



AMERICAN CHURCH HISTORY

A HISTORY  
OF THE  
METHODIST CHURCH, SOUTH  
IN THE UNITED STATES

BY  
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HISTORY OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL  
CHURCH, SOUTH.

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<sup>1</sup> Unless otherwise stated, these books are published in Nashville, Tenn., at the Publication House of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; Barbee and Smith, present agents.

## PREFACE.

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IN a history confined to brief limits, only a general outline of leading events can be given. The leading events in the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, took place, for the most part, in connection with the General Conferences. This fact has largely determined the plan and order of treatment in the present instance. It is true, also, that in the case of the Southern Methodist Church the action of the various General Conferences has been, throughout, representative, in a singular degree, of the thoughts, views, and status of the membership at large. But for these considerations the scheme of treatment according to General Conferences might seem arbitrary and artificial.

The author has drawn largely upon the original sources, and has introduced what may appear frequent and lengthy extracts from the original documents. This seemed better than to give his own abstract of their contents. The reproduction of essential portions of the original documents will give to the history a *reality* and *authority*, and to the reader a corresponding sense of satisfaction, which could not come from any summary, determined and colored, as that would be, by the author's *interpretation* of the originals. These are accessible to only a few. With the ex-



tracts given in the following pages, the general reader will be in a position to form his own judgments and to draw his own conclusions.

The task of the author was confessedly a difficult one. A minister, conversant with the history, humorously said to him :

“ Lo, on a narrow neck of land  
'Twixt two unbounded seas you stand.”

The difficulty of the task was rendered still greater by the limitations of time and space which were imposed. That mistakes have been made it is almost certain; that the work will meet the approval of all readers cannot be hoped. The writer has performed his task not as he would, but as, under the circumstances, he could. No one can be more sensible than he of the imperfections of the work. He bespeaks the charitable judgment of his readers. Those who occupy a different point of view will doubtless find much to criticise.

My thanks are due and are given to my colleagues, Dr. Charles Forster Smith, Prof. Collins Denny, Prof. O. E. Brown, and to Dr. E. E. Hoss, editor of the “Nashville Christian Advocate,” for looking over proofs, and for many helpful suggestions. No one, however, is responsible for the views herein expressed but the author himself.

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# THE METHODISTS, SOUTH.

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## CHAPTER I.

### PRELIMINARY HISTORY.

IN 1766, Methodism, which had turned old England upside down, came hither also, to this new world. It planted itself, as if by a prophetic instinct, simultaneously in two places, one of them in the South, one of them in the North. From these two centers and throughout these two regions it extended itself in every direction, through New York, New England, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, through Maryland, Virginia, the Carolinas, and Georgia. Nevertheless this Methodism was one,

One army of the living God,

coalescing more and more under the plastic hands of Asbury and Rankin, and taking organic form in the conference of 1773 and those that followed. It was not Northern Methodism and Southern Methodism; it was Methodism,—Christianity in earnest, seeking and saving the lost. To the influence and the extension of this common Methodism the North contributed and the South contributed. If the North gave to Methodism such men as Nathan Bangs and Freeborn Garrettson and Joshua Soule, the South furnished her

quota of such as Philip Bruce and Jesse Lee and William McKendree. If increasing and incredible thousands were annually added to the rolls of the church and the number of the saved in New York and New England, answering thousands were added in Virginia and the Carolinas, in Georgia and Tennessee. In all that Methodism accomplished and in all that Methodism was, the North had an equal part with the South and the South had an equal part with the North—unless in point of numbers the North had somewhat the advantage. But while this was true, in another respect, the South had an advantage over the North, due, however, in no way, to the fault of the North. The Rev. Dr. Bristol, fraternal delegate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, said, at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1890: “I am not ignorant, brethren, of the fact that the colored people of the South are indebted to your fathers for their Christianity and for their Methodism.” If there was, then, a department of the great work to which the one section of the church had access and the other had not, except in a very limited way, it was the opportunity and privilege of giving the gospel to the African slave population of the United States. This the Methodists in the South did, for the most part; with what success is partially indicated in the fact that in 1844 there were about 125,000 of these sons of Ham enrolled as members of the church and sons of God—a larger number of practically heathen converts than all the missionary societies of America had gathered upon all the fields of the heathen world. So that while the portion of the church which operated in the North had the preponderance in numbers, the Southern portion, besides having gathered a membership of 350,000 whites, had, with infinite and unrecorded patience and toil, reached and Christianized a

practically heathen population of over 100,000 souls. On the whole, then, it was about an even stand, and neither portion could boast of any great superiority over the other. Neither had made the Methodist Episcopal Church without the other: neither was the Methodist Episcopal Church without the other.

There came a time, however, when, for reasons sufficient and irresistible, in their opinion, the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the South thought that, in view of the condition of affairs which had arisen, they could best conduct their work and operate their field under the jurisdiction of a separate General Conference. To this the representatives of all the Annual Conferences of the undivided Methodist Episcopal Church, in General Conference assembled, in the city of New York in 1844, agreed, by a majority little less than unanimous; and for this they made provision in what is known as the Plan of Separation, conditioned upon the necessity of a separate General Conference, that necessity to be determined by the Annual Conferences of the Southern States.

In accordance with this plan of separation, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, consisting of all the Annual Conferences in the Southern and Southwestern States, was organized as a distinct ecclesiastical jurisdiction, in the month of May in the year 1845. As to the cause or causes of this event, we shall be better able to decide after tracing the history of the events that led to it. It is enough, at present, to say that it was in connection with the problems arising out of the existence of African slavery and its relations to church and state.

It is unnecessary to recite here the facts, that slavery existed at one time in all the original colonies of the American Union; that the business enterprise of New England, as well as that of old England, was active in

supplying African slaves for American markets; and that originally it was chiefly the accidents of climate and cotton and rice and sugar, and not the superior morality of the people of other sections, that determined the preponderance of numbers and the permanence of slavery in the South. "In the Eastern and Middle States the system of slave-labor was gradually abolished, being unprofitable," says a Northern and a Methodist historian of the United States.<sup>1</sup>

Says another: "Slavery was unprofitable in the Northern States, and in the course of time the opinions and sentiments of the best people were arrayed against it. If it had been profitable in the North, the people there, according to the infirmity of our nature, might possibly have remained unconvinced of its evils."

It is sufficient to say that at the time when our history begins, slavery had gravitated to the South, and was, for the most part, confined to the South; although, in the beginning, some of the Southern colonies had opposed and resisted the introduction of the abomination. The colonial legislature of Virginia, for example, in 1726 undertook to check the importation of slaves by imposing a heavy tax on the traffic; but the British Government repealed this law, and, as Madison afterward said, "constantly baffled the attempts of Virginia to put a stop to this infernal traffic, for the avowed reason that 'the slave-trade was very advantageous to Great Britain.'"<sup>2</sup>

The colony of Georgia, also, the year after it was chartered (1734), forbade by express law the introduction of slavery, and it was not until George Whitefield, co-founder

<sup>1</sup> Ridpath's "History of the United States," p. 487.

<sup>2</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle," p. 29.

NOTE.—From 1699 to 1772 *twenty-three* acts were passed to arrest or prohibit the further introduction of slaves, but all were disregarded by the King of Great Britain.—Minor's "Institutes," p. 164.

with Wesley of Methodism, went from Georgia to England and persuaded the trustees of the colony to allow it, that slavery was introduced (1751). He is reported to have said, "I should think myself highly favored if I could purchase a good number of slaves, in order to make their lives comfortable and lay a foundation for bringing up their posterity in the nurture and admonition of the Lord."

Twenty years afterward he died, leaving seventy-five slaves in connection with his Orphan House plantation in Georgia. For without repealing the law of 1734, the colony had from 1751 allowed slave-traders to sail to Savannah and sell their heathen victims to the highest bidder. A slight resistance was kept up by the Moravians, but even they finally yielded to the conviction that African slaves might be employed in a Christian spirit, and that their treatment in a Christian manner might prove their change of country to be a great benefit to them. This view was encouraged by a message from the Moravians of the fatherland, which declared, "If you take slaves in faith with the intention to conduct them to Christ, the action will not be a sin, but may prove a blessing."<sup>1</sup> Possibly this view of the Moravians of Germany was, in some measure, due to the influence of the words of the great Reformer, Martin Luther, who wrote in the sixteenth century, "He that says that slavery is opposed to Christianity is a liar." Sanctioned by such examples and defended with such plausible arguments, it is not surprising that, little by little, the people laid aside their scruples and finally adopted the system. In fact, it seemed equal to the liberation of slaves for kind masters to purchase them from heartless and cruel slave-traders.

When Methodism came upon the scene, about 1766, under Robert Strawbridge in Maryland and Philip Em-

<sup>1</sup> Matlack's "Antislavery Struggle," pp. 30, 31.

bury in New York, slavery was already established and in vogue from Massachusetts to South Carolina, but particularly in the South; and as Wesley had borne strong testimony against it in England, so did Asbury, Garrettson, and others in America. But it was not until the meeting of the conference at Baltimore in 1780 that conference action was taken on the subject. It will be necessary, at this point, to give a brief survey of the course of legislation on the subject of slaveholding, so as better to understand the situation at the critical period, in 1844. Up to 1780 there was no written rule on the practice of slaveholding. The following questions, propounded and recorded at that conference, will show that at that time slaves were held by Methodists, and even by Methodist preachers:

*Question.* Ought this conference to require those traveling preachers who hold slaves to give promises to set them free?

*Answer.* Yes.

*Question.* Do we pass our disapprobation on all our preachers who keep slaves and advise their freedom?

*Answer.* Yes.

At the famous Christmas Conference held in Lovely Lane Chapel in Baltimore in 1784, at and by which the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America was effected, a general rule, in addition to those prepared by Mr. Wesley for the societies in England in 1743, was adopted, prohibiting "the buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or children with the intention of enslaving them."

Other special rules were also adopted at this conference, "designed to extirpate this abomination from among us." These rules were the most rigid that were ever enacted by the General Conference of the Methodist Church in America. They indicate the high-water mark of conference legislation against slavery. They were found, how-

ever, to be too rigid; and the Discipline of 1786 marks the beginning of a recessive movement. If, from the beginning, non-slaveholding had been made a rigid condition of entrance into the Methodist Church, that might have worked, and all the after trouble might have been avoided. But this was not done. Slaveholders had been admitted—when and where and how it may not now be possible to say—but the sensitive and excited tone of the legislation on the subject all through this period indicates that the church had considerable and increasing numbers of slaveholders. An attempt was made at the General Conference of 1800 to pass a resolution prohibiting thereafter the admission of a slaveholder. “Friday morning, May 16th, Brother Snethen moved that this General Conference do resolve that from this time no slaveholder shall be admitted into the Methodist Episcopal Church;” but it seemed now too late to adopt such a rule, for it was “negatived.”<sup>1</sup> Not only so, but another rule was enacted, “That all slaveholders asking admission as members must be spoken to freely and faithfully by the preacher on the subject of slavery.” These two actions revealed the vacillation of the church and the General Conference on the subject of slaveholding. They were hesitating over the question,

Shall we shut the door  
And keep it out? or shall we let it in  
And see if we can get it out again?

Moreover, the subject now began to be complicated with civil legislation. Already in the General Conference of 1800 we begin to meet with clauses that become very familiar in later legislation: “Whereas the laws in two or more of the United States pointedly prohibit the emancipation of slaves;” and again, “shall execute, if it be

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference of 1800,” p. 40.



practicable, a legal emancipation of such slave or slaves, agreeably to the laws of the State wherein they live.”<sup>1</sup>

As they had failed to make non-slaveholding a condition of membership from the beginning; and as, when fully awakened afterward to the nature and meaning of slavery, they had even then definitely *refused* to introduce non-slaveholding as a condition of membership, but, on the contrary, made implicit provision for the continued admission of slaveholders on condition of a *talk* to the candidate by the preacher; and as conference legislation was becoming more difficult and unmanageable by reason of its embarrassing complications with State legislation—they found it necessary to abandon their untenable position, to make further concessions, and to put themselves in line with the laws of the slaveholding States and the crystallizing public opinion of the people in those States, or else they would have practically to abandon them. Hence there is a tone of increasing moderation in the legislation of the General Conference down to 1816, when the law known as the “Compromise Law” of the church on the subject of slavery was passed. The action of that conference is as follows:

Your committee find that in the South and West the civil authorities render emancipation impracticable, and they are constrained to admit that to bring about such a change in the civil code as would favor the cause of liberty is not in the power of the General Conference. They beg leave to submit the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our church where the laws of the State in which he lives will admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.<sup>2</sup>

After 1816 there was practically no change in the legislation of the General Conference on the subject of slavery until the session of 1836; but an event occurred at the

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference of 1800,” pp. 37, 44.

<sup>2</sup> “Journal of the General Conference of 1816,” p. 170.

General Conference of 1828 which showed that the moderate and conciliatory view of the question had been accepted and was generally held. At the General Conference of 1824 that body instructed the bishops to choose and appoint a representative and send him to the British Conference at its session in 1826. At a meeting of the bishops held in Baltimore in April, 1826, Bishop McKendree and Bishop Soule had favored the appointment of Mr. Capers, of South Carolina, while Bishops George and Hedding gave their support to the great Dr. Wilbur Fisk. The ground of their objection to Mr. Capers was that he was a slaveholder. This difference of opinion led to a postponement of the matter till the General Conference of 1828, when the subject was formally brought up in the address of the bishops. The General Conference indorsed the preference of Bishops McKendree and Soule, and elected Mr. Capers over Dr. Fisk, notwithstanding the fact that he was a slaveholder. It may be interesting to add that Mr. Capers was received by the British Conference with cordiality and enthusiasm; and they

*Resolved*, 1. That the cordial thanks of this conference are due to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America for the appointment of their excellent representative, Mr. Capers, whose amiable manners, devout spirit, and acceptable ministry have greatly endeared him to the preachers now assembled, and have confirmed their feelings of respect and attachment toward their American brethren at large.

2. That the warmest thanks of the conference are hereby presented to Mr. Capers for the great ability, Christian spirit, and brotherly kindness with which he has discharged the duties of his honorable mission, and that their most fervent prayers will attend him on his return to his native country.<sup>1</sup>

The journal of the General Conference of 1836 records a remarkable action. It is as follows:

WHEREAS great excitement has prevailed in this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, etc.,

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the Annual Conferences in General Confer-

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Bishop Capers," p. 258.

ence assembled, That they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave as it exists in the slaveholding States of this Union.<sup>1</sup>

One hundred and thirty-seven voted in favor of this resolution, and "none in the opposition."

The great excitement referred to in the preamble was an effect of the organization and operation of the New England Antislavery Society, begun in 1832, and the American Antislavery Society, organized in 1833. These societies took extreme positions and precipitated widespread agitation.

In 1835 the New England and New Hampshire conferences organized Antislavery Societies, and an "Appeal" was issued, signed by La Roy Sunderland and others, and addressed to these two conferences. In the same year appeared a "Counter-Appeal," written by D. D. Whedon and signed by Wilbur Fisk, Abel Stevens, Bishop Elijah Hedding, and others. The signers of this counter-appeal replied to the position taken in the appeal, that "no slaveholder is truly awakened, and that no slaveholder can rightly be permitted a place in the Christian Church," by saying:

That in the primitive church at Colosse, under the apostolic eye and with the apostolic sanction, the relation of master and slave was permitted to subsist; that there were already such in the church of Ephesus; that the New Testament (in Ephesians vi. 5-9 and elsewhere) enjoins obedience on the slave as an obligation due to a present, rightful authority; that 1 Timothy vi. 1, 2, presents an impregnable demonstration that slaveholding is not in all cases and invariably sinful; that we may not say that no slaveholder is truly awakened; and that it does not of itself form a ground of exclusion from the Christian Church.<sup>2</sup>

The counter-appeal maintained also that the Bible is opposed to slavery as a system, and disclaimed all pur-

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1836," pp. 446, 447.

<sup>2</sup> Matlack, pp. 87, 88.

pose of defending the system. What it opposed was the position that all slaveholding is sinful and therefore should be universally and immediately abandoned.

The address of the bishops at the General Conference of 1840 is a notable document. It presents a calm survey of the situation, takes broad views of the jurisdictional questions involved, and counsels moderation and justice in and toward all sections of the church. Among other things they say:

They have no disposition to criminate their brethren in the South who are *unavoidably* connected with the institution of slavery, or to separate from them on that account. In all enactments of the church relating to slavery a due and respectful regard has been had to the laws of the States, never requiring emancipation in contravention of civil authority, or where the laws of the State would not allow the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom. The simple holding or owning of slaves, without regard to circumstances, has at no period of the existence of the church subjected the master to excommunication.<sup>1</sup>

In the reply of the bishops to the fraternal address of the British Conference, which contained references to the subject of slavery, they say:

In some of our States slavery exists so universally and is so closely interwoven with their civil institutions, that both do the laws disallow of emancipation and the great body of the people (the source of laws with us) hold it to be treasonable to set forth anything by word or deed tending that way. Our church is extended through all the States, and as it would be wrong and unscriptural to enact a rule of discipline in opposition to the constitution and laws of the State on the subject, so also is it not equitable or Scriptural to confound the position of our ministers and people (so different as they are in different States) with respect to the moral question which slavery involves. Under the administration of the venerated Dr. Coke this plain distinction was once overlooked, and it was attempted to urge emancipation in *all* the States; but the attempt proved almost ruinous, and was soon abandoned by the doctor himself. Methodism has always been, except in this single instance, eminently loyal and promotive of good order, and so we desire it may ever continue to be both in Europe and America. We conclude the subject with the corroborating language of your noble missionary society, by the revered and lamented Richard Watson, in their instructions to missionaries published in the report of 1833, as follows:

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1840," pp. 135, 136.

“As in the colonies in which you are called to labor, a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the committee most strongly call to your remembrance what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted as missionaries to the West Indies—that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition.”

(Signed) R. R. ROBERTS,  
JOSHUA SOULE,  
ELIJAH HEDDING,  
JAS. O. ANDREW,  
BEVERLY WAUGH,  
THOS. A. MORRIS.<sup>1</sup>

At this same General Conference of 1840 a memorial was presented from the official members of the Westmoreland Circuit, in Virginia, complaining that, while geographically they were subject to State laws under which emancipation could not take place, the Baltimore Conference, to whose ecclesiastical jurisdiction they belonged, refused to elect certain of their local preachers to orders or to admit them into the traveling connection, because they were slaveholders. The conclusion of the report on the subject adopted by the conference is as follows:

In conclusion, your committee would express the deliberate opinion that while the general rule on the subject of slavery relating to those States whose laws admit emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, *should be firmly and constantly enforced*, the exception to the general rule, applying to those States where emancipation is not practicable, should be recognized *with equal firmness and impartiality*. Therefore,

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That, under the provisional exception of the general rule of the church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves or mere ownership of slave-property in States or Territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slaves to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and cannot therefore be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination.

<sup>1</sup> “Journal of the General Conference of 1840,” p. 155.

The action of the General Conference of 1840 marks the furthest limit of concession to the views and sentiments of the Southern section of the church. It was more than the abolition wing of the church could stand. They prepared to secede, and in 1842-43 they did secede; and at a convention held in Utica, N. Y., in May, 1843, they organized the Wesleyan Methodist Church of America, with non-slaveholding as a condition of membership. Within about a year and a half they had enrolled a total membership of fifteen thousand. This secession produced a reaction. A great awakening occurred in the church generally, resulting in some localities in Methodist conventions. One of these declared that "slaveholding is sin," and that "the Methodist Episcopal Church is responsible for slavery in its pale." Another one declared that "the only way to prevent an entire dissolution among us, as a church, is an entire separation from the South."<sup>1</sup>

Prior to 1843 no Annual Conference was allowed to say that all slaveholding was sin. Subsequently no form of expression was objected to by the presiding officer of an Annual Conference. Dr. Whedon, in the "Quarterly Review" for October, 1865, says: "The secession of the Wesleyans, as we believe, saved our church in 1844 from accepting a slaveholding bishop." It was the opinion of Bishop Thompson, expressed in 1866, that the Wesleyans by withdrawing from the church in 1843 constrained a development of antislavery activity in the church, which they could not have accomplished by remaining in it. This reaction was shown in the vigorous controversy which was at that period carried on in the Methodist journals of the time, North and South.

On the other hand, the legislation in the General Conferences of 1836 and 1840, the defeat of the abolition

<sup>1</sup> Matlack, p. 152.

party and their subsequent secession from the church, gave the supporters of the Southern view increasing confidence in *their* position. So that while the secession of the Wesleyans seemed, at the time, to afford "general relief," and did afford temporary relief, yet in fact and in the end it had the effect to reawaken the convictions of the one side and to strengthen those of the other. The crisis was approaching, and soon came. All the alterations of the rule, modifications of method, attempts at reconciliation, had brought the two parts of the church no nearer together. On the contrary, all their experiments and efforts, all the demands of the one side and all the concessions of the other, all the actions and reactions, showed that the question was utterly unmanageable, and that they were in reality wider apart than ever before. It seems amazing to us that the men of '44, on both sides, did not see that it was simply impossible to reconcile the differences and perpetuate the union, and that the best thing would have been to make a friendly division of the church and let each section work its own territory, pursue its own methods, and manage its own problems. An enforced and irritating union is incomparably worse than a friendly separation. So it appeared even to some of the apostles (compare Gal. ii. 9 and Acts xv 39). An opportunity for a peaceable separation came in the General Conference of 1844.

## CHAPTER II.

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1844.

WITHOUT the preliminary review given in the foregoing chapter, outlining the course of events preceding the General Conference of 1844, it would be difficult to understand the situation or to comprehend the action of that historic body. There were forebodings of evil in the hearts of both Northern and Southern delegates as they assembled in the city of New York, in the flowery month of May, to attend the ninth delegated General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in the air were the whispered fears of an impending conflict. The General Conference was composed of the best men of all sections, men of really great abilities, profound convictions, deep piety, and devotion to the church. The radicals had gone off in 1843. The leaders of 1844 were, for the most part, conservatives. There were Soule and Hedding and Bangs and Olin and Morris and the Pecks and Durbin and Hamline and Porter and Collins and Thompson and Ames and Simpson and Cartwright and Scott; there were the Pierces and Capers and Paine and McFerrin and Green and Bascom and Kavanaugh and Winans and Smith and Andrew and Hamilton and Wightman and Early. No less than thirteen of the delegates to that memorable body afterward became bishops—six in the Northern Church and seven in the Southern.

Early in the session the appeal of F. A. Harding, a member of the Baltimore Conference, was taken up. He had married a lady who owned a family of slaves. At the



next session of the conference he was required by that body to free those slaves. Failing to comply, he was suspended till the next Annual Conference, or "until he gives assurance that he has taken the necessary steps to secure their freedom." It appeared in evidence that by the laws of Maryland the title and ownership inhered in his wife, and that a slave could not be emancipated and enjoy liberty in the State. It was claimed that his case was covered by the law, and appeal was made that the sentence of the Baltimore Conference be reversed. On the other hand, it was maintained, that no slaveholder had ever been a member of the Baltimore Conference; that the offending man knew this when he entered it, and had the fact before him when he married; that this usage of the conference had been insisted upon in the case of others; that, notwithstanding the stringency of the State law, slaves had often been manumitted and remained undisturbed in the State; and as for the title, it was assumed that he could persuade his wife to join him in the act of manumission.<sup>1</sup> When the vote was taken, the motion to reverse the decision of the Baltimore Conference was lost, fifty-six voting for and one hundred and seventeen against it. To the Southern members this seemed to be requiring compliance with the usage of the conference in violation of civil law, or, as they afterward expressed it, "enjoining a violation of civil law as a moral duty;" and this case might probably have precipitated the division of the church but for a graver case of similar character which was yet to be disposed of, namely, that of one of the bishops, who also had come into the possession of slaves by inheritance and marriage. The good men of both sides saw and felt what was coming, yet they tried to avert it—to avert the inevitable. On Tuesday, May

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire's "History of Methodism," p. 620.

14th, Dr. Capers, of South Carolina, and Dr. Olin, of Connecticut, offered jointly a resolution to the effect that:

In view of the distracting agitation which has so long prevailed on the subject of slavery and abolition, and especially in view of the difficulty under which we labor in the present General Conference, a committee of six be appointed to confer with the bishops as to the possibility of adopting some plan, and what, for the permanent pacification of the Church.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Olin, though supporting this resolution, gave utterance to the conviction which has already been expressed in these pages, that further concession from either side was not to be expected, could not be asked; the differences were too deep to be healed; harmony and continued union were no longer possible. This great-souled son of New England and South Carolina, "speaking under the most powerful emotion and in a strain of tenderness that moved every member of the conference," said:

It appears to me that we stand committed on this question by our principles and views of policy, and that neither of us dare move a step from our position. I confess I turn away from the controversy with sorrow, and a deep feeling of apprehension that the difficulties that are upon us now threaten to be unmanageable. I will take it upon me to say freely that I do not see how Northern men can yield their ground, or Southern men give up theirs. I do indeed believe that if our affairs remain in their present position and this General Conference do not speak out clearly and distinctly on the subject, however unpalatable it may be, we cannot go home under this distracting question without a certainty of breaking up our conferences. I look to this measure with desire rather than with hope. With regard to our Southern brethren—and I hold that on this question, at least, I may speak with some confidence—if they concede what the Northern brethren wish, if they concede that holding slaves is incompatible with holding their ministry, they may as well go to the Rocky Mountains as to their own sunny plains. The people would not bear it. They feel shut up to their principles on this point. I believe there is not a man among them that would not make every sacrifice, and even die, if thereby he could heal this division. But if our difficulties are unmanageable, let our spirit be right. I see no way of escape.<sup>2</sup>

And Dr. Olin was right. After a day of fasting and prayer and four days of deliberation, the committee re-

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1844," p. 43.

<sup>2</sup> "Debates of the General Conference of 1844," p. 55.

ported on May 18th that, "after a calm and deliberate investigation of the subject submitted to their consideration, they are unable to agree upon any plan of compromise to reconcile the views of the Northern and Southern Conferences." <sup>1</sup>

On Monday, May 20th, the subject which was so much dreaded, but which would not and could not be let alone, was brought up, and a resolution was adopted instructing the committee on episcopacy to ascertain the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew and report the results of their investigation to the conference on the next day

On Tuesday, May 21st, the committee presented their report, embodying a statement by Bishop Andrew himself concerning his connection with slavery: Several years before, an old lady had bequeathed to him a girl in trust, to be taken care of until she was nineteen years old. Then, with her consent, she was to be sent to Liberia; or, in case of her refusal to go, she was to be made as free as the laws of Georgia would permit. She refused to go to Liberia. He derived, however, no pecuniary advantage from her, and she was at liberty to go to a free State at her pleasure, but the laws of Georgia would not permit her emancipation there. In that case he was a slaveholder without his consent.

Secondly. The mother of Bishop Andrew's first wife left to her a negro boy. His wife died without a will, and by the laws of Georgia the boy became Bishop Andrew's property; but emancipation, as in the other case, was impracticable. However, the bishop declared he should be at liberty to leave the State whenever he was satisfied that the boy could either provide for himself or would be provided for by others.

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference 1844," p. 54.

Thirdly. A few months previous, he had married a lady possessed of slaves. Shortly after his marriage, being unwilling to become their owner himself, he had secured them to her by a deed of trust. Consequently, he disclaimed any legal responsibility in the premises, but declared that his wife was unable to emancipate them in Georgia, even if she desired to do so.

It was true, then, that one of the bishops of the church had become a slaveholder, though certainly under very peculiar circumstances. Nevertheless, it was a tremendous matter. The personal character of Bishop James O. Andrew was above reproach and above suspicion. During all those terrible ten days when the searching gaze of the General Conference, of the whole church, and, indeed, of the nation, was focused upon him, no flaw was found in him; amid the feverish excitement of that high debate no railing accusation was brought against him.<sup>1</sup> One who reads his biography will find that his private life was one of exceptional character. His piety was genuine and deep and fervent, his humility was extraordinary, his self-sacrificing devotion to the gospel and the church was apostolic, his interest in the black people was zealous and ceaseless, his tenderness to his slaves was parental, his family life was even beautiful. I may be permitted to say that I began his biography with a prejudice against him; I finished it with the estimate and impression just given. The great Dr. Olin, also, who was for a time an inmate of his house and a member of his family, bears similar testimony to the character of Bishop Andrew. And yet Bishop Andrew was a slaveholder. This, however, was no more against him, *per se*, and apart from his official relation to the church, than the same fact was against Dr. Olin, who was himself a slaveholder during his residence in the South.

<sup>1</sup> See the "Debates of the General Conference of 1844."

But that Bishop Andrew should, in view of the history and the exciting agitation of the slavery question in his church, have allowed himself in any way to become connected with slaveholding *after* he was made a bishop in that church, seems not merely "an indiscretion," but a very grave and grievous error. His biographer, an intense Southerner, says: "No man of proper feeling will say that duty required him to marry the woman he did not prefer because a part of the church was opposed to a slaveholding bishop; but if he had reason to suppose that the results which did follow would have followed, the marriage should have been preceded by his resignation." If Bishop Andrew did not know the history of the slavery agitation in the church and country, and the attitude of the two sections well enough to have reason for fearing that his marrying a slave-owner would occasion serious trouble, then his ignorance, for a man in his position, was inexcusable. If he did know these things and was indifferent to them, his indifference was more inexcusable. In any case, his position in 1844 is not one to be envied.

While all this is true, it is equally true that the division of the church was inevitable. The South, and with it the Methodist Church in the South, was inextricably though, as the bishops in 1840 said, unavoidably involved in slavery; a large part of the North, and with it the larger part of the Methodist Church in the North, was becoming more and more committed to resistance; and in the action of 1836 and 1840 the Northern brethren had made the very last concession to the Southern, and a strong reaction had already set in. If Bishop Andrew's case had never come up, some other question or case like that of Mr. Harding, would have occasioned and precipitated the separation of the two sections of the church. And yet it cannot but be regarded as exceedingly unfort-

unate that the blunder of a good and great and honored man, occupying the highest position the church could bestow, should have become the occasion of that separation, and that his character and good name should be jeopardized and compromised, and with it that of his church, and thus they should be made to bear, in the eyes of the world, the blame of that separation which was probably as much due to one side as to the other, and still more to events and processes and influences which neither was responsible for and neither could control.

On Wednesday, May 22d, a resolution requesting Bishop Andrew to resign was offered by Alfred Griffith and John Davis, of the Baltimore Conference. If Bishop Andrew had been left to himself, his prompt resignation would have anticipated and superseded this resolution, or any other action of the conference in his case. At Baltimore, on his way to the conference, he had learned of the intense excitement caused by the report that one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church was a slaveholder. Thereupon, "he did resolve to resign, and so expressed himself, both in Baltimore and New York."<sup>1</sup>

On May 14th he wrote from New York to his daughter as follows:

As to the General Conference, thus far it has done little else but quarrel. Some of them are in great trouble about having a slaveholding bishop, and I should greatly relieve them if I should resign. I would most joyfully resign, if I did not dread the influence on the Southern Church. I shall therefore wait patiently a while longer. The clouds are dark, but God is in the whirlwind and guides the storm.<sup>2</sup>

On May 16th he wrote to his wife:

The entire delegation from the twelve slaveholding conferences has met, and, through a committee, have earnestly protested against my resignation under any circumstances, as inevitably destructive to the Southern Church;

<sup>1</sup> "Life of Bishop Andrew," p. 340.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 355.

and for the sake of that church I am resolved to maintain my position and await the issue. O my own dear sweet home! the sweetest spot on this green earth! how gladly would I spend the balance of my life in your society! But we must trust God and obey him.

JAMES O. ANDREW.

The action of the Southern delegates, referred to by Bishop Andrew, is as follows:

Whereas Bishop Andrew has signified to the delegates of the conferences in the slaveholding States a purpose to yield to the present distressing urgency of the brethren from the North and resign his office of bishop, and whereas, in a meeting of said delegates to consider this matter, after solemn prayer and much deliberation, it appears to us that his resignation would inflict an incurable wound on the whole South and inevitably lead to division in the church, therefore we do unanimously concur in requesting the bishop, by all his love for the unity of the church, which his resignation will certainly jeopardize, not to allow himself for any consideration to resign.

(Signed) L. PIERCE, *Chairman*.  
L. M. LEE, *Secretary*.

NEW YORK, May 10, 1844.

So far as Bishop Andrew was personally concerned, if he had through ignorance or mistaken judgment become the occasion of trouble, he was willing and more than willing to get out of the way, but it was too late. Resignation was now out of the question and impossible. Nor would it have helped matters, if he had insisted on resigning; for, although it might have been a temporary pacification to the Northern men, it would have been interpreted by the South as enforced, and as a virtual surrender of their rights under the law and discipline of the church, and they would in all probability have seceded in a body.

But the resolution asking Bishop Andrew to resign was never put to vote. It was displaced, on the next day after its proposal, by a substitute. This, it was believed, would be less offensive to Bishop Andrew and the Southern delegates than the resolution asking for his resignation.

The substitute was offered by J. B. Finley and J. M. Trimble, of Ohio, as follows:

WHEREAS the discipline of our church forbids the doing anything calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and WHEREAS Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General Conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Conference that he desist from the exercise of this office so long as this impediment remains.

(Signed) J. B. FINLEY,  
J. M. TRIMBLE.

It was upon this resolution that the great historic debate of 1844 took place. Mr. Finley, in supporting the resolution, said:

This resolution does not impeach the character of Bishop Andrew in any way; and as no brother here would deny the fact that he had become connected with slavery, the resolution is predicated on the principle that the act has brought after it circumstances which would impede and prevent his circulation as an itinerant general superintendent.

What do we request of Bishop Andrew in this resolution? We do not depose him as bishop; we only say it is the sense of this General Conference that he ought to cease to exercise the office till his embarrassment ceases. I do not wish the bishop to resign. I will permit no man on the floor to say that he has a warmer attachment to Bishop Andrew than I have. I love him as a Christian, as a minister, and as a bishop. I hope the General Conference will give him a little time, and perhaps he will by and by be able, consistently with his interests at the South, to free himself from this incubus of slavery, and we shall have him with us again as our beloved bishop.

The situation was singularly difficult. Perhaps no more difficult question ever in the whole history of the Christian Church embarrassed an ecclesiastical body. In short, it was unmanageable. To prevent widespread disaster on one side or the other there was but one solution, and that the General Conference of 1844 finally reached. The long and exhaustive debate which followed upon the resolution of Mr. Finley, developed radical differences of view between the Northern and Southern delegates concerning fundamental questions of church polity and law, in partic-



ular, concerning the constitutional powers of the General Conference, and the tenure of office of the bishops, or, more broadly, the relation of the episcopal office to the government of Episcopal Methodism. And the differences of view, then and there developed, continue till this day, for the most part, to distinguish the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on these great questions.

But the long and able discussion of the situation had developed no solution that would be satisfactory to both sides. It had rather developed and multiplied difficulties in the way of any settlement of the question. On Thursday, May 30th, Bishop Hedding suggested that the conference have no afternoon session, in order to allow the bishops to consult together with the hope that they might be able to "present some plan of adjusting our present difficulties." The suggestion was received with general and great cordiality. Accordingly, on Friday morning, May 31st, the bishops presented the following communication:

*To the General Conference of the M. E. Church.*

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN: The undersigned respectfully and affectionately offer to your calm consideration the result of their consultation this afternoon in regard to the unpleasant and very delicate question which has been so long and so earnestly debated before your body. To us it is fully apparent that a decision on this question, whether affirmatively or negatively, will most extensively disturb the peace and harmony of that widely extended brotherhood which has so effectively operated for good in the United States of America and elsewhere during the last sixty years, in the development of a system of active energy, of which union has always been a main element. At this painful crisis they have unanimously concurred in the propriety of recommending the postponement of further action in the case of Bishop Andrew until the ensuing General Conference. Until the cessation of the embarrassment or the expiration of the interval between the present and the ensuing General Conference, the undersigned believe that such a division of the work of the general superintendency might be made, without any infraction of a constitutional principle, as would fully employ Bishop Andrew in those sections of the church in which his presence and services would be welcome and cordial. If the course pursued on this occa-

sion by the undersigned be deemed a novel one, they persuade themselves that their justification, in the view of all candid and peace-loving persons, will be found in their strong desire to prevent disunion, and to promote harmony in the church.

Very respectfully and affectionately submitted,

JOSHUA SOULE,  
ELIJAH HEDDING,  
B. WAUGH,  
T. A. MORRIS.

This suggestion of the bishops would seem a timely, reasonable, and pacific measure to adopt, but it was in vain. On Saturday, June 1st, Bishop Hedding in open conference withdrew his name from the paper. His reasons for so doing are given by the Rev. James Porter in an article in the "Quarterly Review" for April, 1871:

Abolitionists regarded this suggestion of the bishops as a most alarming measure. Accordingly, the delegates of the New England conferences were immediately called together, and, after due deliberation, unanimously adopted a paper declaring, in substance, that it was their solemn conviction that if Bishop Andrew should be left by the conference in the exercise of episcopal functions, it would break up most of our churches in New England; and that the only way that they could be holden together would be to secede in a body and invite Bishop Hedding to preside over them. The proposition was agreed in by some of our most distinguished laymen who were present, and a committee of two was appointed to communicate this action to Bishop Hedding. On June 1st the bishop was fully informed of the aforesaid action. He then publicly withdrew his name from the paper which he and the other bishops had signed.<sup>1</sup>

Thus it appears that if Bishop Andrew were left in the exercise of his episcopal functions, even though assigned to work in the South, the churches in New England would go to pieces; while, if he should be in any way molested, the church in the South would go to pieces. However, the address and recommendation of the bishops was, by vote of the conference, laid on the table. The substitute of Messrs. Finley and Trimble was then put, and was carried by a vote of one hundred and ten to sixty-eight.

<sup>1</sup> See Matlack, p. 172.

After this action, Dr. Lovick Pierce, of Georgia, gave notice that a protest would be presented by the minority on this vote at as early a day as practicable, to be entered on the journal of the conference.

The language of the resolution concerning Bishop Andrew was such that it might be construed as only advisory, and so possibly would have been construed; but that question was put to the test, and that possible construction of the resolution was effectually excluded by the action of the conference on the next day after the resolution was adopted. Messrs. Slicer and Sargent offered the following:

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of this General Conference that the vote of Saturday last in the case of Bishop Andrew be understood as advisory only, and not in the light of a judicial mandate; and that the final disposition of Bishop Andrew's case be postponed until the General Conference of 1848, in conformity with the suggestion of the bishops.<sup>1</sup>

But this resolution was laid on the table.

Events were now shaping themselves toward the end. It was not to be expected that things should remain in this condition; nor did they. Nothing, so far, was settled. Everything was exactly unsettled. The refusal of the majority to construe the Finley resolution as advisory left the minority to interpret it as mandatory, and this was to them even a graver action than the original resolution requesting Bishop Andrew to resign—in their judgment it was a virtual suspension of him, and that without due form of law and process of trial. Thus they knew it would be interpreted by the mass of the church-membership in the South, and they knew that wholesale disaffection and secession would follow. They felt in duty bound to express their convictions and misgivings, to enter some protest, and to make some effort to stand for and defend the church in the South, in order to prevent, if possible,

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1844," p. 85.

its demoralization and disintegration. And will any fair-minded man say that they did wrong and were to blame for so doing?

In their Protest they say:

We protest against the recent act of a majority of this General Conference as an attempt to establish a dangerous precedent subversive of the union and stability of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and especially as placing in jeopardy the general superintendency of the church by subjecting any bishop at any time to the will and caprice of a majority of the General Conference, not only without law, but in defiance of the restraints and provisions of law. We protest against the act because we recognize in this General Conference no right, power, or authority to suspend or depose a bishop of the church without formal presentation of a charge or charges alleging that the bishop to be dealt with has been guilty of the violation of some law, and also upon conviction of such charge after due form of trial. We protest against the act in question as a violation of the fundamental law usually known as the Compromise Law of the church on the subject of slavery—the only law which can be brought to bear upon the case of Bishop Andrew, and the assertion and maintenance of which, until it is constitutionally revoked, is guaranteed by the honor and good faith of this body as the representative assembly of the thirty-three Annual Conferences known as contracting parties in the premises. It is assumed, and the assumption acted upon, that expediency may have jurisdiction even in the presence of law, the law, too, being special, and covering the case in terms. Had Bishop Andrew been suspended according to law after due form of trial, we would have submitted without remonstrance, as the friends of law and order. The minority are aware that it is affirmed by some of the majority, though denied by others, that the resolution censuring and virtually suspending Bishop Andrew, as understood by the minority, is mere matter of advice or recommendation; but the nature of the resolution, by fair and necessary construction, is imperative and mandatory in form, and conveys the idea plainly that it is the judgment and will of the conference that Bishop Andrew shall cease to exercise the office of bishop until he shall cease to be the owner of slaves. A motion, too, to declare the resolution advisory was promptly rejected by the majority, and in view of all these facts and the entire proceedings in the case, we have been compelled to consider the resolution as a mandatory judgment to the effect that Bishop Andrew desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions. We can never consent, while we have a plain law obviously covering an assumed offense, that the offense shall be taken, under plea of conscience and principle, out of the hands of the law, and be re-subjected to the conflicting opinions and passions which originally led to a resort to law, as the only safe standard of judgment. We do not understand how conscience and principle can attach grave blame to action not disapproved by the law—express law, too, made

and provided in the case—without extending condemnation to the law itself and the body from which it proceeds. Impelled by conscience and principle to the illegal arrest of a bishop because he has incidentally, by bequest, inheritance, and marriage, come into the possession of slave property, in no instance intending to possess himself of such property, how long will conscience and principle leave other ministers, or even lay members, undisturbed who may happen to be in the same category with Bishop Andrew? Will assurances be given that the lawlessness of expediency, controlled, as in such cases, as it must be, by prejudice and passion, will extend no further, that there shall be no further curtailment of right as regards the Southern ministry? Yet what is the security of the South in the case?

As the Methodist Episcopal Church is now organized, and according to its organization since 1784, the episcopacy is a coördinate branch, the executive department proper of the government. A bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church is not a mere creature—is in no prominent sense an officer—of the General Conference. The General Conference, as such, cannot constitute a bishop. It is true, the Annual Conferences select the bishops of the church by the suffrage of their delegates in General Conference assembled, but the General Conference, in its capacity of a representative body or any other in which it exists, does not possess the power of ordination, without which a bishop cannot be constituted. Because bishops are in part constituted by the General Conference the power of removal does not follow. Episcopacy is an officially consecrated station under the protection of law. The power to appoint does not necessarily involve the power to remove; and when the appointing power is derivative, as in the case of the General Conference, the power of removal does not accrue at all, unless by consent of the coördinating branches of the government, expressed by law, made and provided in the case. When the legislature of a State appoints a judge or a senator in Congress, does the judge or senator thereby become the officer or creature of the legislature, or is he the officer or senatorial representative of the State, of which the legislature is the mere organ, and does the power of removal follow that of appointment? The answer is negative in both cases, and applies equally to the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who are the officers and servants of the *church*, chosen by the General Conference *as its organ of action*, and no right of removal accrues except as they fail to accomplish the aims of the church in their appointment, and then only in accordance with the provisions of law. But when a bishop is suspended, or informed that it is the wish or will of the General Conference that he cease to perform the functions of bishop for doing what the law of the same body allows him to do, and, of course, without incurring the hazard of punishment or even blame, then the whole procedure becomes an outrage upon justice as well as law. Upon this theory of official tenure, the provisions of law and the faithful performance of duty afford no security. The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church are slaves, and the General Conference their masters and holders. They are in office only at the discretion of

a majority of the General Conference, without the restraints or protection of law.<sup>1</sup>

On the afternoon of Wednesday, June 5th, the Southern delegates presented the following declaration, with the purpose of eliciting conference action in the premises:

The delegates of the conferences in the slaveholding States take leave to declare to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church that the continued agitation on the subject of slavery and abolition in a portion of the church, the frequent action on that subject in the General Conference, and especially the extrajudicial proceedings against Bishop Andrew, which resulted, on Saturday last, in the virtual suspension of him from his office as superintendent, must produce a state of things in the South which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of that General Conference over these conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding States.<sup>2</sup>

On motion of Dr. Charles Elliott this "Declaration" was referred to a committee of nine, among whom were Robert Paine, Nathan Bangs, L. L. Hamline, William Winans, and James Porter. This committee was instructed by the conference:

To devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the church, provided they cannot, in their judgment, devise a plan for an amicable adjustment of the difficulty now existing in the church on the subject of slavery.<sup>3</sup>

After three days of deliberation the committee presented their report, which is known as the historic "Plan of Separation." Its adoption was moved by Dr. Charles Elliott, on whose motion the committee was constituted. Their report is as follows:

The select committee of nine to consider and report on the declaration of the delegates from the conferences of the slaveholding States, beg leave to submit the following report:

WHEREAS a declaration has been presented to this General Conference, with the signatures of fifty-one delegates of the body, from thirteen Annual

<sup>1</sup> "Debates of the General Conference of 1844," pp. 203-211.

<sup>2</sup> "Journal of 1844," p. 109.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 111.

Conferences in the slaveholding States, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and church organization cannot be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General Conference as now constituted; and

WHEREAS, in the event of a separation, a contingency to which the declaration asks attention as not improbable, we esteem it the duty of this General Conference to meet the emergency with Christian kindness and the strictest equity; therefore,

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled,

1st. That should the delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding States find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the Northern boundary of such connection: All the societies, stations, and conferences adhering to the church in the South, by a vote of a majority of the members of said societies, stations, and conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church; and the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in nowise attempt to organize churches or societies within the limits of the Church, South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein; it being understood that the ministry of the South reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to stations, societies, and conferences adhering, by vote of a majority, to the Methodist Episcopal Church; provided also that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and conferences bordering on the line of division, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that church within whose territory they are situated.

2d. That ministers, local and traveling, of every grade and office in the Methodist Episcopal Church, may, as they prefer, remain in that church, or, without blame, attach themselves to the Church, South.

3d. *Resolved*, by the delegates of all the Annual Conferences in General Conference assembled, That we recommend to all the Annual Conferences, at their first approaching sessions, to authorize a change of the Sixth Restrictive Rule, so that the first clause shall read thus: "They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, nor of the Chartered Fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children, and to such other purposes as may be determined upon by the votes of two thirds of the members of the General Conference."

4th. That whenever the Annual Conferences, by a vote of three fourths of all their members voting on the third resolution, shall have concurred in the recommendation to alter the Sixth Restrictive Rule, the agents at New York and Cincinnati shall, and they are hereby authorized and directed to, deliver over to any authorized agent or appointee of the Church, South, should one be authorized, all notes and book accounts against the ministers,

church-members, or citizens within its boundaries, with authority to collect the same for the sole use of the Southern Church, and that said agents also convey to the aforesaid agent or appointee of the South all the real estate, and assign to him all the property, including presses, stock, and all right and interest connected with the printing establishments at Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, which now belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

5th. That when the Annual Conferences shall have approved the aforesaid change in the Sixth Restrictive Rule, there shall be transferred to the above agent of the Southern Church so much of the capital and produce of the Methodist Book Concern as will, with notes, book accounts, presses, etc., mentioned in the last resolution, bear the same proportion to the whole property of said Concern that the traveling preachers in the Southern Church shall bear to all traveling ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the division to be made on the basis of the number of traveling preachers in the forthcoming minutes.

6th. That the above transfer shall be in the form of annual payments of \$2500 per annum, and specifically in stock of the Book Concern, and in Southern notes and accounts due the establishment, and accruing after the first transfer mentioned above; and until all the payments are made the Southern Church shall share in all the net profits of the Book Concern, in the proportion that the amount due them, or in arrears, bears to all the property of the Concern.

7th. That — be and they are hereby appointed commissioners to act in concert with the same number of commissioners appointed by the Southern organization (should one be formed) to estimate the amount which will fall due to the South by the preceding rule, and to have full powers to carry into effect the whole arrangements proposed with regard to the division of property, should the separation take place. And if by any means a vacancy occurs in this Board of Commissioners, the Book Committee at New York shall fill said vacancy.

8th. That whenever any agents of the Southern Church are clothed with legal authority or corporate power to act in the premises, the agents at New York are hereby authorized and directed to act in concert with said Southern agents, so as to give the provisions of these resolutions a legally binding force.

9th. That all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church in meeting-houses, parsonages, colleges, schools, conference funds, cemeteries, and of every kind within the limits of the Southern organization, shall be forever free from any claim set up on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as this resolution can be of force in the premises.

10th. That the church so formed in the South shall have a common property in all the copyrights in possession of the Book Concern at New York and Cincinnati, at the time of the settlement by the commissioners.



*Resolved*, That the bishops be respectfully requested to lay that part of this report requiring the action of the Annual Conferences before them as soon as possible, beginning with the New York Conference.

ROBERT PAINE, *Chairman*.

NEW YORK, June 7, 1844.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. Elliott moved the adoption of the report. He said:

He had had the opportunity of examining it, and had done so narrowly. He believed it would insure the purposes designed, and would be for the best interests of the church. It was his firm opinion that this was a proper course for them to pursue, in conformity with the Scriptures and the best analogies they could collect from the ancient churches, as well as from the best organized modern churches. All history did not furnish an example of so large a body of Christians remaining in such close and unbroken connection as the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was now found necessary to separate this large body, for it was becoming unwieldy. He referred to the churches at Antioch, at Alexandria, at Jerusalem, which, though they continued as one, were at least as distinct as the Methodist Episcopal Church would be if the suggested separation took place. The Church of England was one under the archbishops of Canterbury and York, connected and yet distinct. In his own mind it had been for years perfectly clear that to this conclusion they must eventually come. Were the question that now unhappily agitated the body dead and buried, there would be good reason for passing the resolutions contained in that report. As to their representation in the General Conference, one out of twenty was but a meager representation, and to go on as they had done it would soon be one out of thirty. And the body was now too large to do business advantageously. The measure contemplated was not schism, but separation for their mutual convenience and prosperity.<sup>2</sup>

The report of the committee embodying the provisional Plan of Separation was adopted by a majority ranging from 135 to 153 on the several resolutions, against 18 to 13 voting in the negative. This was done on June 8th, and on the second day afterward this epoch-making conference, the last General Conference of the United Methodism of America, adjourned.

The Plan of Separation as conceived and agreed on was honorable to both parties. It was a healing measure, and

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of Conference of 1844," p. 135.

<sup>2</sup> "Debates of General Conference of 1844," p. 219.

a fitting conclusion to the fifteenth General Conference of United Episcopal Methodism, and the last.

From this history it will, we think, be evident to the candid reader that the Southern delegates in 1844 did not contend for slavery. They contended for a separate ecclesiastical organization, in order that, secure from the continual agitation of the slavery question, they might, without interfering with established civil institutions and relations, have the opportunity and privilege of giving the gospel to the slave-owners of the South and their slaves; for whatever excluded them from the former excluded them also from the latter. "It was not for slavery, but for the privilege of saving the slave, that our fathers chiefly contended," said Bishop Galloway, the fraternal delegate to the British Conference in 1892. They could not change the situation. They had to take it as they found it, and deal with it as best they could. They honestly thought that they could best succeed in reaching both slave-owners and slaves by giving them the gospel as they were, without in the least interfering with their civil relations, firmly established, as these were, through long years of usage, sanctioned by the very Constitution of the United States, and guarded by the most rigid State laws. Nay, they believed that they could reach them *in no other way*; but that if they undertook to abolish these relations, or seriously to interfere with them, they would effectually shut themselves out from all access to the slaves or their owners. May they not have refrained from such revolutionary efforts in the spirit of St. Paul, who, we are told, made no interference with slavery in his day and time, because he knew it would array society and the world against his gospel and doom it to defeat and failure? At least, so thought and said the Southern delegates at the General Conference of 1844. *They* saw and

felt and acknowledged the evil and curse of slavery. For example, Dr. Smith, of Virginia, said in the debate on the Harding case :

I say slavery is an evil, because I feel it to be an evil. And who cannot say the same that has trod the soil of the South? It is an evil. The Discipline declares the truth when it says, "We are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery." Yes, we say that slavery is an evil, and that Southern people know and feel it to be an evil. Who knows how the shoe pinches but he who wears it? And who more than we who have been compelled to submit to it to the present moment? So sorely did we in Virginia feel the evils of slavery and groan under them, that, from the debates in 1831 in the Virginia Legislature and the popular sentiment, expressed by pulpit and press, no doubt was entertained that the State was about to adopt immediate measures for its gradual extirpation.<sup>1</sup>

These sentiments of Dr. Smith were heartily responded to by the delegates from the South.<sup>2</sup>

He went on to say :

On the other hand, I should say that while the Discipline deprecates the evil of slavery, it requires the members of the church within the slave States to conform their action to the laws of those States in which they live.

Dr. McFerrin, another of the Southern leaders, said :

I never bought or sold a slave, but those which I had were family servants. I had treated them humanely, and never intended to wrong them in any sense. In my heart I believed slavery to be an evil—more of an evil to the master than to the slave—but under the circumstances, and in view of what the Bible said, I did not believe it to be a sin *per se*.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, then, it was not for slavery that they contended, but for security from molestation in preaching the gospel to slave-owners and to slaves without running the risk of being denied access to both classes by interfering with existing institutions and civil relations. At least, so it appears from the proceedings and debates of 1844.

But it was not for this alone that they contended.

<sup>1</sup> "Debates of 1844," pp. 26, 27.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 44.

<sup>3</sup> "Life of McFerrin," p. 269.

They contended also for the authority of law, for the sanctity of the Constitution, and for the sacredness of the rights of ministers under the Constitution and the law, as the extracts previously quoted from the Protest show. (See page 27 ff.) And yet this is not intended on the part of this writer to imply any criticism of the action of the majority in the case of Bishop Andrew. In the first place, he committed an error in becoming connected with slavery. Not that he offended against the written law, but against the unwritten, higher law of charity, which seeketh not her own, which surrenders her rights rather than be a stumbling-block in the way of others. But, having become entangled with slavery, it became *absolutely necessary* for the General Conference to take some action, and some immediate action in his case, in order to save large portions of the church in the North from disaffection and secession, and perhaps ruin. In the second place, they believed that they were acting in accordance with the Constitution, as their speeches during the debate show. What *could* the General Conference of 1844 do, in view of the circumstances, except what it did? It seems to this writer that they did even more wisely than they knew, in doing what they did. Only if, as good Bishop Morris afterward wrote, "the plan" which the General Conference of 1844 devised and adopted, "had been carried out in good faith and Christian feeling on both sides," all the desirable ends of the division into two jurisdictions would have been met, and "it would scarcely have been felt any more than the division of an Annual Conference."

As to the power of the General Conference to authorize or provide for the separation of a part of the church, there was a distinct precedent in the action of the General Conference of 1820.

The operations of the Methodist Episcopal Church and

of the missionaries of the British Wesleyan Conference extended over the same territory in the provinces of Upper and Lower Canada. Hence there were frequent collisions and much friction. In 1820, on account of many and urgent memorials received from the Canadian societies, the General Conference empowered the bishops "to negotiate with the British Conference respecting Lower Canada in the way and manner they shall see fit," and, if possible, to send a delegate to England for the purpose. The Rev John Emory was appointed, and in their letter of official instructions to him the bishops say :

We are of opinion that the most effectual means to prevent collisions in future will be to establish a specific line by which our field of labor shall be bounded on one side and the British missionaries on the other. With this view you are at liberty to stipulate that our preachers shall confine their labors in Canada to the Upper Province, provided the British missionaries will confine theirs to the Lower.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Emory succeeded in effecting this arrangement with the British Conference, and accordingly Bishop McKendree addressed to the private and official members in Lower Canada a circular letter, dated October 16, 1820 :

It has been agreed that our British brethren shall supply the Lower Provinces and our preachers the Upper. It becomes our duty, therefore, to inform you of this agreement, and to advise you, in the most affectionate and earnest manner, to put yourselves and your chapels under the care of our British brethren, as their societies and chapels in the Upper Province will be put under our care. This communication, we confess, is not made without pain. But necessity is laid upon us. It is a peace-offering. Forgive, therefore, our seeming to give you up.

Accordingly, a committee of three preachers from each connection met at Montreal February 15, 1821, and fixed the time and manner for delivering up the several charges which were to be relinquished on both sides.

Thus the General Conference empowered the bishops

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Emory's "Life of Bishop Emory," pp. 93, 94.

and the bishops empowered Mr. Emory, and Mr. Emory contracted with the British Conference to surrender to that ecclesiastical jurisdiction a portion of the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the contract was faithfully executed. (See Dr. Tigert's "Constitutional History of American Methodism.")

This was arranged for and consummated long before the theory of a "compact" between the Methodists of Canada and the Methodist Episcopal Church was invented. That theory was hit upon to obviate a difficulty which occurred to the delegates of the General Conference of 1828; but in 1820 the difficulty had not been thought of.

It did not occur to Bishop McKendree that there was any violation or disregard of the constitution in the action of the General Conference of 1820 in setting off the charges of Lower Canada and surrendering them to another and a foreign ecclesiastical jurisdiction, though it was done without their request, without their consent, without even consulting them. Indeed Bishop McKendree was the chief agent in effecting the arrangement. And no man in the history of American Methodism understood the constitution of the church and the powers of the General Conference better than William McKendree, or was more conscientiously and consistently jealous than he of any usurpation of the one or infraction of the other.

## CHAPTER III.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

THE General Conference had made provision for the separation of the Southern conferences and their erection into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, on condition that those conferences should find a severance of their jurisdictional connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church necessary. In order to ascertain the view of the Southern conferences on the necessity of separation, the delegates of those conferences thought it advisable to meet together before leaving New York, and hold a consultation. In order to promote uniformity of action in the premises they submitted to the conferences a plan for procuring the judgment of the church in the slaveholding States as to the necessity of organizing a Southern division of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and the best way of effecting such an organization should it be deemed necessary. That plan was to hold a convention at Louisville, Ky., beginning May 1, 1845, and composed of delegates from the Southern conferences in the ratio of one for every eleven members. These conferences were to instruct their delegates to the proposed convention on the points on which action was contemplated, conforming their instructions, as far as possible, to the opinions and wishes of the membership within their several conference bounds. They also issued an address to the ministers and members of the Southern conferences

“conveying authentic information of the provisional Plan of Separation, under which relief in a regular way could be obtained from the Northern jurisdiction, if they judged it necessary.” They counseled moderation and forbearance. They declared that the separation proposed was not schism, as Dr. Elliott also had said in his speech advocating the plan. They declared that they “have clung to the cherished unity of the church with a firmness of purpose and a force of feeling which nothing but invincible necessity could subdue. If, however, nominal unity must coexist with unceasing strife and alienated feeling, what is likely to be gained by its perpetuation? Disposed, however, to defer to the judgment of the church, we leave this subject with you. The plan does not decide that division shall take place, but simply provides that it may, if it be found necessary. Of this necessity you are to be the judges after a careful survey and comparison of all the reasons for and against it. Our first and most direct object has been to bring it fully before you, and, giving you an opportunity to judge and determine for yourselves, await your decision.”

The Kentucky Conference was the first in the Southern division of the church to meet after the adjournment of the General Conference. It convened on September 11, 1844, and adopted, among others, the following resolutions, with but one dissenting voice:

*Resolved*, 1. That it is the deliberate judgment of this conference that the action of the late General Conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew and of the Rev. F. A. Harding, is not sustained by the Discipline of the church, and that we consider those proceedings as constituting a highly dangerous precedent.

2. That we deeply regret the prospect of division growing out of those proceedings.

3. That we approve the holding a convention of delegates in Louisville next May agreeably to the recommendation of the Southern and South-western delegates in the late General Conference.



4. That unless we can be assured that the rights of our ministry and membership can be effectually secured according to the Discipline against future aggressions, and reparation be made for past injury, we shall deem the contemplated division unavoidable.

5. That we approve the course of our delegates in the late General Conference, and tender them our thanks for their faithful and independent discharge of duty in a trying crisis.

6. That we respectfully invite the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church who may feel disposed to do so, to be in attendance at the contemplated convention.

7. That we appoint Friday preceding the day for the meeting of the convention, as a day of fasting and prayer for the blessing of Almighty God on the said convention.

Resolutions to the same effect, and covering the same ground, were passed at the sessions of the Missouri, Holston, Tennessee, Memphis, Mississippi, Arkansas, Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Texas, Alabama, and Indian Mission conferences. The resolutions passed by some of these conferences concerning the unconditional necessity of separation were much stronger than those of the Kentucky Conference, but in other respects they were very similar. Great unanimity prevailed in respect to all the points touched upon in the foregoing resolutions. Indeed, it has been said by one who took part in those proceedings, and who with wide opportunities made a study of this whole history, that "those who will take the trouble to read the utterances of these conferences will find that the history of the world does not offer a parallel to the unanimity of sentiment, thought, and purpose which they exhibited on a subject of such momentous importance. Their course was taken reluctantly, sadly, but firmly, and for the glory of God."<sup>1</sup>

The meeting of the delegates from the Southern conferences in convention at Louisville, in May, 1845, was looked to with great and general interest. It is said that

<sup>1</sup> Myers' "Disruption of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

hundreds of ministers and members attended the convention to witness the progress and result of its deliberations, and the entire church, North and South, awaited with painful solicitude the final issue.

There were between ninety-five and a hundred delegates in attendance from the conferences enumerated above. Bishops Soule, Andrew, and Morris were present, and were requested by the convention to preside in turn, but Bishop Morris declined. Dr. Lovick Pierce was elected temporary president, and opened the convention with a Scripture lesson and hymn, and a "suitable and impressive prayer to the throne of grace." Thomas O. Summers was elected secretary, and Thomas N. Ralston assistant. On the morning of the second day of the convention a notable address was delivered by the venerable Bishop Soule. It will be remembered that he was the Senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. He was from the extreme North. He had been born and reared in Maine, and was, at the time referred to, a citizen of Ohio. It was he who, at the age of twenty-seven, had drafted the constitution of the church. It was he who, on a former occasion, when the constitution was in peril, more than any other man had saved it; and it was he who, though a Northern man and never a pro-slavery man, undertook the defense of the constitution in the great controversy that agitated the General Conference of 1844. He said to the convention:

I rise on the present occasion under the influence of feelings more solemn and impressive than I recollect ever to have experienced before.

I am deeply impressed with a conviction of the important results of your deliberations and decisions in relation to that numerous body of Christians and Christian ministers you here represent and to the country at large. When it is recollected that it is not only for yourselves and the present ministry and membership of the conferences you represent, that you are assembled here, but that millions of the present race and generations yet unborn

may be affected in their most essential interests by the result of your deliberations, it will occur to you how important it is that you should do all things as in the immediate presence of God. The opinion which I formed at the close of the late General Conference, that the proceedings of that body would result in a division of the church, was not induced by the impulse of excitement, but was predicated of principles and facts after the most deliberate and mature consideration. And however deeply I have regretted such result, yet, believing it to be inevitable, my efforts have been made, not to prevent it, but rather that it might be attended with the least injury and the greatest amount of good which the case would admit. I was not alone in this opinion. A number of aged and influential ministers entertained the same views, and, indeed, it is not easy to see how any one acquainted with the facts in the case and the relative position of the North and South could arrive at any other conclusion. Nothing has transpired since the close of the General Conference to change the opinion I then formed, but subsequent events have rather confirmed it. In the Southern conferences which I have attended, I do not recollect that there has been a dissenting voice with respect to the necessity of a separate organization, and although their official acts in deciding the important question have been marked with that clearness and decision which should afford satisfactory evidence that they acted under a solemn conviction of duty to Christ and to the people of their charge, they have been equally distinguished by moderation and candor. For myself, I stand upon the basis of Methodism as contained in the Discipline, and from it I intend never to be removed.

On Monday, May 5th, the following resolution was offered by Dr. Wm. A. Smith and Dr. Lovick Pierce:

*Resolved*, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences in the Southern and Southwestern States in General Convention assembled:

That we cannot sanction the action of the late General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery by remaining under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of that body without deep and lasting injury to the interests of the church and the country; we therefore hereby instruct the committee on organization that, if upon a careful examination of the whole subject they find that there is no reasonable ground to hope that the Northern majority will recede from their position and give some safe guarantee for the future security of our civil and ecclesiastical rights, they report in favor of a separation from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the said General Conference.

After a lengthened discussion of this resolution, extending through nine days, it was, on May 14th, adopted, with one dissenting vote.

On Saturday, May 17th, the report of the committee on organization was taken up and adopted, as follows:

Be it resolved, by the delegates of the several Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding States, in General Convention assembled, that it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the Annual Conferences represented in this convention into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as at present constituted; and accordingly, we, the delegates of said Annual Conferences, acting under the provisional Plan of Separation adopted by the General Conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said Annual Conferences by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, entirely dissolved; and that said Annual Conferences shall be and they hereby are constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection under the provisional Plan of Separation aforesaid and based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and economical rules and regulations of said Discipline, except, only, in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of The Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

This resolution was adopted by a vote of ninety-four yeas against three nays. They appointed the first General Conference to meet on the first day of May, 1846, in the city of Petersburg, Va., and thenceforward in the month of April or May, once in four years, successively

After adopting various other measures appropriate to their circumstances, on May 19th the convention "*Resolved*, That we devoutly acknowledge the superintending providence of God over this convention, and rejoice in the harmony which has prevailed in all its deliberations and decisions," and adjourned; and the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was completed.

In the interval before the General Conference of 1846 the various Annual Conferences, with great unanimity, approved the acts of the Louisville Convention.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE FIRST GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.

THE first General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, assembled by appointment of the Louisville Convention in the Union Street Church in Petersburg, Va., on the first day of May, 1846. There were eighty-seven delegates, from sixteen Annual Conferences. These men came together in this first general representative assembly of their church with solemn impressions of the gravity of their responsibility, on the one hand, and on the other, with a steady confidence in God and the rightness of their course, and high hopes for the future. Among them were such men as the venerable Senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, Joshua Soule, the venerable Lovick Pierce, John B. McFerrin, H. B. Bascom, William Winans, Robert Paine, A. L. P. Green, Jonathan Stamper, John Early, William Capers, George F. Pierce, William M. Wightman, Jefferson Hamilton, Thomas O. Summers, H. H. Kavanaugh, Fountain E. Pitts. Of these, seven afterward became bishops in the church, and every one of them honored the high position.

The conference was called to order by Dr. Winans, of Mississippi, and John Early was elected temporary chairman; for, though Bishop Soule was present, he had not yet formally declared his adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This he did, however, on the

second day of the conference, in the following formal communication :

PETERSBURG, VA., May 2, 1846.

REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN: I consider your body as now organized as the consummation of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in conformity to the Plan of Separation adopted by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1844. The organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, being thus completed in the organization of the General Conference with a constitutional president, the time has arrived when it is proper for me to announce my position. Sustaining no relation to one Annual Conference which I did not sustain to every other, and considering the General Conference as the proper judicatory to which my communication should be made, I have declined making this announcement until the present time; and now, acting with strict regard to the Plan of Separation and under a solemn conviction of duty, I formally declare my adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. And if the conference receive me in my present relation to the church, I am ready to serve them according to the best of my ability. In conclusion, I indulge the joyful assurance that, although separated from our Northern brethren by a distinct conference jurisdiction, we shall never cease to treat them as brethren beloved, and cultivate those principles and affections which constitute the essential unity of the Church of Christ.

JOSHUA SOULE.

From this time, Bishop Soule and Bishop Andrew, who arrived after the opening, presided in turn over the daily sessions of the conference. The organization of the body was effected, the usual committees were appointed, and soon they were launched upon the current of routine General Conference proceedings. These men were not novices in the conduct of a Methodist General Conference. They were old hands at the business, and among them were some of the ablest and most venerable men of the Methodism of America. At this very first session of the General Conference of the church, her representatives, while recognizing that they had a special call to a peculiar and difficult mission work in their own territory, did not fail to cast their glance abroad and to acknowledge their obligation to give the gospel, as far as in them lay, to

unevangelized peoples beyond the pale of Christendom. They strove to follow in the succession of him who said, "The field is the world," of him who declared himself "debtor to Greeks and to barbarians," and of him who said, "The world is my parish." Accordingly, early in the session they took measures for enterprising a mission to China. For the furtherance of this and similar objects, they constituted and organized a permanent Board of Missions.

Educated from of old to know the need and value of church literature, and wishing from the very start to secure independent facilities of their own for furnishing it, they provided for a Book Concern. However, this arrangement gave place to another, better suited to the condition of the church at the time, and this was the appointment of an agent to provide for a supply of books for the church by contracting for such books where they could be obtained on the best terms. He was to cause these books to be kept on hand at Louisville, Richmond, and Charleston, subject to the orders of the itinerant preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. John Early was elected agent. They projected three weekly religious papers, to be published, one in Louisville, one in Richmond, and one in Charleston. They provided for the publication of a Sunday-school journal, and established a "Quarterly Review," of which H. B. Bascom was elected editor. John B. McFerrin was elected editor of the "Nashville Christian Advocate," W. M. Wightman of the "Southern Christian Advocate" at Charleston, with Thomas O. Summers as assistant, and LeRoy M. Lee was elected editor of the "Richmond Christian Advocate."

The committee on episcopacy recommended the election of two additional bishops, and the conference concurred. Bishop Soule and Dr. Lovick Pierce led the conference in

prayer for the divine direction in the selection of their superintendents; and it is not too much to say that the event justified their confidence in the divine guidance. On the second ballot William Capers, of South Carolina, and Robert Paine, of Tennessee, were elected bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The former of these, it will be remembered, was elected by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1828, as their representative to the British Conference, and had discharged his delicate duties with such acceptability and grace as to elicit from that distinguished body resolutions of thanks to the church for sending him, and to himself "for the great ability, Christian spirit, and brotherly kindness with which he had discharged the duties of his honorable mission." In 1840 he had been elected one of the general missionary secretaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But a distinction, higher and nobler than any of these, was the fact that in 1829, after having served long and faithfully as a preacher to and pastor of thousands of slaves in connection with his white congregations, he established missions to the plantation slaves, and was himself appointed superintendent of these missions. At the time of his death there were, as the product of this movement, inaugurated by him, twenty-six mission stations in South Carolina *alone*, on which were employed thirty-two preachers, and the number of church-members at these stations was 11,546.

Dr. Robert Paine was, at the General Conference of 1844, chairman of the general committee on episcopacy, and chairman, as well, of the famous committee of nine who drew up the Plan of Separation. He had been at the time of his election as bishop for sixteen years and still was president of LaGrange College in Alabama. These two tried and honored men, then, were the first choice of



the Southern Church for the high and responsible office of general superintendent. They were consecrated at noon on Thursday, May 14th, in the Washington Street Church. It will not be amiss to quote a short extract from a letter written by Bishop Capers to his wife on that day:

To-day I feel that we are all on the altar together. And oh! have I not felt that the altar sanctifieth the gift? I have only to cast all my care on God, all my multiform unworthiness on his divine goodness and condescension in Christ, and go on. I have so revered the office and work of a bishop, and the bishops themselves, that that very thing embarrasses me. I cannot feel myself a bishop, but, thank God! I feel what is better—an abiding sense of being accepted of him in an humble and sincere devotion of myself without stint to his service.

The General Conference of 1846 made no essential change in the original Discipline. In fact, they declare that the changes made by them were fewer in number and less important than those of any General Conference since 1792. On the subject of slavery the section and rule were left unchanged; only a paragraph was added explaining that the section was understood by the M. E. Church, South, in the sense of the declarations made by the General Conferences of 1836 and 1840. The interests of the slave population received special attention. The report of the committee on missions adopted by the conference has these words: "The duty of giving the gospel to the slave population is binding on all according to their ability, and it is binding on all, as they are severally able, with the same force of indispensable obligation." This report occupies three pages of the conference journal.<sup>1</sup>

Three new conferences, in addition to the original sixteen, were constituted by the General Conference of 1846—the Louisville, the St. Louis, and the Louisiana.

It was ordered that three commissioners be appointed,

<sup>1</sup> See "Journal of the General Conference of 1846," pp. 65-67.

in accordance with the Plan of Separation, to act in concert with commissioners appointed for the Methodist Episcopal Church "concerning our interest in the Book Concern." These commissioners were H. B. Bascom, A. L. P. Green, and S. A. Latta. And "should no settlement be effected before 1848, said commissioners were to have authority to attend the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to settle and adjust all questions involving property or funds which may be pending between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."<sup>1</sup>

Though the Southern conferences had thus consummated their separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church, as provided for in 1844, yet, as they had all along declared, they entertained feelings of the most cordial good-will and brotherly kindness toward their brethren of the Northern conferences, and they neither forgot nor neglected to give practical expression to those feelings in their official capacity as a General Conference. Accordingly, on Saturday, May 23d, it was by a rising and unanimous vote

*Resolved*, That Dr. Lovick Pierce be and is hereby delegated to visit the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to be held in Pittsburgh May, 1848, to tender to that body the Christian regards and fraternal salutations of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The statistics for the year 1846 are as follows:

Traveling preachers .....	1,519
Local preachers .....	2,833
White members .....	327,284
Colored members .....	124,961
Indian members .....	2,972
Total .....	<hr/> 459,569

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1846," p. 97.

St. Louis was selected as the place for the meeting of the General Conference of 1850. "The benediction was solemnly pronounced by the venerable senior superintendent, Bishop Soule," and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was launched upon its providential and useful career.

## CHAPTER V

### OPPOSITION AND FRICTION.

WHILE among the Southern conferences there was a practical unanimity of sentiment and action in favor of the Louisville Convention and in indorsement of its work, it was not so in the North. Though the Plan of Separation had been adopted by an overwhelming majority of the General Conference of 1844, there came afterward a reaction, and some of the men who voted for it and who advocated it, drew back from it when they realized that there was a probability of its being carried into effect. Even before the meeting of the Louisville Convention measures were taken to counteract its influence and forestall its probable conclusion. In particular, the editors of the two leading papers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, one of whom had moved the adoption of the plan and then advocated it in a strong speech, labored to impress the public mind unfavorably with regard to the convention. In the South, however, the question was considered as finally settled, and the general desire was to cultivate peace with the Northern portion of the church. This feeling was reciprocated on the part of many in the North, and expressed by some of the church papers. The editors of the two leading church papers, however, after the convention, became more pronounced and vigorous in their opposition than before, claiming and holding that the Southern organization was a secession if not a schism of the worst sort, that the Louisville Convention

was not held in accordance with the Plan of Separation, that the plan itself was unconstitutional and void. The venerable Bishop Soule was attacked and charged with being the prime agent in the whole movement. This implication and accusation of him in the leading papers led to such a complication and embarrassment in regard to the holding of conferences that it was thought best, in July, 1845, to call a meeting of the bishops to determine what should be done. Bishops Hedding, Waugh, Morris, and Janes were present. It was decided that it would be best for them to form a new plan of episcopal visitation, not including the Southern conferences. In addition to this, they adopted the following resolution governing their own administration:

*Resolved*, That the plan reported by a select committee of nine at the last General Conference, and adopted by that body, in regard to a distinct ecclesiastical connection, should such a course be found necessary by the Annual Conferences in the slaveholding States, is regarded by us as of binding obligation in the premises, so far as our own administration is concerned.

EDMUND S. JANES, *Secretary*.

When this wise, conservative, and just action of the bishops became known, it had a decided influence in quieting matters and in settling the public mind.

These sound and conservative views were ably seconded by men of the highest standing in the Northern Connection. Dr. Bangs and Dr. Olin contended that the faith and honor of the church were deeply concerned in carrying out the Plan of Separation, and thereby greatly endeared themselves to the lovers of peace, both North and South. The church papers, too, with the exceptions mentioned, sanctioned the action of the bishops and took the same honorable ground.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Morris had occasion, on being invited by a

<sup>1</sup> "History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," p. 238.

minority of the Missouri Conference to take charge of them and preside over them in a conference capacity, to write a letter in which he expounds at greater length his views of the Plan of Separation and its operation. The letter is dated Burlington, Ia., September 8, 1845. He closes with these words:

In the meantime there is much more bad feeling indulged in respecting the separation than there is any necessity for. If the Plan of Separation had been carried out in good faith and Christian feeling on both sides, it would scarcely have been felt any more than the division of an Annual Conference. It need not destroy confidence or embarrass the work, if the business be managed in the spirit of Christ. I trust the time is not far distant when the brethren, North and South, will cease their hostilities and betake themselves to their prayers and other appropriate duties in earnest. Then, and not till then, may we expect the Lord to bless us as in former days.

THOS. A. MORRIS.

The conciliatory action of the bishops, however, and the wise and pacific words of Bishop Morris did not put an end to the reaction which was going on in the North. The Annual Conferences, though giving a numerical majority for the change of the Sixth Restrictive Rule, did not give the requisite three-fourths vote, and the rule was not changed. The numbers are as follows:

For changing the rule in the Northern conferences . . . . .	1,164
In the Southern conferences . . . . .	971
Total . . . . .	<hr/> 2,135
Against changing the rule . . . . .	1,070

This, of course, was irritating to the South. The South did and said things that were irritating to the North. The attempts to adjust the difficulties of the border conferences developed a great deal of friction and ill feeling. It was charged that there were infractions of the plan on both sides, and perhaps it was true. It was a time of political agitation, excitement, and animosity preceding and following the annexation of Texas, as a slave State, to the

United States. The culminating point was reached when the General Conference of the M. E. Church in Pittsburg in 1848, by a very large majority, declared the Plan of Separation null and void.

This General Conference also refused to receive Dr. Lovick Pierce in his official relation as fraternal delegate from the M. E. Church, South, though extending to him "all personal courtesies." Their action was as follows:

WHEREAS there are serious questions and difficulties existing between the M. E. Church and the M. E. Church, South,

*Resolved*, That while we tender to Rev. Dr. Pierce all personal courtesies and invite him to attend our sessions, the General Conference does not consider it proper, at present, to enter into fraternal relations with the M. E. Church, South.

The commissioners of the Southern Church, appointed to confer with the authorities of the M. E. Church concerning the adjustment of all matters pertaining to the division of the church property and funds, were present at the General Conference of 1848, and reported themselves ready for negotiations. The conference replied that they had no authority independently of the Annual Conference to enter into arbitration with the commissioners of the M. E. Church, South, in relation to the claims set up by them to a division of the vested funds of the M. E. Church.

As to the rejection of the fraternal delegate of the M. E. Church, South, at Pittsburg, in 1848, it may be said that the General Conference at Brooklyn in 1872 practically reversed that by their action in appointing fraternal delegates to the Southern General Conference at Louisville in 1874. Before leaving the city of Pittsburg in 1848, the rejected Southern delegate sent a communication to the General Conference of the M. E. Church, saying:

The M. E. Church, South, can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States;

but the proposition can be renewed at any time, either now or hereafter, by the M. E. Church, and if ever made *upon the basis of the Plan of Separation* as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the Church, South, will cordially entertain the proposition.

This action of their delegate was approved by the General Conference of the Southern Church in 1850 in an explicit and emphatic resolution.

The General Conference of the M. E. Church in May, 1872, after various preliminary communications and negotiations, appointed a delegation of two distinguished ministers and one distinguished layman to convey their "fraternal greetings to the General Conference of the M. E. Church, South," to convene in May, 1874, and they were "received with pleasure."

It may be said that the Methodist Episcopal Church implicitly nullified their nullification of the Plan of Separation by sending fraternal delegates after the declaration contained in the final communication of the rejected Southern delegate in 1848, as well as by the declarations of the Cape May Commission in August, 1876.

As has been said, the General Conference of the M. E. Church in 1848 replied to the Commissioners of the Southern Church that they had no power to authorize or negotiate a division of the property with the Southern Church, without the concurrent vote of the Annual Conferences. This the Annual Conferences had refused to give. The General Conference proposed, however, to submit once more to the Annual Conferences a recommendation to change the Sixth Restrictive Rule so as to allow the claim of the Southern Church to be submitted to arbitration. The commissioners of the Southern Church saw no reason to believe that the same Annual Conferences that had once refused to change the Restrictive Rule in their favor, would do so now. Indeed, it was practically certain that, if *with*



the vote of the Southern Conferences, as in the former case,<sup>1</sup> the resulting vote was against changing the Restrictive Rule, it would be much more so *without* them. Believing in the justice of their claim, and, still more, desiring a judicial and moral vindication, they entered suit in 1849, in the United States Circuit Courts of New York and Ohio, for the recovery of their *pro rata* portion of the property in the cities of New York and Cincinnati. It is a sad history, but history it is.

<sup>1</sup> See p. 53.

## CHAPTER VI.

### SECOND GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH.

THE second General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, was held in the year 1850, in Centenary Church, in the city of St. Louis. It had been a stormy quadrennium. The church had, nevertheless, passed through it without suffering serious damage or discouragement. To be sure, it was a matter of unceasing regret that they had not been able to live on terms of Christian and fraternal communion with the other portion of the great M. E. Church of which they had once been a part. They labored under the double disadvantage of separation from the fellowship of their former brethren and proscription by them, and of exclusion from participation in the material resources which through half a century and more their united efforts, gifts, and sacrifices had gathered together. But they had not labored altogether in vain. There had been an increase of 48,236 white and 10,633 colored members. They had now a total membership of over half a million, or, in exact figures, 520,256; an increase of 60,685 during the quadrennium.

The address of the bishops calls attention to the state and needs of the church, to the trials and tribulations of the past four years, and to the work already accomplished, as well as to the expanding opportunities and increasing responsibilities of the church for the time to come.

In 1848, two missionaries had been appointed and sent

out by the bishops to China—Rev. Benjamin Jenkins and Rev. Charles Taylor, M.D., both of the South Carolina Conference. They had begun their work in the great city of Shanghai. They had purchased a lot and erected missionary residences and a church in that city, and were preaching the gospel.

The work of the church among the Indians had been annually enlarging in extent and increasing in interest. The number of Indian members had increased from 2972 in 1846 to 3487 in 1850.

The missions to the slave population of the Southern plantations continued, in a very eminent degree, to share the sympathies of the church and the blessing of God. The Southern Church recognized this as their special mission. To it they felt themselves especially called, and they felt and confessed that “woe would be to the church, if they neglected it.” As the result of their efforts among this “servile progeny of Ham,” they had added nearly 11,000 of them to the roll of the sons of God.

In 1848, California was ceded to the United States, and soon afterward followed the discovery of gold in that distant and unknown territory. The excitement produced throughout the country by this event was intense, and thousands of people from all quarters flocked thither to find their fortune in that favored land. It was filling up with a rapidity perhaps unequaled in the history of the world. The bishops of the Southern Church, feeling that they shared in the responsibility of leavening this mass of humanity with the gospel, and urged by Southern emigrants to California, judged it their “duty to send missionaries to unfurl their banner in that distant and interesting portion of the great republic.” Accordingly, they appointed Rev. Dr. Boring and Rev. A. M. Wynn, of

Georgia, and Rev. W. D. Pollock, of St. Louis, as missionaries to California. They sailed for San Francisco by way of Panama in February, 1850, well supplied with standard Methodist literature, Sunday-school publications, and copies of the Bible, furnished by the American Bible Society. "Their progress exceeded their own expectations." Circuits were formed and members enrolled and classed, and though, in the absence of pastors, much of the work projected fell through, by and by "the church moved up to this sudden demand, and California was supplied with preachers as well as gold-diggers."

The commissioners, appointed to negotiate with the authorities of the M. E. Church concerning the division of the property, reported to the General Conference of 1850 the action of the General Conference of the M. E. Church at Pittsburg in the premises, and their own subsequent application to the civil courts for the adjustment of the claim, and were instructed to prosecute the claim until the final decision of the Supreme Court of the United States was rendered in the suits then pending. In the suit brought in New York the case was argued by D. Lord and Reverdy Johnson for the claimants, and by the able and distinguished Rufus Choate, G. Wood, and E. L. Fancher, afterward a Cape May commissioner, for the defendants. The opinion of the court was delivered on November 11, 1851, and was in favor of the claimants on every material point. The suit in Ohio to recover their interest in the property at Cincinnati, was decided adversely to the Church, South, in July, 1852. The text of this decision is quoted in full in Curtiss's "Manual of Methodist Episcopal Church History," pp. 201, 202. The commissioners of the Church, South, appealed from the decision of the Court in Ohio to the Supreme Court of the United States, and the judgment of the Ohio Court

was reversed by the unanimous decision of the highest tribunal in the land, in April, 1854.

The journals of the General Conferences of 1844, 1846, 1848, and of the Louisville Convention of 1845 were before the court. The Discipline figured largely before Cæsar, and great lawyers, prompted by Bangs and Peck on the one side, and by Smith and Green on the other, made themselves minutely acquainted with the genius and details of Episcopal Methodist government. They had a patient hearing before a bench renowned in jurisprudence and accustomed to construe contracts.<sup>1</sup>

Henry B. Bascom was elected bishop at the General Conference of 1850, and David S. Doggett was elected editor of the "Quarterly Review." It was upon the occasion of his own ordination that he delivered his memorable sermon on "Glorying in the Cross" (Gal. vi. 14). He lived, however, to hold only one Annual Conference, the St. Louis, at Independence, Mo., July, 1850. He died in September of the same year, at Louisville, Ky.

The career of Henry B. Bascom as preacher, educator, and author was brilliant; and as bishop, brief. The son of poor parents, his heritage was toil and privation. His school advantages ended in his twelfth year, and he was making pumps for a living at fifteen. At the age of seventeen he was admitted into the traveling connection in Ohio. Hard circuits were his portion and probation for a long time, yet no pulpit orator in his day had an equal fame. He preached at the General Conference of 1840, and one who was present describes the sermon thus:

"He preached in the Light Street Church to as dense a throng as could crowd into the spacious building, while the adjoining street was filled with people who could not find entrance. His text was, 'Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.' The sermon embraced all the cardinal elements of the Christian system, set forth in a light so vivid, under illustrations so magnificent, and with a vehemence so rushing and pauseless, as to hold the vast audience spellbound. At particular passages, several of which we distinctly remember, the effect was awful. The sentences came like the sharp zigzag lightning; the tones of the preacher's voice were like articulate thunder. The hearer cowered under the weight of thought piled on thought, and was driven almost beside himself by the rapid whirl of dazzling imagery. The audience was bewildered by the quick succession of vivid pictures thrown off as by the turn of a grand kaleidoscope."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire's "History," p. 648.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. W. M. Wightman, in "Southern Christian Advocate."

But it was a popular error that his superiority lay in speaking only. His ecclesiastical state papers are of the very first rank. He wrote the Protest in the General Conference of 1844, and he wrote other papers which are models of mental grasp and perspicuity and force.

His devotion to his father in sickness and poverty was beautiful. He cut and hauled wood from the forest for the use of the household, and, to make himself a wakeful nurse, he slept on a bench with a block of wood for his pillow. After holding the St. Louis Conference he returned to St. Louis and preached on Sunday, greatly exhausting himself, and soon after, he died, with this testimony: "All my trust and confidence is in Almighty Goodness as revealed in the cross of Christ."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire's "History."

## CHAPTER VII.

### THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERAL CONFERENCES OF THE M. E. CHURCH, SOUTH.

THE third General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, was held at Columbus, Ga., in May, 1854. There were one hundred and nineteen delegates in attendance, and among them we notice for the first time the names of some who were afterward to become distinguished in the history of the church: E. M. Marvin, H. N. McTyeire, and John C. Keener, as bishops, and Dr. E. E. Wiley, as the president of Emory and Henry College. Among the delegates we note also for the second time the name of Charles F. Deems, who afterward, in 1866, became the distinguished pastor of the Church of the Strangers in New York City, and so remained until his death.

Notwithstanding the unfortunate litigation of the period and the sorrowful and bitter newspaper controversies that attended it, the rank and file of the ministry and membership of the church had given themselves to their proper work, and the blessing of the Lord of the vineyard had attended their efforts. There was a very considerable and, in view of the state of the church and country, a very gratifying increase in the membership. The following figures will show the comparative membership of 1850 and 1854:

	Traveling preachers.	Local preachers.	White members.	Colored members.	Indian members.	Total.
1850.	1,700	3,955	375,520	135,594	3,487	520,256
1854.	2,092	4,359	428,501	164,584	3,757	603,303

The total increase of the quadrennium was 83,047.

The commissioners who were charged with the property question between the Northern and Southern churches, reported at the conference of 1854, that the suits had been decided in favor of the M. E. Church, South. The church was now in a position to establish a publishing-house of its own, which accordingly was done by the General Conference of 1854. Louisville, Memphis, Atlanta, St. Louis, Richmond, and Columbus were voted for on the first three or four ballots, but on the sixth ballot Nashville received 60 out of 117 votes, and was selected, while Louisville received 57. This establishment was for the purpose of manufacturing and publishing books, and was to be under the control of two agents and a book committee. The object of the institution was to advance the cause of Christianity by disseminating religious knowledge and useful literary and scientific information in cheap books, tracts, and periodicals. The agents were authorized to invest as much as \$75,000 in grounds, house, and fixtures. Rev. Edward Stevenson and Rev. F. A. Owen were elected the first agents of the house.

The membership in the State of Arkansas had increased so as to justify a new conference, which was provided for by the General Conference of 1854. It was organized by Bishop Kavanaugh at Washington, Ark., in November of the same year. The Kansas Mission Conference was also provided for by the General Conference of 1854, and was to include Kansas Territory and part of the Territory of New Mexico.

It will be remembered that a few months after his elevation to the episcopacy, Bishop Bascom had died. Bishop Soule was now seventy-three years of age, and in very feeble health. Bishop Andrew and Bishop Capers, coming from the previous century, were also men well advanced in years, and worn with long, laborious, and exhausting



toil. The remaining superintendent, Bishop Paine, was in the prime of a robust and vigorous manhood, but he needed relief and assistance in the widening range of episcopal responsibility and duty. It was decided to strengthen the episcopacy by the addition of three bishops. The choice of the conference fell on George F. Pierce, of Georgia, John Early, of Virginia, and Hubbard H. Kavanaugh, of Kentucky. And they were ordained in the Methodist Church in Columbus, Ga., on Wednesday, May 24, 1854.

The General Conference of 1858 was opened on the first day of May, in the hall of the House of Representatives, in the capitol, at Nashville, Tenn. The publishing-house, which was projected by the General Conference of 1854 and located at Nashville, had been completed and was in operation. This fact determined the future rank and destiny of Nashville as the ecclesiastical center of Southern Methodism. It was right and proper that the General Conference should now convene in the city which their choice had selected as the base of their supplies and the headquarters of their ecclesiastical operations. Accordingly, toward the end of April, 1858, from all quarters of the South, by steamboat and railroad and stage-coach, the delegates came up to the great quadrennial representative convocation. There were present one hundred and fifty-one duly accredited members—only twenty-nine less than the full number of delegates at the last and largest General Conference of the undivided church in 1844, and twenty-one more than were present at the preceding and next largest General Conference of the undivided church in 1840.

Six of the seven bishops who signed the journal of the Conference of 1854 were present: Joshua Soule, J. O. Andrew, R. Paine, G. F. Pierce, John Early, H. H. Kavanaugh. The saintly Capers, after a life of singular purity,

fidelity, and usefulness, had finished his course with joy, had laid his armor by, and had gone to join the general assembly and church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven; and his name, disappearing from the rolls and journals of the church on earth, was written with theirs on high. The memory of his self-sacrificing devotion to the good of men, poor and rich, black and white, is like ointment poured forth through all the Southern church and land.

The address of the bishops reminds the assembled representatives of the church that "the work of God has greatly prospered and enlarged within our bounds. God has done great things for us and by us. The retrospect of the last four years is full of instruction and encouragement; and yet how much more might have been accomplished had we been faithful to the grace of God received, and zealous in diffusing that grace abroad."

While the usual and due prominence was given to the missionary work among the slaves of the Southern plantations, which the address of the bishops declares to be "the crowning glory of our church," the attention of the church was called to the outlying regions, and measures were adopted to extend its operations in as many ways and directions as possible. The General Conference at this session provided for the organization of the Rio Grande Mission Conference, and recommended to the bishops the establishment of a mission in Central America at the earliest practicable day, and by resolution requested the bishops and the board of missions, in the event of providential indications, "to proceed at once to organize a mission at such a point in Africa as they shall judge most expedient."

And yet, while laying their plans for more extended and efficient missionary operations among the slaves of

the South and for founding a mission among the benighted blacks

Where Afric's sunny fountains  
Roll down their golden sands,

thus manifesting a peculiar and special interest in this race, whom at least they *knew* better than others, this General Conference adopted a measure which at first sight will seem utterly enigmatical and contradictory. On May 19th, after a good deal of discussion, a resolution was adopted, by a majority of a hundred and forty-one to seven, to the effect that the rule on the subject of slavery be expunged from the general rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and the bishops were instructed to lay the resolution before the Annual Conferences for their concurrent action. Those who passed this measure may give their own reasons for it:

The Southern Church has avowed as their settled belief and sentiment that slavery is not a subject of ecclesiastical legislation. It is not the province of the church to deal with civil institutions in her legislative capacity. This is our position. The primary single object of this action is to conform the Discipline to that profession. In the Twenty-third Article of Religion in our Book of Discipline we recognize the Constitution and Government of the United States, and obedience to them as a religious duty, and pledge ourselves, in our very profession of faith, to fidelity to the country and her authority. We claim to be loyal citizens. We have only set ourselves right on the question that has so long troubled the church. The legislation in reference to it was contradictory and absurd. While denouncing slavery as an evil and pledging the church to its extirpation, it provided by statute for its allowance and perpetuation. We have surrendered to Cæsar the things that are Cæsar's, and, holding ourselves to be debtors to the wise and the unwise, the bond and the free, we can now preach Christ alike to the master and the servant, secure in the confidence and affection of the one and the other. The benign spirit of our holy religion not only demands that masters should render to their servants that which is just and equal as to food, raiment, and shelter, but that religious instruction should be provided alike for servants as for children. The gospel is God's gift to the black man as well as to the white, and Christian masters should see to it that all their dependents are regularly supplied with the preaching of the Word and all the privileges of the Church of God. The salvation of the colored race in our midst,

as far as human instrumentality can secure it, is the primary duty of the Southern Church. Let us earnestly seek to meet our responsibilities, and then, whatever evil thing may be said of us, we shall have the testimony of a good conscience and the blessing of Him who is judge of all.<sup>1</sup>

It does seem that this action deserves at least the credit of consistency. The only consistent alternative was to refuse to receive slaveholders into the church at all, and to exclude those that were already in. If the Methodist Church had adopted this rule in the beginning, all the conflict and strife on this subject might have been avoided, though it may be questioned whether its influence and work and usefulness would have been as extensive. Indeed, it is practically certain that, in that case, the Methodist Church would have had very little success in the South.

At the General Conference of 1858 Bishop Paine reported that the manuscript of his "*Life and Times of Bishop McKendree*" was ready for publication. The church now has this memorable production in enduring form. And though Bishop McKendree was second only to Asbury in his influence on American Methodism, North and South, if indeed he was second to him, yet as he was a son of the South it was fitting that a son of the South should write his biography. The book is worthy of its subject; and it is declared by those competent to judge, to be, incidentally, the best extant history of the origin and growth of the constitution of American Episcopal Methodism.

Much attention was given to the new publishing-house by the General Conference of 1858, and that man of resources, tact, and uncommon sense, John B. McFerrin, was put at its head as agent for the next quadrennium, with R. Abbey as financial secretary.

The report of the committee on education was an interesting document. It contained an exhaustive list of the

<sup>1</sup> "*Journal of the General Conference of 1858*," pp. 461, 584.

colleges and schools under the patronage of the church. As long ago as 1858 a charter was obtained from the legislature of Tennessee for the Central University of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. This university, however, never came into existence. In two short years after this the country was filled with rumors of war, and the best laid plans of the Southern Methodist Church for establishing missions in Central America and in Africa and for founding a great university came to naught.

The growth of the church for the preceding four years is shown by the following figures:

	Traveling preachers.	Local preachers.	White members.	Colored members.	Indian members.	Total.
1854.	2,092	4,359	428,511	164,584	3,757	603,303
1858.	2,577	4,984	499,694	188,036	3,874	699,165

showing a total increase of 95,862.

The next tabulation will show a suggestive and sorrowful decrease.

Thomas O. Summers was elected editor of the "Quarterly Review." L. D. Huston was elected editor of "The Home Circle." H. N. McTyeire was elected editor of the "Nashville Christian Advocate" in the place of J. B. McFerrin; and the career of O. P. Fitzgerald as an editor began at the General Conference of 1858. He was elected editor of the "Pacific Methodist" by "a rising and unanimous vote." E. W. Sehon was elected missionary secretary.

New Orleans was selected as the place for the meeting of the General Conference of 1862. Little did the delegates dream of the events and changes that were to take place in the interval—that the whole country would be convulsed with civil war, and that in the very month before they were to meet in New Orleans that city would be occupied by an invading, hostile army.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### SOME GLIMPSES OF THE WAR PERIOD.

THE statistical returns for the year 1860 show that up to the outbreak of the war the Southern Church kept on the even tenor of its way, extending its operations and increasing its membership from all classes of its population, whites, blacks, and Indians. In that year she had enrolled 537,136 white members, an increase of 37,442 over the year 1858; 207,776 colored members, an increase of 19,740 over the year 1858; and 4160 Indian members, an increase of 286 over 1858. The total membership of the church in 1860 was over three quarters of a million, or, in exact figures, 757,205, a total increase of 56,040 in the two preceding years.

All the interests of the church were in a flourishing condition. The Publishing House, under the efficient management of John B. McFerrin, had developed a large business, and continued to prosper up to the time when the Federal army entered Nashville in 1862. It was then taken by the military and used for a United States printing-office and other purposes. Much of the stock and material was used up, and the machinery greatly damaged.

In the matter of education, the statistics show that up to the beginning of the war the Southern Church had multiplied, with commendable zeal, her schools and colleges for both sexes over the vast extent of her territory, from ocean to ocean and from the Ohio to the Gulf, in whose halls her youth were regularly receiving the benefits of scholastic training, entering and returning in perpetual

succession. In 1858 she had in successful operation 106 schools and colleges.

But during the war, professors, teachers, and students were withdrawn from the seats of learning, their halls were vacated, schools were deserted, text-books and apparatus were abandoned, college endowments were swept away, patrons were impoverished. Hundreds of schools as well as churches were burned or dismantled by use as hospitals, warehouses, or stables. The ghastly devastations left in the track of invading armies, the horrors of two thousand battles,<sup>1</sup> the portentous rumors and the agonizing anxieties that are incident to war—these were the portion of the South through four long and sorrowful years. And yet in the midst of these scenes and these sorrows the preachers of the Southern Methodist Church, as a rule, continued faithful to their holy calling and their heaven-appointed work. They filled their appointments much as of old. They preached, they exhorted, they prayed, they held protracted meetings, they attended, with some exceptions, their Annual Conferences. And during those trying years gracious revivals of religion among the people attested how the divine presence was still in their midst.<sup>2</sup> Not among the people only, but in many places among the soldiers of the Lost Cause, the gospel was faithfully preached, and the Lord confirmed it with signs following.

The writer will be excused for introducing here some perhaps lengthy extracts from the war diary of a chaplain in the Confederate army. They are interesting, as well for the vivid pictures of war times and war scenes drawn by an eye-witness, as for the account of the remarkable work of grace among the soldiers, which they contain. And that chaplain was John B. McFerrin.

<sup>1</sup> Official reports of Surgeon-General Barnes give 2110.

<sup>2</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1866," pp. 16, ff.

When the Federal army occupied Middle Tennessee in 1862, I took my family south of the lines and stopped at Cornersville, Tenn., leaving house and furniture in the hands of others. A little later I went to Atlanta, Ga., to meet the bishops and the Board of Missions. While there I was cut off from my family. It was a sad and sorrowful day. I was in Georgia, my wife and children away from their home in Tennessee. We were ignorant of each other's whereabouts or condition. General Bragg's raid into Kentucky drew the Federal army out of Middle Tennessee, and I returned to Cornersville, where the Tennessee Conference was to be held on the 15th of October, 1862. No bishop being present, I was elected president of the conference, and conducted the business to the end. The attendance was tolerably full, though some of the brethren were too far north to reach the place. At a meeting of the bishops and Missionary Board, April, 1863, at Macon, Ga., it was determined to send missionaries to the Confederate army. I was appointed in charge of all the Methodist missionary work in the Army of the Tennessee. I entered immediately on my work in the army, and as fast as I could, I engaged as many preachers as I thought the Missionary Society could sustain. I began my work in Shelbyville. I was hailed with pleasure by the officers and soldiers. For some time I remained about Shelbyville and the adjoining neighborhoods, preaching day and night. A great work of grace had commenced in many of the commands, and the chaplains and preachers in the neighborhood were actively engaged in the precious revival that was springing up in almost every direction. On May 17, 1863, 10 A.M., I preached in the Presbyterian Church: house crowded with officers and soldiers; serious attention. At three o'clock, I preached in Bates' brigade: a very good time; revival in the brigade. May 19th, I preached in B. Johnson's brigade: thirty to forty mourners; glorious work in this command. May 20th, I preached in General Polk's brigade: many mourners; several conversions. May 21st, I preached in General Wood's brigade: forty to fifty mourners; fifteen or twenty conversions. May 22d, I spoke in General Riddle's brigade: a great work here; already more than one hundred conversions in this command. So the work went on. But in June I was taken sick, and remained unfit for work till August, when I joined the army again at Chattanooga, and on August 14th preached in General Wright's brigade. There were five conversions that night, among them a captain. From this till September 19th I was constantly engaged in preaching, visiting, and holding prayer-meetings in various parts of the army, and many precious souls were converted during this revival. On September 19th and 20th the great battle was fought at Chickamauga, fifteen miles from Chattanooga. The slaughter was tremendous on both sides, but the Confederates held the field. I remained on the battlefield eleven days, nursing the sick, ministering to the wounded, and praying for the dying. The sight was awful. Thousands of men killed and wounded. They lay thick all around, shot in every possible manner, and the wounded dying every day. Among the wounded were many Federal soldiers. To these I ministered, prayed with them, and



wrote letters by flag of truce to their friends in the North. They seemed to appreciate every act of kindness.

The Federals occupied Chattanooga, and for weeks the two armies were in full view of each other. All along the foot of Missionary Ridge we preached almost every night to crowded assemblies, and many precious souls were brought to God. After the battle of Missionary Ridge the Confederate army retreated and went into winter quarters at Dalton, Ga. During these many months the chaplains and missionaries were at work—preaching, visiting the sick, and distributing Bibles, tracts, and religious newspapers. There was preaching in Dalton every night but four, for four months; and in the camps all around the city preaching and prayer-meetings occurred every night. The soldiers erected stands, improvised seats, and even built log churches, where they worshiped God in spirit and in truth. The result was that thousands were happily converted and were prepared for the future that awaited them. Officers and men alike were brought under religious influence. In all my life, perhaps, I never witnessed more displays of God's power in the awakening and conversion of sinners than in these protracted meetings during the winter and spring of 1863-64. The preachers of the various denominations were alike zealous; our army ministerial associations were pleasant, and at our meetings we had precious seasons of joy and rejoicing while recounting the victories of the cross. In May, 1864, I left the army and went to Montgomery, Ala., to meet the bishops and the Board of Missions. All resolved to maintain the work of religion in the army. Hearing that the armies had commenced hostilities near Dalton, I left on the first train for the place of conflict, and resumed my work among the soldiers. At Atlanta a gentleman gave me a bolt of blue linen. I had a suit made of it for the warm weather. It was pleasant, but attracted much attention. When General Johnston evacuated Atlanta, he was relieved of his command and General Hood made chief commander. He at once resolved to march into Middle Tennessee, and so cut off the supplies of the Federal army in Georgia. During all this marching and fighting we kept up religious services wherever it was possible to collect the men together. From May to September the army was in motion, and I might say every foot of ground was contested. Thousands were slain in battle or died of sickness. I visited the hospitals, and preached, with the missionaries and chaplains, wherever it was possible to do so. At Tuscumbia and Florence for two weeks we had refreshing seasons. Large congregations assembled in the churches and in camp, many souls were converted, and Christians were made to rejoice. This seemed a preparation for the disasters that followed. The army moved on to Franklin, Tenn., where occurred the most bloody battle of the war in proportion to the numbers engaged. The fight began late in the afternoon of November 30th, and continued till a late hour in the night. The slaughter was terrible on both sides. The Federals were strongly fortified, and the Confederates fought in an open field. They charged the breastworks several times, and hundreds were shot down while the muzzles of their muskets rested

on the head-logs of the fortifications. By sunrise next morning I was passing through the heaps of slain soldiers, having spent the night at the field-hospital. Such a scene I never before looked upon. I had witnessed more extensive battles, but here the dead lay in heaps. The sight was sickening, heart-rending, horrible, awful. Never before had I been so fully impressed with the cruelty of war, notwithstanding I had witnessed many bloody fights. On the 7th of December my wife ran the blockade and met me at the house of her cousin, near Nashville. It was a joyful meeting, after a separation of fourteen long months. I asked for the children, but could not see them. When I told my wife where I had been, what I had done, what good meetings we had had, how I waited on the sick and ministered to the well, she rose to her feet and said, "Husband, stay with them to the last!"

On December 15th and 16th the battle around Nashville was fought. Hood's ranks were broken, and he retreated toward Franklin. The ground had been covered with snow and ice for several days. Then came a heavy rain; the snow and ice were melting, and the poor soldiers—many of them barefooted, or nearly so—moved back with bleeding feet and aching hearts. They had expected, when they left Georgia, to regain their homes and see their friends; but now it was all over, and their spirits sank within them. Again I turned my back on home, and with downcast spirits accompanied the retreating army, in the rain, in the snow, over swollen streams and roads almost impassable. During this retreat I preached whenever practicable, especially at Columbus, Miss., and Augusta, Ga., where I was engaged in visiting the hospitals also.

After the surrender of Lee and Johnston I returned to Nashville, reaching there late at night, May 20, 1865. My house had been burned, and my family and myself went to her brother's and began life anew. Horses gone, cattle gone, fences gone, timber gone, money gone, servants gone—the outlook was unpromising. Nothing daunted, however, we went to work to make a living.

October came. The Tennessee Conference, which had not convened for two years, met in Nashville, at Tulip Street, and the bishop read me out as Book Agent.<sup>1</sup>

The work of another of these army chaplains is worthy a place in these pages. He was connected with the army that operated in Arkansas and the West. The work done by him and under his direction is one of the lights that relieve the dark picture of the horrors of war. "Under the faithful ministry of gospel truth by him and other faithful chaplains and missionaries," says one who was

<sup>1</sup> Fitzgerald's "Life of McFerrin," pp. 269, ff.

upon the field, "very extensive revivals of religion occurred in the army, especially during the winter encampment in Arkansas, 1863-64. At Little Rock, Camden, Camp Bragg, and Three Creeks, revivals continued for months. I kept an estimate for two years of the number of conversions, and in the two years they amounted to more than two thousand." Says another, who was associated in the work:

The writer [Rev. Horace Jewell] was a chaplain in one of the Arkansas regiments, and was intimately associated with Brother Marvin in his labors for the spiritual welfare of the soldiers. I suppose that some of the finest efforts of his life were sermons preached to the soldiers in the camps. I have no doubt that he was instrumental in the conversion of hundreds. Not only was he successful in his personal ministry, but he was able to inaugurate measures that assisted others in working for the cause of Christ. He directed their labors and energies to successful results. For the ends of association and organization he called together a meeting of chaplains and other ministers, representing Methodists, Baptists, and Presbyterians, and organized a regular Army Church. The vast amount of good accomplished by it can only be fully known in eternity.

The following is a copy of the plan of organization:

#### ARTICLES OF FAITH.

The Christian men of the army, believing that the habitation of God by his Spirit constitutes the church, agree, for their edification and for the conversion of their fellowmen, to organize the Church of the Army, with the following Articles of Faith and Constitution:

ARTICLE I. We believe the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments to be the Word of God, the only rule of faith and obedience.

ART. II. We believe in one God, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, the same in substance, equal in power and glory.

ART. III. We believe in the fall in Adam, the redemption by Christ, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.

ART. IV. We believe in justification by faith alone, and therefore receive and rest upon Christ alone as our only hope.

ART. V. We believe in the communion of saints and the doctrine of eternal rewards and punishments.

#### CONSTITUTION.

The Christian men who have been baptized, adopting these "Articles of Faith" in each regiment, shall constitute one church, who shall choose ten

officers to take the spiritual oversight of the same. Of the officers so selected, the chaplain, or one selected by themselves, shall act as moderator. The officers will meet once a month, or oftener, if necessary, and in the exercise of discipline will be governed by the teachings of Christ. They will keep a record of the names of the members, and the manner in which their connection with the church is dissolved.

One of the associated chaplains has this to say, long after the war:

Soon after the organization of these army churches in the various regiments, we were visited by a gracious revival, in which hundreds were converted and gathered into these army churches. My position as a presiding elder on two large districts since the war has given me large opportunity to compare the results of the work in this organization. My conviction is that a much larger percent. of the converts in these army churches have remained faithful than is usual in our ordinary revival meetings.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. B. T. Kavanaugh, writing of the results of this work among the soldiers, says:

After the close of the war, when the men were discharged and had returned home, I was traveling through Texas, and put up for the night at the house of a Christian widow lady. I was telling her of our Army Church and of its happy influence on our soldiers, when she replied with a smile and said, "Yes, sir; I have heard of it before, greatly to my delight; for I had two sons in the army, and they have both returned to me converted, Christian men." I have met with others who dated their Christian experience back to their service in the army.

These are examples—exceptional examples, it is true—of the work done by Southern Methodist preachers among the soldiers during the war.

On April 9, 1865, General Lee surrendered to General Grant at Appomattox in Virginia; on April 26th General Johnston surrendered to General Sherman at Greensboro, N. C. The South was conquered and the war was ended. The soldiers of the Northern armies returned to homes of comfort and a land of comparative plenty amid the rejoicings of millions. It was otherwise in the South.

<sup>1</sup> Finney's "Life of Bishop Marvin," pp. 378, 379.

Everywhere were desolation and destitution, and, for a moment, the pall of despair. Homes and houses had been destroyed. Plantations and farms had been laid waste. Fences had been burned. The live stock had been used up by the Confederates or confiscated by the Federals, and those were considered fortunate who had, at the close of the war, a solitary mule, an abandoned army horse, or a single milk cow. Mills were destroyed. Implements of industry were gone. Provisions and clothing had been exhausted, and large districts were on the verge of famine. Soldiers returned to their homes to find them in ruins and their loved ones in want. Women received back, with tears of rejoicing, husbands and brothers, fathers and sons, but they received them barefooted and in rags. Added to their difficulties and destitution were the exactions and oppressions of the rapacious adventurers, who, as agents of reconstruction, came down on the South like wolves on the fold.

The Southern people had lost their cause, for which let us unceasingly thank God; and they had lost their all. But they had not lost heart or hope or manhood or self-respect or courage, for which also let us thank God. After a breathing-spell they arose to meet the problems of their new situation, and to undertake the task of recuperation with a calmness, a courage, and a good-will which have been the admiration of the world.

The Southern Methodist Church shared all the disasters of the scene of war, and all the difficulties and embarrassments of the situation at its close. When in 1865 she called her rolls, though the church still lived many of her sons were dead or missing. She had suffered a threefold decimation in those terrible years from '61 to '65. Her ministers, as already noted, continued, straight on through the war, to preach the gospel to the people at home and

the soldiers on the field, to the whites and to the blacks, to the poor and to the—poorer; but the regular operations of the church machinery were much interfered with. The Annual Conferences, as a rule, were held, but with diminished numbers, and often without the presence of a bishop.

When the time approached for the General Conference of 1862, appointed to meet in New Orleans, though delegates had been elected by all the Annual Conferences, yet it was thought impracticable to attempt the holding of a General Conference at that time and place. Contrary to the expectations and calculations of the General Conference of 1858, Admiral Farragut and General Butler had anticipated them in the occupancy of New Orleans, in April, 1862; and it was not entirely certain that General Butler would hospitably receive the General Conference or facilitate its proceedings. It therefore lapsed.

In August, 1865, after a short season for review and reflection, the bishops of the church held a meeting in Columbus, Ga., and issued a "Pastoral Address to the Preachers and Members of the Church." They reviewed the past few years and the present situation.

It was like the blast of a trumpet, and gave no uncertain sound:

"The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, still lived, and in all its polity and principles was unchanged. Neither disintegration nor absorption was for a moment to be thought of, all rumors to the contrary notwithstanding. Whatever banner had fallen or been furled, that of Southern Methodism was still unfurled; whatever cause had been lost, that of Southern Methodism survived."

The Annual Conferences were instructed to elect delegates to the session of the General Conference to be held in New Orleans in 1866, according to adjournment eight years before. In the meeting of the Annual Conferences of the fall of 1865, "the peeled and scattered hosts, dis-

couraged and confused by adversities and adverse rumors, rallied; and never did delegates meet in General Conference from center and remotest posts more enthusiastically. Of one hundred and fifty-three delegates elect, one hundred and forty-nine were present.”<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire, “History of Methodism.”

## CHAPTER IX.

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1866.

THE first session of the General Conference after the close of the war was held in the Carondelet Street Church in New Orleans, in April, 1866. It was, next to that of 1846, the most important and memorable in the history of the church. Five of the six bishops were present—Andrew, Paine, Pierce, Early, and Kavanaugh. Bishop Soule was too feeble to be in attendance. Thomas O. Summers was elected secretary.

On the third day of the session a delegation from the Baltimore Conference appeared, asking admission into the M. E. Church, South. At the time of the separation in 1845, this conference had adhered to the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1861 they withdrew from that jurisdiction, and maintained an independent existence until their session at Alexandria in March, 1866, when they formally adhered to the M. E. Church, South, and delegates, six in number, were elected to the General Conference in New Orleans.

Notwithstanding this accession, the statistics show a large and suggestive decrease in membership. In 1860 the general minutes showed a grand total of 757,205 members; in 1866 it had fallen to 511,161, showing a loss of 246,044. In the South, as in the North, as President Lincoln said, "The Methodist Church sent more soldiers to the field, more nurses to the hospitals, and more prayers to heaven than any other;" and the great decrease in the



membership of both churches bears suggestive witness that the Methodists did not stay at home and take care of themselves.

On the fourth day of the session, when the General Conference had gotten under full headway, there was a very pleasant interruption of the proceedings. The secretary announced that he had received a telegraphic dispatch from the New York East Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, then in session in Brooklyn. It was as follows:

WHEREAS the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is now in session in the city of New Orleans; therefore,

*Resolved*, That we, the New York East Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, hereby present to that venerable representative body our Christian salutations, and cordially invite them, together with us, to make next Sabbath, April 8, 1866, a day of special prayer, both in private and in the public congregations, for the peace and unity of our common country and for the full restoration of Christian sympathy and love between the churches, especially between the different branches of Methodism in this nation;

That the secretary be instructed to transmit by telegraph a copy of this resolution to the secretary of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at New Orleans.

This communication was received with great interest, and the General Conference, by a standing vote, adopted a resolution instructing the secretary to express by telegraph to the New York East Conference their cordial reciprocation of these Christian salutations and their cordial agreement to unite with that conference on Sunday, April 8th, "in special and solemn prayer, in private and in the public congregations, for the very desirable objects specified in their fraternal message."<sup>1</sup>

Numerous changes, some of them important, were made in the economy of the church by the General Conference of 1866. Says one of those who took a prominent part: "Men's minds had become used to great changes, and the

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1866," p. 26.

session at New Orleans was therefore favorable for measures upon which the usual conservatism might have hesitated long in ordinary times.”<sup>1</sup>

Attendance upon class-meeting, which up to this time was obligatory, was made voluntary, and so put upon the same ground as attendance upon the other means of grace. The General Conference did not, by any means, intend, in this action, to abolish the class-meeting; but eventually, and to the great regret of many, bishops, preachers, and people, it resulted in a practical abolition of this time-honored institution, though it still lingers in some places, and love-feasts are regularly held in connection with quarterly meetings.

The rule imposing a probation of six months on candidates for membership was set aside. It was supposed that “admission to the church would be guarded with reasonable and conscientious care.” It is to be feared, however, that this is not in all cases true, and that there is practically insufficient detention of candidates for ascertaining their spiritual condition or obtaining substantial assurances of their religious experience or the genuineness of their purpose of consecration and obedience. In some conferences, however, there are exceptions, and the door of admission into the church is carefully and jealously guarded, as it ought to be in all.

The pastoral term was, not without much discussion and opposition, extended from two to four years. District conferences were discussed and recommended, but not formally adopted and authoritatively imposed till the General Conference of 1870. Among the most important measures of the General Conference of 1866 was the adoption of lay representation in the General and the Annual Conferences. The experiment had been made

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire, “History of Methodism.”

and the example set by the Methodist Protestant Church, which indeed was organized on the basis of lay representation as long before as 1830. A sentiment, says Bishop McTyeire, in favor of lay delegation had been growing for years in the Southern Methodist Church. At least two tentative schemes had preceded the legislative action of 1866, one in the Virginia Conference and one in the Louisiana Conference. The law, as adopted in 1866, provided for four lay delegates for each presiding elder's district in the Annual Conferences, while in the General Conference, the law-making body, the number of lay delegates was made equal to the clerical.

So ripe was public opinion, so propitious the times, and so well digested was the scheme, that this great change was introduced without heat or partisanship. Unstintedly, on their own motion, the ministry, who had held this power from the beginning, divided it equally with lay brethren, and a new power was developed, a new interest awakened, and a new progress begun.

Bishop Soule, now eighty-five years old, in age and feebleness extreme, and Bishops Andrew and Early, advanced in years, and worn with incessant travel and excessive toil, were, at their own reluctant request, retired from active service and four new bishops were elected: W. M. Wightman, Enoch M. Marvin, David S. Doggett, and Holland N. McTyeire. Dr. Wightman had been a member of the General Conferences of 1840 and 1844, prior to the division of the church, and of every General Conference of the Southern Church after the division. From 1840 to 1854 he was editor of the "Southern Christian Advocate." From 1854 to 1859 he was president of Wofford College in South Carolina, and after 1859 chancellor of the Southern University at Greensboro, Ala., till his election as bishop. He was the author of the "Life of Bishop William Capers," and a contributor to the "Life of Dr. Olin," edited by Mrs. Olin. He was a man

of fine ability and of superior scholarship. His sermons showed most careful preparation, were delivered with great deliberation and precision, and often rose into eloquence.

Brother Marvin, as those who knew him preferred to call him, came from the common people, retained always the simplicity and ruggedness of the common people, and was always a favorite with the common people. He was born in a log cabin, and when seventeen years old, in a log cabin he was born again. But he *was* born again. Nobody that knew him ever doubted that. College training he had none, but he had the old-time religion and much native mental vigor. What of him was not God-made was self-made. When he went up to join conference at Jefferson City, in his native State of Missouri in 1842, his homeliness of person, his awkwardness of manner, and his homespun, misfit clothing marked him as a country curiosity. In these respects he was not unlike the homely-faced, awkward-mannered, ill-clad rail-splitter of Kentucky, who afterward became President of the United States. But he could preach. He had it in him to rise. And he rose. In 1854 he was a delegate to the General Conference. In 1855 he was pastor of a metropolitan church in St. Louis. In 1863 he was superintendent of chaplains in the army, with what results we have already seen. In 1866 he was elected bishop on the first ballot. His elevation from the pastorate to the episcopate had no visible effect on the childlike simplicity of his character, the humility of his spirit, or the intense directness of his preaching. It did not remove him from the people. He still preached at camp-meetings, held protracted services for his brethren, and still saw sinners powerfully convicted and gloriously converted under his preaching, as when he was a country boy-preacher in old Missouri. In spontaneous, fiery outbursts of natural elo-

quence, he has perhaps not had his equal in the Southern Church. In 1876 he made an episcopal visit to the China mission, and in 1877, on his way back to the West by the way of the East, he attended the British Wesleyan Conference as fraternal delegate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. He was the author of several books, the best known of which is perhaps his book of travels, "To the East by the Way of the West." His smaller and earlier work entitled "The Work of Christ" is vigorous and thought-provoking. A short time after his death a contribution of one dollar was asked from each namesake of the beloved and lamented bishop for a mission school, and over seventeen hundred dollars were sent in.

Dr. Doggett was professor in Randolph-Macon College from 1842 to 1845. From 1850 to 1858 he was editor of the "Quarterly Review" of the church. At the time of his election to the episcopacy he was pastor of Centenary Church in Richmond, Va. He was a polished and dignified Virginia gentleman, a broad and versatile scholar, and a devout and earnest Christian. His sermons were models of homiletical architecture; his thought was masculine, and his style Ciceronian in its transparent clearness, its dignified simplicity, its fine antithesis, its swelling volume, and its periodic compactness. When the unction was upon him, as it often was, his eloquence was next to irresistible.

But the one of the four new bishops who exerted the widest influence and became most widely known was H. N. McTyeire. He had been a pastor and an editor. At the time of his election he was pastor in Montgomery, Ala.

Says one who knew him familiarly and for years:

He was a pure man and an able preacher, a great bishop, and a wise, firm, impartial presiding officer, an ecclesiastical statesman, and the calm philosophical historian of Methodism. In him joyous and sympathetic com-

munion with nature, with God, and his fellowman produced a thoroughly healthy spirit, which, free from abnormal and fantastic thinking, from false and sickly sentiment, from bookishness and pedantry, poured forth a strong limpid stream, which, through its whole course, refreshed and invigorated the Church of God, in which he was ordained a bishop. His sermons were always marked by great solemnity, relieved, however, by the genial play of humor, which bubbled up on the surface of some great theme as naturally as a spring bursts from the bosom of the earth. Not so leonine as Soule, nor so overwhelming as Bascom, nor so mellifluous as Pierce, nor so ornate as Doggett, nor so rapturous as Kavanaugh, he yet possessed in singularly harmonious proportions the elements of a really great preacher. Much of his early preaching was to the negroes, of whom, for many years, he had pastoral charge.

His intense concern for the race knew no abatement with the increase of episcopal and university responsibilities. Strong in mind and body; bold to take up and firm to sustain the burden of duty; large in his sympathies and generous in his impulses; sprung from the people, loving them and loved by them; tenacious of his convictions and purposes; blessed with a rare simplicity of motive which was never confused by the enticements of the world or corrupted by the deceitfulness of riches; unswerving in his loyalty to Methodism—this man faithfully served the church of his love in his youth and early manhood, through the burden and heat of middle life; and as his sun crossed the meridian and began its descent of the western skies, he laid down his finished task at his Master's feet.<sup>1</sup>

The Missionary Society of the church was found to be \$60,200 in debt, and the Publishing House was practically in ruins. The General Conference of 1866 "patched up these two wrecks and sent them forth to sink or swim. There was no capital and but little credit, no supply but much demand." Dr. A. H. Redford, of Kentucky, was elected Agent of the Publishing House, with no books to sell, no facilities for making books, and no suitable place for keeping them when made.

In the face of the ruin of their promising educational institutions, the General Conference of 1866 calmly set about the task of repairing it as far and as fast as possible. "We must," they say in their address to the church, "meet the emergency with an unfaltering purpose, and rise with determined might to the difficult yet hopeful task

<sup>1</sup> Tigert's "Fraternal Address," 1892, p. 30.

which lies before us." They even undertook to make provision for some new features in their educational work. They recommended and insisted upon the establishment of a Biblical Institute for the proper and special training of young preachers. And still further: realizing the changed conditions and their new relations and responsibilities to the colored people, and reasserting their claim to be the friend of this race—a claim vindicated by continuous and successful exertions made in their behalf in instructing and evangelizing them—by formal resolution they recommended to their people the establishment of *day-schools* for the education of colored children, and this notwithstanding their poverty and notwithstanding heavy burdens of their own. The bishops were authorized to form presiding elders' districts of colored charges, to appoint colored presiding elders, and to organize Annual Conferences of colored preachers.

However, out of 207,776 colored members in 1860 there now remained in the Southern Church only 48,742. The others had joined the two African churches, which up to this time had operated mainly in the North, or had gone to the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose representatives were everywhere to be found throughout the South.

Five new conferences were authorized by the General Conference of 1866: the South Georgia, the Columbia, the Northwest Texas, the Illinois, and the North Texas, all of which were organized the same or the following year.

The large attendance of delegates at the General Conference of 1866, the hopefulness and enthusiasm of its members, their earnest grapple with the problems before them, and their generous measures for the extension and the enlarged efficiency and usefulness of the church, chal-

lenged and revived the confidence of the people, and sounded the keynote of the quadrennium for renewed activity and lofty endeavor. Preachers and people everywhere responded, and once more, after a long, dark period of decimation, demoralization, and depression, the church went forward on her mission of evangelizing the masses within her borders, and providing, as much as in her lay, for the extension of her work into outlying lands.

The difficulties and embarrassments of her changed condition, misrepresentation and opposition from without and defections from within—all these were not enough to destroy her courage or to check her enthusiasm. On the contrary, they seemed to invigorate her spirit and stimulate her activities to an unwonted degree. The itinerant went forth again on his gracious errands, old circuit lines were restored and extended, new and larger churches were builded, parsonages were multiplied, schools and colleges were reopened, and the whole machinery of church work was in motion everywhere. The Lord seconded these efforts with his blessing, and in all places the tokens of his gracious presence attested that he had not forsaken his ancient heritage. Once more the decimated rolls of the church began to fill up, and there was a steady increase throughout the quadrennium. In 1866 the number of members had fallen to a little over half a million. In 1870 it had risen again to nearly six hundred thousand.

Within less than a year after the General Conference of 1866 the church was called to lament the death of their venerable and venerated Senior Superintendent, Bishop Joshua Soule. He was the last and a worthy member of the great episcopal triumvirate of American Methodism—Asbury, McKendree, Soule.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1870.

THE succeeding General Conference, held at Memphis in May, 1870, is noteworthy for several reasons. It was the first in which laymen participated as delegates. Indeed, with the exception of the Methodist Protestant Church, it was the first General Conference of the kind in the annals of Methodism. Of lay delegates there were one hundred and six, and of clerical, one hundred and twenty. The experiment proved eminently successful and satisfactory to all parties, even the most conservative and doubtful. The venerable Bishop Paine, in his address on the last day of the conference, said: "The inauguration of the system of lay delegation has worked admirably, confirming our conviction that the laity can aid greatly in managing the great interests of the church; and I hope our lay brethren will return home with the impression that they are not only welcome, but that they are felt to be an important element in our deliberations."

While this important measure, inaugurated in the Southern Church and under the leadership of her prominent men, showed their wise foresight and indicated courage to pioneer a forward movement, another measure, by them planned and adopted at this session, demonstrated that they were men who had a thorough acquaintance with the past constitutional history of Methodism, a profound knowledge of the necessity, nature, and ends of constitutional law, and of constitutional safeguards for the preven-

tion of hasty action or ill-advised legislation involving fundamental matters. In other words, while they had the courage to inaugurate wise forward movements without waiting for others to make the experiment or set the example, they had the wise caution and conservatism to set constitutional barriers and bulwarks against the possibility of lawless action or reckless legislation. The General Conference of 1808, which enacted the constitution, had left it defective in one important respect: it provided no way of determining whether an action or measure of the General Conference is or is not constitutional, is or is not contrary to the Restrictive Rules. The question was raised as far back as 1820. A resolution was passed making presiding elders elective by the Annual Conferences. Bishop McKendree expressed his decided conviction that this was a violation of the Third Restrictive Rule, and unconstitutional.

Mr. Soule, who had been elected bishop, declined to be ordained and resigned the office, holding the same views as Bishop McKendree.<sup>1</sup> The offensive resolution was suspended till the next General Conference, and a resolution was passed recommending to the Annual Conferences so to alter the Discipline that if a majority of the bishops judged a measure unconstitutional they should return it to the General Conference in three days, with their objections, and a majority of two thirds should then be required for its final passage. This resolution, however, was not concurred in by the Annual Conferences. The same fate, says Bishop McTyeire, met a similar effort four years later. He goes on to say: "This want of a constitutional test must be supplied sooner or later,—by the civil if not by the church courts." Joshua Soule had said in 1824, with equal truth and emphasis: "The General Conference

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1820," pp. 236, 237.

is not the proper judge of the constitutionality of its own acts. If the General Conference be the sole judge of such questions, then there are no bounds to its power." And it has been forcibly said by another: "Should the General Conference at any time exceed its constitutional powers, the Annual Conferences have no protection and no redress; the bishops can only submit or resign; the church itself, should the guaranteed rights of the membership be invaded, has no remedy save that of revolution."

An effort was made at the General Conference of the Southern Church in 1854 to remedy this defect of the constitution, and to add to the constitution, as a part of itself, a constitutional test of the constitutionality of the acts of the General Conference. But the paragraph making provision for a veto power of the bishops was only passed by a majority vote of the General Conference, and was never submitted to the Annual Conferences, which omission rendered the *proviso* itself unconstitutional and void. For that reason it was stricken out of the Discipline by the General Conference of 1870.<sup>1</sup> At the same time, and by the same General Conference, this defect in the constitution was supplied. The following amendment to the constitution was made in the regular constitutional way—that is, by a General Conference majority of two thirds, confirmed by a three-fourths vote of the Annual Conferences, in this case, by a General Conference majority of 160 yeas to 4 nays, and a concurrent vote of the Annual Conferences of 2024 yeas to 9 nays:

*Provided*, That when any rule or regulation is adopted by the General Conference which in the opinion of the bishops is unconstitutional, the bishops may present to the conference which passed such rule or regulation their objections thereto, with their reasons in writing; and then if the General Conference shall by a two-thirds vote adhere to its action on said rule or regula-

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1870," pp. 287, 331.

tion, it shall take the course prescribed for altering a Restrictive Rule; and if thus passed upon affirmatively, the bishops shall announce that such rule or regulation takes effect from that time.

Viewed from the standpoint of its organic connectionalism, this jealous care of the constitution is the distinguishing peculiarity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and one of its crowning glories.

The General Conference of 1866 directed that, if the colored membership desired it, the bishops, if and when their godly judgment approved, should organize them into an independent ecclesiastical body. In the interval between 1866 and 1870 the bishops formed several Annual Conferences composed of colored preachers. That experiment proved satisfactory. The colored preachers, as the bishops declare, showed diligence as well as fidelity. A very general and earnest desire was expressed by the colored preachers and members for an independent church organization. They declared that they believed it would be best for both white and colored people to have separate churches and schools, and that it would promote the peace and prosperity of both the white and the colored churches. The preachers of the colored conferences requested the General Conference of 1870 to appoint a commission of five to confer with delegates of their own, with a view to the consummation of an independent organization.<sup>1</sup> This was accordingly done, and the colored conferences, eight in number, were erected into a distinct ecclesiastical organization in December, 1870. Bishop Paine and Bishop McTyeire presided at the conventional General Conference at Jackson, Tenn., and ordained two bishops of their own election, W. H. Miles and R. H. Vanderhorst, a wise and friendly solution of the vexed question of colored bishops.

<sup>1</sup> See article by Bishop Holsey in "Independent," March 5, 1891.

The name of their church, chosen by themselves, was "The Colored Methodist Episcopal Church." All the churches and church property held by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for the use of their colored membership, were turned over to the properly constituted authorities of the new church. The total value of this church property is estimated at \$1,000,000.<sup>1</sup> Moreover, the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have, in many cases, given them church-lots and helped them to build houses for religious worship. A school for the education of the teachers and preachers of this colored church was founded some years ago by Southern Methodists at Augusta, Ga., one man giving \$25,000; and this school is regularly supported by assessments laid upon all the Annual Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; while they contribute regularly also to the support of the Normal and Theological Institute of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church at Jackson, Tenn.

One peculiarity of the Colored Methodist Episcopal Church is that "it stands aloof from politics."<sup>2</sup> One rule of their Discipline is that their church-houses shall not be used for political speeches and meetings. "While exercising their rights as citizens, they endeavor to keep their religious assemblies free from that complication with political parties which has been so damaging to the spiritual interests of the colored people." They have over 3000 churches, over 1200 traveling preachers, 2500 local preachers, about 140,000 members, and 22 Annual Conferences, presided over by 4 bishops.

At the General Conference of 1870, the two mission boards, foreign and domestic, were consolidated, and Dr. John B. McFerrin was made secretary of the new board.

<sup>1</sup> Rev. Dr. R. A. Young tells me it was \$1,500,000.

<sup>2</sup> See the article of Bishop Holsey cited above.

Under his able and efficient management, in less than two years the old debt was liquidated, and the church was relieved of a heavy burden which for years had weighed her down and impeded her missionary movements.<sup>1</sup>

The expansion of the work of the church in the home field and its extension into outlying territory called for new conferences, and six were provided for in the General Conference of 1870. These were organized in the same or the following year: the North Alabama, the Los Angeles, the Southwest Missouri, the North Mississippi, the White River, and the Western.

John C. Keener was elected bishop, and still survives as the Senior Bishop of the church. Thomas O. Summers was elected editor of the "Nashville Christian Advocate." A proposition was made to the General Conference by its editor, the distinguished Dr. A. T. Bledsoe, a local preacher, to adopt the "Southern Review"; and it was accepted on certain express conditions, one of which was the elimination of all party politics and the substitution of a theological department.<sup>2</sup> Dr. Bledsoe accepted the conditions, and the "Review," which through several years was conducted with an ability that placed it in the very front rank of similar periodicals, became the "Quarterly Review of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." "There are not a few," says Dr. W. F. Tillett, "who regard it as the ablest periodical of its kind that has ever been published in this country, and Dr. Bledsoe will always be known as one of the strongest intellects, clearest thinkers, and ablest writers that this country has ever produced."<sup>3</sup>

The bishops issued a pastoral address at the opening of this General Conference, and, by special request of the

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1870," pp. 328, 329.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 323, 324.

<sup>3</sup> "Southern Methodist Quarterly Review," July, 1893.

conference, another near its close, on the particular subject of "Worldly Amusements." While the whole of their pastoral address is an earnest, thoughtful, and weighty document, one paragraph is especially interesting at the present time, as it shows what were the views and convictions of the chief pastors of the church concerning the Methodist doctrine and experience of perfect love. They say :

In immediate connection with the spiritual welfare of the church, the great and only effectual remedy for most, if not all, our deficiencies as a church people, is an increase of inward genuine Scriptural holiness. We fear that the doctrine of perfect love which casts out fear and purifies the heart and is the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, as taught in the Bible, and explained and enforced in our standards as a distinct and practicable attainment, is too much overlooked and neglected. This was a paramount theme in the discourses of our fathers, and alike in their private conversations as in their public ministrations, they urged religious people to go on to this perfection of sanctifying love. The revivals which followed their ministry were not superficial or ephemeral. Their genuineness and power were proved by the holy lives and triumphant deaths of the converts. If we would be like them in power and usefulness, we must resemble them in holy consecration. Nothing is so much needed at the present time throughout all these lands, as a general and powerful revival of Scriptural holiness.

(Signed) J. O. ANDREW, W. M. WIGHTMAN,  
R. PAINE, E. M. MARVIN,  
G. F. PIERCE, D. S. DOGGETT,  
H. H. KAVANAUGH, H. N. McTYEIRE.<sup>1</sup>

Nothing could be more explicit or emphatic than their utterances on the subject of worldly amusements. They say :

Nothing less than a genuine godliness in the power of its regenerating influence can meet the necessities of the case. So powerful are the fascinations of pleasure, so abounding is iniquity, in high places and in low, that the love of many has waxed cold. Young persons in good society who may desire to be religious are especially open to danger from the tone of surrounding fashionable society and from the plausibilities of the worldly spirit. But there can be no compromise here. There can be no inward experience of

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1870," p. 164.

grace, no valid religion of the heart, which is not preceded by a full, unreserved, irrevocable commitment to the Lord Jesus. This commitment involves self-denial, taking up the cross and following Christ. A religion of mere culture, of amiabilities and esthetic tastes, of sentiment, opinion, and ceremony, may readily allow participation in dancing and revelry, in theatrical and operatic and circus exhibitions, and in the gambling operations of the turf. But the religion which is a divine life in the soul of Christ's true disciple heeds the voice of conscience and feels the powers of the world to come. It confers the dignity of holiness, the strength of self-denial, the glad freedom of a spirit rejoicing in the right and good. Such a religion needs not, desires not, allows not participation in worldly pleasures, in diversions which, however sanctioned by fashion, are felt and known to be wrong by every truly awakened heart. Its spiritual discernment is not deceived by well-dressed plausibilities, by refinements in taste, by respectabilities in social position. It has put on the Lord Jesus, and made no provision for the flesh to fulfill the lusts thereof.

In conclusion, we beg to suggest that the pastors of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, give heed to these things in the administration of discipline. The Book of Discipline provides not only against crimes and gross immoralities, but there is a process laid down for cases of "imprudent conduct" as well as for indulging sinful tempers and words. We are persuaded that where that process is faithfully, firmly, but kindly followed, these growing evils will be arrested.

Wise words of wise men, to which the church and ministry would do well to take heed in these days and always. These utterances met with a hearty reception and response upon the part of the ministers composing the General Conference, and gave the watchword to the militant hosts of the church for the ensuing quadrennial period. In general, the spiritual tone and quality of a religious movement or body does not rise above that of its accepted and recognized leaders. The words of the bishops in their pastoral addresses struck a high spiritual tone, and invited the ministry and the church to strive after high and worthy levels of Christian experience and living. The following years were marked by general and generous revivals of religion. There was a large ingathering of souls. By the time of the next quadrennial convocation there was an increase of 126,299 members, the largest the church had



ever yet known within the same period. And this, notwithstanding it had relinquished not less than 60,000 of its members for the establishment of the Colored Methodist Church in the latter part of 1870, as already related. But after the surrender of these 60,000 there was at the roll-call of the church in 1874 a grand total of 712,717 members. Two new conferences were provided for to meet the exigencies of the advancing work—the German Mission Conference in Texas and the Denver in the West.

In 1871 Bishop Andrew died, at the age of seventy-seven. He was to the last a great and good man. His last words were: “God bless you all! Victory! victory!”

In 1873 Bishop Early died, at Lynchburg, Va. Though in the earlier part of his episcopal career he had given some cause of dissatisfaction on account of his peremptory manner and arbitrary rulings, and was seriously complained of at the General Conference of 1858, after that time he discharged the delicate duties of that eminent office with acceptability, and became greatly beloved in the church for his Christian virtues and his long and varied service. “He gave the days of the years of his youth and maturity to the active service of the church, and then, amid the infirmities of old age, illustrated the grace of God by patient submission and the triumph of faith and hope.”

## CHAPTER XI.

### LEADING EVENTS FROM 1874 TO 1894.

AT the General Conference of 1874, held in Louisville, Ky., regularly appointed fraternal delegates from the Methodist Episcopal Church appeared for the first time. Initiatory movements, however, in the direction of fraternity had preceded this. The rejected fraternal delegate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1848, had said:

You will regard this communication as final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. She can never renew the offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time by the Methodist Episcopal Church. And if ever made upon the basis of the Plan of Separation, as adopted by the General Conference of 1844, the Church, South, will cordially entertain the proposition.

This action of their delegate was approved by the General Conference of 1850. Here the matter rested until May, 1869, when the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church invited the bishops of the Southern Church to confer with them "on the propriety, practicability, and methods of reunion." The Southern bishops in reply invited the attention of their Northern brethren to a subject having precedence of that of reunion, namely, the cultivation of fraternal relations. Accordingly, the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at its session in Brooklyn in 1872 took the following action:

To place ourselves in the truly fraternal relations toward our Southern brethren which the sentiments of our people demand, and to prepare the way for the opening of formal fraternity with them; it is hereby

*Resolved*, That this General Conference will appoint a delegation, consisting of two ministers and one layman, to convey our fraternal greetings to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its next ensuing session.

On Friday, the eighth day of the session of the General Conference of 1874, this delegation, consisting of the Rev. Dr. Albert S. Hunt, the Rev. Dr. Charles H. Fowler, and Gen. Clinton B. Fisk, having announced their presence, were formally received. Their addresses were able, eloquent, courteous, and fraternal. Says the journal: "Their utterances warmed our hearts. Their touching allusions to the common heritage of Methodist history, to our oneness of doctrine, polity, and usage, and their calling to mind the great work in which we are both engaged for the extension of the kingdom of their Lord and ours, stirred within us precious memories." The General Conference by resolution requested the bishops to appoint a delegation of two ministers and one layman to bear the Christian salutations of the Southern Church to the next session of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church;<sup>1</sup> and going a step further, they passed a resolution, "That in order to remove all obstacles to formal fraternity between the two churches, our College of Bishops is authorized to appoint a commission, consisting of three ministers and two laymen, to meet a similar commission authorized by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to adjust all existing difficulties." In accordance with this resolution the College of Bishops, at their annual meeting in May, 1875, appointed the five commissioners. They were the Rev. Dr. (now Bishop) R. K. Hargrove, the Rev. Dr. Edward H. Myers, the

<sup>1</sup> These were Lovick Pierce, J. A. Duncan, and L. C. Garland.

Rev. Dr. Thomas M. Finney, and the Hon. Trusten Polk, of Missouri, and Hon. David Clopton, of Alabama. In 1876 the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church authorized and the bishops appointed a similar commission, consisting of the Rev Dr. (now Bishop) John P Newman, the Rev. Dr. M. D'C. Crawford, the Rev. Dr. E. Q. Fuller, Gen. Clinton B. Fisk, and Hon. E. L. Fancher. The commissioners of the two churches met in joint session at Cape May, N. J., August 17, 1876. After a session of six days, characterized by devout supplication for the divine blessing, a due appreciation of the pending issue, and the exercise of becoming Christian candor, they adopted with entire unanimity, as the basis of adjustment and fraternal reconciliation, the following :

#### DECLARATION AND BASIS OF FRATERNITY.

*Status of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and their Coördinate Relations as Legitimate Branches of Episcopal Methodism.*

Each of said churches is a legitimate branch of Episcopal Methodism in the United States, having a common origin in the Methodist Episcopal Church organized in 1784; and since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was consummated in 1845, by the voluntary exercise of the right of the Southern Annual Conferences, ministers, and members, to adhere to that communion, it has been an evangelical church, reared on Scriptural foundations; and her ministers and members, with those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have constituted one Methodist family, though in distinct ecclesiastical connections.

It was next incumbent on us to consider the questions concerning conflicting claims to church property, and some special cases that could not conveniently be referred to the operation of a general rule. There were two principal questions to be considered with regard to the church property in dispute between local societies of the two churches :

1. As to the legal ownership of said property.
2. As to whether it will consist with strict equity, or promote Christian harmony or the cause of religion, to dispossess those societies now using church property which was originally intended for their use and occupancy, and of which they have acquired possession, though they may have lost legal title to it by their transfer from the one church to the other.

We have considered the papers in all cases that have been brought to our notice. These arose in the following States : Virginia, West Virginia, Maryland, Tennessee, Louisiana, North Carolina, and South Carolina. In respect of some of these cases, we have given particular directions ; but for all other cases the Joint Commission unanimously adopted the following :

RULES FOR THE ADJUSTMENT OF ADVERSE CLAIMS TO CHURCH PROPERTY.

RULE I. In cases not adjudicated by the Joint Commission, any society of either church, constituted according to its Discipline, now occupying the church property, shall remain in possession thereof ; provided that where there is now, in the same place, a society of more members attached to the other church, and which has hitherto claimed the use of the property, the latter shall be entitled to possession.

RULE II. Forasmuch as we have no power to annul decisions respecting church property made by the State courts, the Joint Commission ordain in respect thereof :

1. In cases in which such a decision has been made, or in which there exists an agreement, the same shall be carried out in good faith.

2. In communities where there are two societies—one belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the other to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South—which have adversely claimed the church property, it is recommended that, without delay, they amicably compose their differences irrespective of the strict legal title, and settle the same according to Christian principles, the equities of the particular case, and, so far as practicable, according to the principle of the foregoing rule. But if such settlement cannot be speedily made, then the question shall be referred for an equitable decision to three arbitrators, one to be chosen by each claimant from their respective societies ; and the two thus chosen shall select a third person not connected with either of said churches, and the decision of any two of them shall be final.

3. In communities in which there is but one society, Rule I. shall be faithfully observed in the interest of peace and fraternity.

RULE III. Whenever necessary to carry the foregoing rules into effect, the legal title to the church property shall be accordingly transferred.

RULE IV. These rules shall take effect immediately.

This was understood to be authoritative and final. The year following, and upon the acceptance and basis of this Cape May settlement, the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church appointed the Rev. Dr. Cyrus D. Foss and the Hon. Wm. Cumbach as fraternal delegates to the session of the General Conference of the Southern Church at

Atlanta in 1878. The addresses of these distinguished visitors were characterized by a truly fraternal spirit, and were received with great applause. Responses were made by the venerable Lovick Pierce, then in his ninety-fourth year, and by Bishop Paine, who at the time was presiding. "The whole scene was morally sublime, and at its close the conference spontaneously arose and sang the doxology"<sup>1</sup>

At the General Conference of 1874 the first fraternal address of the British Wesleyan Conference to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was received. It was duly acknowledged and responded to.<sup>2</sup>

In 1862 the Publishing House, under the management of Dr. McFerrin, was just getting rid of incumbrances and embarrassments and entering upon a career of prosperity and usefulness, when it was seized by the Federal troops. During the remainder of the war it was used as a United States printing-office. Owing to the damage of the buildings and the destruction of machinery during this period, and the debt incurred in rebuilding after a destructive fire, its condition was such that at the General Conference of 1878 its liabilities were found to be about \$125,000 in excess of its total assets. It was declared insolvent. The Book Committee was authorized by the General Conference to dispose of machinery, fixtures, furniture, and real estate, if they deemed it best, in order to meet the obligations of the house. The only hope was to rescue the credit and save the good name of the church. All felt that the debt must be paid. But how? What could be done? The same thought occurred simultaneously to many: put McFerrin back as Book Agent; the people all know him and believe in him; if any man can save the

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1878," p. 117.

<sup>2</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1874," pp. 375-77.

wreck, he can. But he held back. He was too old for such a burden and such a task. (His age was seventy-one.) Still the conviction was so general in favor of his election that he dared not peremptorily decline. When the result of the ballot was announced, the strong old man wept.<sup>1</sup>

A Book Committee was selected to reinforce and support Dr. McFerrin, consisting of some of the very ablest business men in the whole South. Among these wise counselors a scheme was devised for bonding the enormous debt of \$356,843, and, after full deliberation and consultation, was adopted. But to sell these bonds was the next thing, and not an easy thing to do. The depressed condition of the institution, the disheartened state of the church, and the many opportunities for profitable investment in other and safer enterprises in the South, made it very improbable that men of means would be willing to buy McFerrin's four-percents. The details of the scheme were explained through the church papers, and the members were urged to rally with their subscriptions. Nashville Methodists, including the members of the Book Committee and the Agent, gave the movement a liberal start, and when the time came for the autumn conferences, Dr. McFerrin was ready to start out on his great bond campaign.<sup>2</sup> Wherever he went, preachers and people were stirred by his appeals; confidence returned by degrees; the bonds were taken more and more freely; confidence rose into enthusiasm; despair gave way to renewed hope, and hope to certainty, that the Publishing House would be saved, the honor and good name of the church maintained; and a grand demonstration was made of the denominational fealty and latent power of the Southern Methodist people. To the whole church belongs the honor of this achieve-

<sup>1</sup> Fitzgerald's "Life of McFerrin," p. 360.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. R. A. Young assisted him in this important work.

ment; but to McFerrin's wonderful hold upon the confidence and affection of the church and his masterful leadership, more than to what was done by any other man, must this deliverance be ascribed.<sup>1</sup>

At the General Conference of 1878 Dr. A. W. Wilson was elected missionary secretary, and served with great ability and efficiency during the quadrennium. Dr. O. P. Fitzgerald was elected editor of the "Nashville Christian Advocate," and during the twelve years of his incumbency made one of the brightest, breeziest, and most popular religious weeklies in the nation. One new conference was provided for by the General Conference of 1878, the Montana, and was organized in September, 1879.

When the grand total of the membership was reckoned up, it was found to be only a little less than 800,000, or, in exact figures, 798,862. •

Through the years following, the progress of the church was steady and continuous, and her work was rapidly developing and extending in every direction. Her activities were continually multiplied. Increasing thousands were annually gathered within her folds. Her educational zeal and enterprise received fresh accessions, and her educational institutions were growing in number and efficiency. In April, 1874, the cornerstone of the great Vanderbilt University was laid with impressive ceremonies amid universal rejoicings. In 1875 her halls were opened for the reception of students. Students came and have been coming in increasing numbers and with increasing enthusiasm through all the intervening years. In every way this noble institution has grown, until to-day it is recognized as perhaps the leading institution of learning in the South, and is second to but few in the nation.

The missionary spirit of the church was much quickened

<sup>1</sup> Fitzgerald's "Life of McFerrin," p. 367.



and her missionary activities greatly increased during these years, as we shall see in a later chapter. At no previous time did the church enjoy richer evidences of the divine favor or possess in a greater degree the elements of prosperity and power. Meanwhile her ranks were filling up with young men of promise to take the place of the veterans who were dropping out of the ranks. And the veterans were dropping out. The church lost one of her best and ablest men for every year of the quadrennium 1878-82.

In 1880 Bishop Doggett, a princely man, and a prince among preachers, after serving his generation by the will of God, died in peace, and was laid to rest in Hollywood Cemetery in Richmond, Va.

In February, 1882, just before the meeting of the General Conference, Bishop Wightman, who, by the will of God, had served two generations, fell asleep and was gathered to his fathers.

On the first day of the General Conference of 1882, in Nashville, the Senior Superintendent, Bishop Paine, made an affecting address to his brethren, and asked that, "worn down by age and infirmities, he might be permitted to retire from active service." For sixty-four years he had been an effective traveling preacher; for thirty-six years an efficient general superintendent. But the limit now was reached. He was able to bear the burden and do the work no longer. On May 3, 1882, at the age of eighty-three, he was retired from active service. On May 22d, unable to attend further upon the session of the General Conference, he departed to his home in Mississippi. On the 19th of October following he departed for his home beyond the stars.

On the opening day of the General Conference of 1882, Wednesday, May 3d, Dr. Thomas O. Summers was, for the eighth time, elected secretary of that body. On Saturday

morning, May 6th, immediately after the opening, the presiding bishop announced that Dr. Summers was dead. The prayer of his favorite hymn was literally fulfilled:

Oh, that without a lingering groan  
I may the welcome word receive,  
My body with my charge lay down,  
And cease, at once, to work and live.

Dr. Summers was a born Englishman. His early advantages were not great. He was a man of prodigious labor, however, and he came to be a man of extraordinary attainments and cyclopedic knowledge. He was positive in his convictions, dogmatic in his utterances, blunt in his manner; but he was a true and noble man and a loving-hearted Christian.

He was for many years the editor of the "Nashville Christian Advocate," and for some time the editor of the "Southern Methodist Quarterly Review." Only a few of the older men in the church can remember the time when he was not Book Editor. He was himself the author of several books, the best known of which are his Commentaries on the New Testament books from Matthew to Romans, and his able and learned work on Systematic Theology, in two noble octavo volumes. At the time of his death he was dean of the theological department of Vanderbilt University and Professor of Systematic Theology. As a preacher his sermons were too dull, and as an editor his articles were too heavy, to be popular. Yet for his work and his personal character he had come to be so beloved that his death fell with the weight of a personal bereavement upon the whole church. His biography has been well written by Dr. (now Bishop) Fitzgerald, his successor in the editorship of the "Advocate."

The most important action of the General Conference

of 1882 was the creation of the Board of Church Extension and the election of the clear-headed and indefatigable Dr. David Morton as secretary and general superintendent. Under the phenomenally successful management of this man "with a telescopic mind and a microscopic eye," this arm of church work has developed an efficiency and usefulness which far exceed the expectations of its most sanguine friends and supporters. The General Board was fully organized and its plans formulated at a meeting held in Louisville, Ky., in June, 1882. Bylaws were adopted, a plan of campaign was mapped out, and the first annual assessment of \$50,000 was made. In the eleven years since the organization of the Board of Church Extension the total receipts have been considerably over \$700,000; and the last annual report shows that the board has built, helped to build, or otherwise aided one church for each week-day and two for each Sunday in the year. The total number of churches built or aided by the board since 1882 is 2510. The only serious problem which the church has in connection with this work is to find a man to fill Dr. Morton's place and do his work, when age or infirmity shall have rendered him incapable of further service.

The General Conference of 1882 authorized the creation of two new conferences, the Central Mexico Mission Conference and the Mexican Border Mission Conference, which were not long afterward organized, the one by Bishop Keener, the other by Bishop McTyeire.

The unprecedented number of five bishops was elected: A. W. Wilson, Linus Parker, A. G. Haygood, John C. Granbery, and Robert K. Hargrove (though Dr. Haygood declined). Dr. Robt. A. Young was elected missionary secretary.

The fraternal message of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the General Conference of 1882 was borne by the genial and gentle, but able and eloquent Dr. Henry Bascom

Ridgaway, and the glowing words of this genuinely fraternal man made and left a delightful impression upon those who were present, and upon the whole church.

The first Ecumenical Conference of the Methodisms of the world was held in London in 1881. In this memorable gathering the Southern Methodist Church was fully and worthily represented. According to the English papers, that church furnished two of the three American representatives who made a distinct personal impression. These were the inimitable and irresistible Dr. John B. McFerrin and the weighty and dignified Bishop McTyeire, with his massive head and face and thought, his slow, deliberate speech, his fog-horn voice, and his unepiscopal, unconventional, cutaway coat.

In the General Conference of the Southern Church in 1878 a movement was initiated looking to a centenary celebration of the organization of American Methodism. No fact in the history of American Christianity can be considered of equal importance with that which took place in an humble chapel in Baltimore in December, 1784. It was therefore worthy of commemoration by the Methodists of a hundred years after. And as that far-reaching event took place upon Southern territory, it was fitting that the centenary movement should originate in the Southern division of Methodism. Accordingly, the bishops of the Southern Church were requested in behalf of the General Conference to open a correspondence on the subject with the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the presidents of the several conferences in Canada, and of all other Methodist bodies on the continent, and these bishops and presidents in conjunction were to arrange and mature a suitable program for a fitting celebration of the centenary of the organization of American Methodism. The suggestion was concurred in by the other branches of Methodism in the country. The arrangements for the part

which the Southern Church was to take were completed in the General Conference of 1882. The celebration was duly observed in December, 1884, in the city of Baltimore by a great gathering of representatives of all the Methodist bodies, white and colored, in America. In the exuberance of fraternal feeling and the tide of spiritual emotion it surpassed any inter-Methodistic gathering that has been held before or since. It was a veritable love-feast, not of American Methodists only, but of American Methodisms. Nor was it an enthusiasm of mere emotion, but of genuine gratitude and practical benevolence. The centenary year was a season of generous giving upon the part of Methodists everywhere. The special centennial offerings of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for the year 1884 amounted to \$1,382,771.<sup>1</sup>

In the midst of the activity and enthusiasm of the centenary year the church was in mourning for the death of two of her most honored and best beloved bishops. These were H. H. Kavanaugh, of Kentucky, and George F. Pierce, of Georgia.

They were both members of the General Conference of 1844 and of every succeeding one down to 1854, when they were elected to the episcopal office. At the time of his death Bishop Kavanaugh was eighty-two years of age and had been a bishop thirty years, Bishop Pierce was seventy-three years of age, and had been a bishop for thirty years.

In physique, Bishop Kavanaugh was below the ordinary stature; but what was lacking in length was made up in breadth and bulk. His neck was short, his head massive, his hair short and stiff. His face, though not handsome, was radiant with imperturbable good-humor. In spirit

<sup>1</sup> It was in the centenary year that Bishop McTyeire published his noble work on "The History of Methodism."

and manner he was as simple and transparent as a little child. As a preacher he was unequal. There were times when his eloquence was rapturous, overwhelming. But depending, as he did, on the occasion for inspiration, he sometimes limped in preaching. Nevertheless, his great power as a preacher gained for him the title of "the old man eloquent." As a presiding officer, he was amiable to laxity. It is even said that on one or two occasions he took a little nap while presiding in General Conference. But he was so beloved that everybody, except perhaps Bishop Keener, excused and enjoyed these amiable small faults of the noble old man.

Bishop Pierce, of Georgia, son of Lovick Pierce, was every way a marvelous man. His form was majestic. He bore himself like a king. His eye was black and lustrous. His cheek glowed with the rosy hue of health. His every movement was grace. His voice was clear and mellow; its highest tones were musical and sympathetic. His style was direct, his metaphors novel and striking, his illustrations pertinent and persuasive, and his pathos often kindled to a heat of rapture under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. Whether before the most cultured audience or the plainest, he was alike master. He preached in a metropolitan church with all the ease with which he preached to a congregation of negro slaves, and he preached to the slaves with as much beauty and pathos and power as to the great men and women of the earth.<sup>1</sup> I have heard Beecher and Talmage and Hall and Taylor and Simpson and Spurgeon and Liddon and Farrar and Punshon and Parker; but I was never so moved, or saw people so moved, by the preaching of any man as by that of George F. Pierce, of Georgia.

In the next year (1885) occurred the death of one of the younger bishops, Linus Parker, of Louisiana. He had

<sup>1</sup> See Smith's "Life of Bishop Pierce."

filled the episcopal office with acceptability for three years. The death of three bishops within less than a year made it necessary for the General Conference of 1886 to elect others. Accordingly four were elected and ordained at the session in Richmond: W W Duncan, Charles B. Galloway, E. R. Hendrix, and Joseph S. Key.

It is one of the peculiarities and one of the excellencies of the Southern Methodist Church that it avoids all connection with politics. This very virtue has, however, sometimes been misunderstood and misinterpreted, and has given occasion for the charge that the Southern Church shrinks from committing herself on great social and moral questions and from taking part in great social and moral movements. If any denial of that charge were necessary, the action of the General Conference of 1886 on two of the most vital moral issues of the day would be a sufficient refutation.

Their deliverance on the subject of temperance and prohibition speaks for itself:

We rejoice in the widespread and unprecedented interest, both in the church and out of it, in behalf of temperance and prohibitory law. The public has awakened to the necessity of both legal and moral suasion to control the great evils stimulated and fostered by the liquor traffic. We recognize in the license system a sin against society. Its essential immorality cannot be affected by the question whether the license be high or low. The effectual prohibition of the manufacture, sale, and use of intoxicating liquors would be emancipation from the greatest curse that now afflicts our race. The total removal of the cause of intemperance is the only remedy. This is the greatest moral question now before our people. The fact that the people of the United States spend for strong drink \$900,000,000 annually is not the most important aspect of the subject, but the fact that it is the enemy of the church, the source of crime, the cause of poverty and suffering, wretchedness and death, and that its readiest victims are our young men, thousands of whom are every year swept by it into dissipation, dishonor, debauchery, death, and damnation. We cannot withhold our emphatic deliverance on the subject, especially in view of the prevailing agitation of the question of prohibition. Therefore be it

*Resolved*, That the General Conference of the M. E. Church, South, is op-

posed to the manufacture, sale, and use of intoxicating liquors, except for medicinal and mechanical purposes, and that we will continue to agitate the subject of prohibition as a great moral question, and will strive, with all good citizens and by all proper and honorable means, to banish the horrible curse from our beloved church and country.

*Resolved*, That the time has now come when the church, through its press and pulpit, its individual and organized agencies, should speak out in strong language and stronger action in favor of the total removal of this great evil.<sup>1</sup>

The General Conference recommended that the Sunday-school editor statedly provide for a Scripture lesson on temperance, and that those in charge of schools or colleges controlled or indorsed by the church, see that the children and youth are properly instructed touching the effect of alcoholic stimulants on the human system.

The manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors upon the part of church-members is absolutely forbidden. The law is explicit and emphatic: "If any preacher or member shall engage in the manufacture or sale of intoxicating liquors to be used as a beverage, let the Discipline be administered as in cases of *immorality*."<sup>2</sup>

The other action of the General Conference of 1886 referred to above, was upon the subject of divorce. After a long and strong preamble it was

*"Resolved*, That no minister of the M. E. Church, South, knowingly, upon due inquiry, shall solemnize the marriage of any person who has a divorced wife or husband still living."<sup>3</sup>

The increase of the membership of the church during the quadrennium ending in 1886 was larger than it had ever been during any similar period in its history. Nearly 200,000 members had been added in that time, and the grand total rose in the year 1886 to 1,066,377.

The eleventh and last General Conference was held in

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1886," pp. 198, 199.

<sup>2</sup> "Discipline of the M. E. Church, South," p. 129.

<sup>3</sup> "Journal of the General Conference of 1886," p. 233.



Centenary Church in the city of St. Louis in May, 1890, just forty years from the time when the second General Conference was held in the same city and the same church (in 1850). The number of delegates in attendance was 294. Resolutions on worldliness were unanimously adopted, explicitly condemning "theater-going, dancing, card-playing, and the like, as contrary to the spirit of Christianity and violative of the General Rules and moral discipline of the church, as also of the vows of our church-members."<sup>1</sup> A committee of fifteen was appointed to consider and report on the "state of the church." Their report is a strong, clear, and ringing document, and but for its length and the limitations of our space would deserve a place in these pages. It is given in full in the Discipline of 1890.

On the subject of temperance they vigorously declare and resolve that "voluntary total abstinence from all intoxicants is the true ground of personal temperance, and complete legal prohibition of the traffic the duty of government."<sup>2</sup>

The phenomenal advance made during the preceding period of four years, in all departments of church work, is indicated by the provisions made by the General Conference for the increased efficiency of all the coördinated agencies of the church. Two additional secretaries of the Board of Missions were provided for and elected. An additional secretary for the Board of Church Extension was authorized. An assistant Book Agent, an assistant editor of the "Christian Advocate," and an assistant Sunday-school editor were elected by the Conference. The Book Agents were authorized to publish, as one of the general organs of the church, the "Pacific Methodist Advocate" at San Francisco. The Epworth League was

<sup>1</sup> See Discipline, edition of 1890, p. 391.

<sup>2</sup> "Journal of General Conference of 1890," p. 212.

adopted by the General Conference and provision made for establishing leagues throughout the church. Four new conferences were constituted and organized in the year 1890-91, the Western North Carolina, the East Columbia, the New Mexico, and the Northwest Mexican Mission. The China Mission and the Brazil Mission had been erected into conferences in 1886, and organized as conferences, the one in 1886, the other in 1887. The church has now forty-three Annual Conferences. The statistics for the year 1890 were: traveling preachers, 5042; local preachers, 6366; white and Indian members, 1,206,611; colored members, 534; and altogether, 1,218,561.

A notable incident of the General Conference of 1890 was the reception and address of the Rev David J. Waller, the first fraternal delegate of the British Wesleyan Conference to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Mr. Waller, both by his personal bearing and his instructive and courteous address, produced an exceedingly favorable impression.

At the General Conference of 1890, A. G. Haygood and D. P. Fitzgerald were elected bishops.

The quadrennium was marked by the death of two of the very foremost men of the church. In May, 1887, Dr. McFerrin died, and the funeral sermon was preached by Bishop McTyeire, who, in less than two years after, followed his friend to the undiscovered country.

Bishop McTyeire is buried along with Bishop McKendree and Bishop Soule on the campus of Vanderbilt University. His fitting epitaph is, "He was a leader of men and a lover of children."

## CHAPTER XII.

### THE MISSIONS OF THE CHURCH.

#### 1. *Missions to the Negroes.*

UP to the outbreak of the war in 1861 the mission work of the Southern Church was principally confined to the slave population of the South. The Southern Methodists recognized this as a vast opportunity, and to this work they felt themselves specially called. For the most part, the same pastor preached the gospel to master and slave, in the same church, as parts of one congregation. The gallery, or some other portion of the church, was set apart for the slaves. In addition to this, the pastor who preached to all together in the forenoon of Sunday would preach to the slaves from the same pulpit in the afternoon. When special services were held for the colored people, they occupied the body of the church, while the white people who attended were seated in that part of the church usually assigned to the negroes.<sup>1</sup> One of the early reports of the Board of Missions of one of the Southern conferences has these words: "The gospel is the same for all men, and to enjoy its privileges in common promotes good-will." Consequently it was declared to be the duty of all congregations to supply necessary and suitable accommodations for the colored people, "in order that none of them might make such neglect a plea for staying away from public worship." If a separate building was provided for them,

<sup>1</sup> See Dr. John's "Handbook of Methodist Missions," p. 83, and McTyeire's "History of Methodism," p. 584.

as was sometimes the case, the negro congregation was an appendage to the white, the pastor usually preaching once on Sunday for them, holding official meetings with their leaders, exhorters, and preachers, and administering discipline.

But large numbers of the slaves were isolated on the rice, sugar, and cotton plantations, especially in the further South. The regular ministry did not reach these, inhabiting, as they did, a distant and malarial region in which but few white people were found. Attempts had been made as early as 1809 to give the gospel to some of these remote plantation communities. In that year the South Carolina Conference had sent out two missionaries, James H. Mel-lard to the slaves on the Savannah River, and James E. Glenn<sup>1</sup> to those on the Santee. But there were so many obstacles in the way that the work was soon given up. The attitude of the Methodists and the Methodist General Conferences on the subject of slavery gave rise to suspicions and to opposition upon the part of the planters, and access to their slaves was denied. Later, however, when the preachers had come to see the necessity of adjusting themselves to the situation and the legislation of the General Conference was toned down, as we have related in Chapter I., the work was taken up again. In 1828, through the efforts of a pious lady, a large planter gave his consent that a Methodist preacher should work among his slaves. This was the Rev. George W. Moore. He was not regularly appointed by the conference. But this did not deter him from preaching to these darkened souls

<sup>1</sup> "It was Mr. Glenn who received into his home at Cokesbury a young Vermonter going South in 1821 with shattered health and unsettled religious principles. This young Northerner was converted and developed in the South. He became first president of Randolph-Macon College in Virginia, and died while president of Wesleyan University in Connecticut. No man had more to do with shaping the life of Stephen Olin than James E. Glenn." —McTyeire's "History."

with all the zeal and faithfulness of a heart that counted no labor too exacting, no service too lowly, in the cause of his Master.<sup>1</sup> The results of Mr. Moore's preaching to the slaves were such that application was made by several of the planters to the South Carolina Conference for missionaries to be regularly sent to preach to their people. Accordingly in 1829, through the influence of the Rev. William Capers, the missionary society of that conference sent out two preachers for this special work, Rev. John Honour to the plantations south of the Ashley River, and Rev. John H. Massey to those south of the Santee.<sup>2</sup> Rev. William Capers was made superintendent of these missions. Mr. Honour, succumbing to the malaria of the region, died the same year (1829). "He was a noble, zealous Christian minister, not ashamed of the lowly work to which he had been called, but joyfully resigning even life itself in the cause." He was succeeded by Rev. George W. Moore. Rev. James Danelly was sent to a mission on the Savannah River, and the work extended. The operations of the first year gathered 417 church-members. The experiment, eyed with distrust by most of the planters, denounced by many as a hurtful and perilous innovation, favored by very few, had been commenced. It was found that the preaching of the gospel with the simplicity and directness of the Methodists was understood by the negroes and took well with them; that, combined with the regular discipline of the church, it produced a distinct improvement in their moral character and habits, making them sober, industrious, honest, and contented. Prejudice fell away little by little. Doubt and distrust brightened into approval. The time for enlargement was come. The door of access to these thousands of Africa's benighted children was open-

<sup>1</sup> "The Gospel Among the Slaves," p. 154.

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*, p. 155.

ing wider and wider.<sup>1</sup> The movement, begun in South Carolina, soon extended throughout the whole connection. Missions were organized in all the conferences, and men, carefully chosen for the work, devoted their entire time to the religious instruction of the slaves. They assembled them in congregations, preached to them the gospel, instructed and comforted the penitents, baptized the converted, organized them into societies, administered to them the holy communion, visited and prayed with them in their cabins, ministered to their sick, and buried their dead. In South Carolina *alone* at the time of the death of Bishop Capers (1854) there were twenty-six mission stations on the plantations, served by thirty-two regularly appointed preachers, and counting a membership of over ten thousand negroes and over a thousand whites, or, in exact figures, 10,371 of the former and 1175 of the latter. The contributions of the South Carolina Conference for the work for that year (1854) amounted to \$25,000. Nor was this difficult and uninviting work left to or thrust upon preachers of inferior quality or ability. Indeed, the planters declared that they were unwilling to receive young or indiscreet or untried men to go in and out among their slaves as their moral and spiritual advisers. "Some of the best preachers of Southern Methodism spent their best days in this work," says one who had large personal knowledge of the field. There were W. C. Kirkland (father of the present chancellor of Vanderbilt University), G. W. Moore, Charles Wilson, Coburn, Boyd, Bunch, Ledbetter, Turpin, Rush, Skidmore, Carr, Steele, and many others—unmonumented heroes of earth, whose record is safe in the keeping of God. It is not possible in the brief space allotted to this history to recount the toils, the privations, the sufferings, the

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Wightman in "Southern Quarterly Review," quoted by McTyeire, p. 585.

martyr-like self-immolation, the apostolic successes of these humble Methodist preachers, who, in the isolation of the remote plantations, amid the pestilential malaria of the river-bottoms and the rice-swamps of the far South, ministered the evangel of divine love and salvation to the lowly sons and daughters of that benighted race; and who, away back in those dim and distant years, did more than all other agencies combined to prepare them for the responsibilities of freedom and citizenship, as well as for the kingdom of heaven. A volume might be written of the Acts of these Apostles to the Southern slaves. Indeed, such a volume has been written.<sup>1</sup> It remains for some magnanimous negro of the future to propose, and for his magnanimous fellow-negroes of all classes, North and South, East and West, to erect, on some suitable spot, a worthy and enduring monument to the memory of the noble and self-forgetting Southern Methodist preachers who, in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in labors, in watchings, in fastings, in weariness and painfulness and perils, in honor and dishonor, through evil report and good report, christianized their fathers.<sup>2</sup>

Up to the time of the division of the church, in 1844, these Southern Methodist preachers had gathered into church-membership over a hundred thousand African slaves.<sup>3</sup> And it was for the opportunity and privilege of continuing this work that they made their stand in 1844.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "The Gospel Among the Slaves," p. 394, by Miss Annie Maria Barnes and Dr. W. P. Harrison. Nashville, Barbee & Smith, 1893.

<sup>2</sup> "In the neighborhood where I lived during the war in Alabama the sound of a trumpet would have called up five thousand colored men and not over fifty white men. The white men had gone off to the war and left their wives, children, and property in the care of the negroes. Not a crime was committed."—Dr. R. H. Rivers, in "Central Methodist," January 27, 1894. The same was true everywhere. To the preaching of the Gospel, as above related, it was due that the crimes now so frequent were almost unheard of.

<sup>3</sup> The number of colored members of the Southern Church in 1846 was 124,961.

<sup>4</sup> Compare the latter part of Chapter II.

In 1860, sixteen years after the division, the Southern Church had upon her rolls nearly a quarter of a million of these imported heathen people. The official returns for that year give 207,776 members, with 180,000 negro children under regular catechetical instruction. Says that calm and careful historian of Methodism, Bishop McTyeire: "The church-membership of all the missionary societies and stations, in all parts of the world, did not equal the colored membership of Methodism in the Southern States."<sup>1</sup> Said another bishop: "The Southern Church counted more converts among these descendants of Ham than the united efforts of Christendom had gathered upon all the mission-fields of the heathen world."<sup>2</sup> If any man will furnish reliable facts and figures to contradict or correct this statement of two of the bishops of the M. E. Church, South, he shall have our prompt acknowledgment of the mistake, and our thanks for his kindness. Whether that be done or not, who is there so destitute of magnanimity, or even of common fairness and candor, as to refuse to recognize and acknowledge this great service of the Southern Methodist Church to the negro race, to the country, and to Christendom?

In addition to their missions to the slaves, the Southern Church enterprised a mission to China at the first General Conference, in 1846, and organized that mission in 1848. Ten years later, when their China mission had gotten into successful operation, the General Conference of 1858 took measures for founding missions in Africa and Central America. But the war prevented the execution of their plans.<sup>3</sup> These facts together will explain how it was that no other foreign missions were undertaken until after the war, and will at the same time account for the fact that

<sup>1</sup> McTyeire's "History of Methodism," p. 387.

<sup>2</sup> "Life of Bishop George F. Pierce," p. 469.

<sup>3</sup> See page 68.



the present missionary operations of the Southern Church are not yet so extensive as those of other churches in different circumstances.

The M. E. Church, South, has one General Board of Missions. This board has charge of the four missions in foreign lands, as well as the Indian and German missions in the home-land, and all other missions not provided for by the Annual Conferences. In addition to this General Board, each Annual Conference has a Conference Board, which has entire control of the missions within its borders and under its care, as well as of the money raised for their support. A collection is annually taken for the General Board in every congregation, and a separate collection for the use of the Annual Conference Board. The General Board employs three secretaries, who at present are I. G. John, D.D., H. C. Morrison, D.D., and Rev. Walter R. Lambuth, M.D., D.D. The church has missions in China, Japan, Mexico, and Brazil, as well as among the Indians and Germans of this country, and in many of the Western States and Territories.

## 2. *The China Mission.*

The mission to China was authorized by the first General Conference of the church, in 1846. Two years afterward, on April 24, 1848, the Rev. Charles Taylor, M.D., and the Rev. Benjamin Jenkins stood with their wives on the deck of the little ship "Cleone" in Boston Harbor. A little group of Boston Methodists joined them in singing the Missionary Hymn and in prayer, and they sailed away over unknown seas to an unknown world. The cabin of the "Cleone" was ten by fourteen feet, and seven feet in height. The state-rooms were six by four. In such a vessel they sailed a voyage of four months, and anchored,

August 12th, in the harbor of Hong Kong. Afterward they proceeded to Shanghai, where the mission was to be established. Here they purchased a lot, built a temporary dwelling, and went to work. The next year they purchased another lot and built a chapel, in which they held their first service in January, 1850. They established two day-schools, gathered thirty scholars, and mingled religious services with the daily exercises. In 1851 their Chinese teacher and his wife renounced Buddhism and became Christians. This man, Liew, soon became a preacher and an evangelist, and proclaimed the gospel to hundreds of his fellow-countrymen. "His ministry was greatly blessed. He died in 1866, mourned by missionaries and native Christians as a great loss to the cause of Christianity."

In 1852 Rev. W. G. E. Cunyngham, D.D., and his wife joined the missionary force in China, and became faithful and efficient workers in that difficult field. These all remained at their post and continued their work amid the trials and horrors of the Taiping rebellion in 1853. Shanghai was crowded with soldiers, and amid the devastations committed by them the two residences of the missionaries and their chapel were burned. In 1854 Rev. Dr. D. C. Kelley, Rev. J. W. Lambuth, and Rev. J. L. Belton, with their wives, arrived in China to reinforce the mission. In December, 1859, Rev. Young J. Allen and Rev. M. L. Wood sailed from New York for Shanghai.

But while the mission was thus reinforced with new arrivals, it was weakened by the return of some of the earlier missionaries, whose health was broken by the rigor of the climate and the exactions of the work. Mrs. Jenkins died on her homeward voyage, and was buried at sea. Mr. Belton arrived in New York in time to die on the soil of his native land. Dr. Kelley (in 1855) and Dr. Cunyngham (in 1861) were compelled to return on account

of the failing health of themselves or their families. None were now left but Lambuth and Allen and Wood. In 1861 Dr. Lambuth returned to the United States; and from 1861 to 1864 Allen and Wood were cut off from communication with the home church and reduced to great straits. But they continued at their posts and their work during those years of silence and suspense, supporting themselves, in part, by doing literary work for the Chinese Government. After the war between the States, the church, impoverished as it was, entered anew upon its mission work, and other missionaries were sent out. Dr. Lambuth returned to the field in 1864 and resumed his work. Mr. Wood returned in 1866. In 1875 Rev. A. P. Parker joined the mission. In 1876 Bishop Marvin, accompanied by Rev. E. R. Hendrix, visited the mission, and besides leaving great encouragement and blessing behind for the lonely and weary workers and the converted natives, he completed and compacted the organization of the mission, ordaining four native preachers as deacons and two as elders.

After this the following missionaries were sent to the work in China: Rev W R. Lambuth, M.D., in 1877; C. F. Reid and W. W. Royall in 1880; Geo. R. Loehr in 1881; D. L. Anderson, O. G. Mingledorf, and W. H. Park, M.D., in 1883; W W Bonnell and Rev. O. A. Dukes, M.D., in 1885; W. B. Burke in 1887; W. B. Hill and J. L. Hendry in 1888; H. L. Gray in 1889; B. D. Lucas, O. E. Brown, T A. Hearn, L. Leitch, and R. M. Campbell, M.D., in 1890. This list does not include the missionaries of the Woman's Board.

In 1886, by order of the General Conference, Bishop Wilson organized the China Mission Conference.

The following are the statistics for 1893: Number of missionaries: male, 16; wives, 10. Native preachers: or-

dained, 4; unordained, 6. Sunday-schools, 23; scholars, 1164; day-schools, 16; pupils, 1572. Communicants and probationers, 736. Property: churches, 9; value, \$22,816; parsonages, 14. Total value of church and school property, \$137,311. Appropriation of Board for 1893, \$37,383. Total appropriations, \$568,068.

Our mission occupies seven walled cities. The missionaries publish two periodicals, that reach the thoughtful men of the eighteen provinces. We have two boarding-schools for young men, one of which is the Anglo-Chinese College at Shanghai. We have a fully equipped hospital at Suchow in charge of two surgeons, aided by several assistants. The number of patients treated in 1893 was 12,236.

### 3. *The Missions in Mexico.*

Early in 1873 Bishop Keener visited the City of Mexico and laid the foundations of the Mexican Mission. He succeeded in purchasing a lot in the heart of the city, near the College of Mines. He appointed to the work a native Mexican, Alejo Hernandez, who had been a soldier, a skeptic, and a prisoner, but who, through reading a book against Romanism, was led to read the Bible. This awakened him to a sense of his condition and his peril. He visited a Protestant Church in Brownsville, Texas, where he "felt his heart strangely warmed, and went away weeping for joy." He had then, under appointment of Bishop Marvin, served two years on trial in the Mexican work of the West Texas Conference before his appointment to the City of Mexico. In 1873 he was joined by Rev. J. T. Daves, of the Louisiana Conference. The first society was organized in the City of Mexico in 1875, with eighty-three members, and the work continued.

In 1878 Rev W M. Patterson, of the Memphis Confer-

ence, was appointed superintendent of the mission. He began at once to plan wisely and broadly in every way for the advance of the work. Buildings were procured in a number of the principal towns, a printing-press was purchased and put in operation, and at the end of one year he reported 268 members, 12 native preachers, and 12 teachers. From this impetus the work steadily grew on through the following years, until at present there are three regular conferences: the Central Mexico Mission Conference, the Mexican Border Mission Conference, and the Northwest Mexican Mission Conference.

The following missionaries are at present engaged in the Mexican work: A. H. Sutherland, J. W. Grimes, D. F. Watkins, Geo. B. Winton, J. M. Weems, J. D. Scoggins, D. W. Carter, S. G. Kilgore, J. F. Corbin, R. C. Elliott, W. D. King, J. C. Cavener, J. R. Mood.

The statistics for 1892 are as follows: Missionaries, 13; wives, 10; native preachers, 80; members, 4863; Sunday-schools, 153; scholars, 3642; day-schools, 14; pupils, 1192; churches, 52; value, \$92,029; parsonages, 19. Total value of property, \$167,512. Appropriations for 1893, \$73,094. Total appropriations to the Mexican work, \$1,125,362.

The three conferences support a weekly paper, "El Evangelista Mexicano."

#### 4. *The Brazil Mission.*

The Rev. J. E. Newman, of the Alabama Conference, removed to Brazil at the close of the war of 1861-65. He preached and worked, as he was able, among the English-speaking people of the province of San Paulo. Later he organized a small society there. In 1875 he was recognized as a missionary of the M. E. Church, South, and

appointed superintendent of the work which the church then undertook in Brazil. In the same year Rev. J. J. Ransom, of the Tennessee Conference, was appointed to labor in that empire, and was put in charge of the work in Rio de Janeiro. In the years following others were sent out by the Board: J. L. Kennedy, J. W. Tarbaux, H. C. Tucker, J. W. Wolling, E. A. Tilly, Michael Dickie, John M. Lauder, R. C. Dickson, J. L. Bruce, and C. B. McFarland. The mission was organized into an Annual Conference by Bishop Granbery in 1887.

The statistics for 1893 are as follows: Missionaries, 10; wives, 9; native preachers, 16; native local preachers, 5; members, 825; Sunday-schools, 11; scholars, 441; boys' day-schools, 5; pupils, 438.

There is a beautiful stone church in Rio, a comely brick church in Juiz de Fora, a good brick church in Piracicaba, and other chapels to the amount of about \$75,000 in value. Total value of church property, \$111,626. Contributed (1893) by the members, \$7022. Appropriated by the Board for 1893, \$31,440. Total appropriations, \$326,821. They have a weekly paper, their conference organ, the "Expositor Christão," with 1650 subscribers.

### 5. *The Mission to Japan.*

The mission to Japan is the youngest of the missions. The first appropriation was made in 1885. In 1886 Rev. Dr. J. W. Lambuth, who had previously made a *reconnoissance* of the island, was transferred from China to take charge in Japan. He was accompanied by Rev. W. R. Lambuth, M.D., his son, and Rev. O. A. Dukes, M.D. In September of that year the first meeting of the Japan Mission was held at Kobe. Bishop Wilson, accompanied by Rev. Collins Denny, was present. In 1887 the mission re-

ported 6 foreign members, 1 Chinese, and 1 Japanese. In the beginning of 1888 the missionaries had received into the church by baptism 64 adults, and had 66 probationers. The General Board has, at present, 18 missionaries in Japan. Rev. W. R. Lambuth, M.D., at home on leave; Rev. W. E. Towson, Osaka, Japan; S. H. Wainright, M.D., at home on leave; Rev. J. C. C. Newton, Kwansei Gakuin, Kobe, Japan; Rev. N. W. Utley, Osaka, Japan; Rev. T. W. B. Demaree, Kwansei Gakuin, Kobe, Japan; Rev. B. W. Waters, Hiroshima, Japan; Rev. C. B. Moseley, Matsuyama, Japan; Rev. W. A. Wilson, Oita, Japan; Rev. Simeon Shaw, Yamaguchi, Japan; Rev. H. G. Hawkins, Matsuyama, Japan; Rev. W. A. Davis, Uwajima post-office, Japan; Rev. J. T. Meyers, Tadotsu post-office, Kobe, Japan; Rev. C. A. Tague, Iwakuni post-office, Hiroshima, Japan; Rev. S. E. Hager, Osaka, Japan; W. P. Turner, Kobe, Japan; C. M. Bradbury, Kobe, Japan; Rev. B. S. Rayner.

The statistics for 1893 are: Missionaries, 18; wives, 9. Native preachers: traveling, 6; local preachers, 6; exhorters, 14. Members, 507; increase during the year, 57; probationers, 87; Sunday-schools, 42; scholars, 1297; theological schools, 1; theological students, 15; boys' day-schools, 13; pupils, 385; churches, 5; chapels, 26; parsonages, 4. Total value of property, \$37,366; collections, \$3699.90. In 1892 Dr. J. W. Lambuth died in Japan. His dying message to the Church was, "I die at my post. Send more men."

#### 6. *Missions to the Indians.*

The Indian Mission Conference is a mixed conference, having 2000 white members and 10,759 Indian members, some pure bloods, some mixed bloods.<sup>1</sup> It extends

<sup>1</sup> Dr. I. G. John, Missionary Secretary, is my authority for these figures.

over Indian and Oklahoma Territories. There were 1329 additions to the church during the year 1892-93. The conference has 160 churches, valued at \$74,265, and 43 parsonages, valued at \$21,194. The Harrell Institute, under the presidency of Rev. Theodore F. Brewer, has a faculty of 9 teachers and 250 students. Besides this, there are four other schools, with 13 teachers and 327 pupils. The conference contributed last year for foreign missions, \$2150.05; for domestic missions, \$972; for church extension, \$492.35. Appropriations, 1892-93, \$21,340.

"We have confessedly a larger field and greater success among the Indians than any other church in the country," says Dr. John, Missionary Secretary.

### 7. *German Missions.*

The German Mission Conference embraces all the German churches in the State of Texas. It was organized in 1874 at Houston. For 1892 it reports 19 missionaries and 1073 members. It has a college at Fredericksburg, Texas.

The amount collected by the General Board for the foreign missions of the church during the year ending April 1, 1893, was \$346,572.39. "The Methodist Review of Missions," a monthly magazine of sixty-four pages, edited by Dr. John and Dr. Lambuth and published by the General Board, is a bright, newsy, attractive, and earnest advocate of the great cause, and will compare favorably with the missionary magazines of other churches. Dr. John has just written and published a volume entitled "A Handbook of Methodist Missions" (pp. 604), which is an exceedingly valuable manual.



### 8. *Woman's Work in the Church.*<sup>1</sup>

In April, 1874, largely through the zeal and efforts of Mrs. M. L. Kelley, some of the Methodist women of Nashville, Tenn., formed themselves into an organization known as a "Bible Mission," with two distinct objects: one to furnish aid and Bible instruction to the poor and destitute of the city, the other to collect and contribute pecuniary aid to foreign missionary fields. In three years this society secured a home for the poor of the city, founded the "Mission Home" for fallen women, which has grown into a large and permanent institution, and contributed \$3000 for Christian work among the women of China. To this work Mrs. Kelley devoted her every treasure, her prayers, her labor, her child, and her grandchild, both of whom spent some time in China. Similar societies were about the same time or soon afterward organized at Warren, Ark., in the Broad Street Church in Richmond, Va., at Macon, Ga., Glasgow, Mo., Louisville, Ky., and Franklin, N. C. For some years before this a society of ladies in New Orleans had been working for the Mexican Mission. In 1878 there were more than twenty Woman's Missionary Societies in the Southern Methodist Church. These were the same year incorporated into one, and the Woman's Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was organized under a constitution provided by the General Conference of that year, with Mrs. Juliana Hayes, of Baltimore, as first president, and Mrs. D. H. McGavock, of Nashville, Tenn., as corresponding secretary. Miss Lochie Rankin, of Tennessee, was the first representative of the newly formed society. She was sent to take charge of a school in Shanghai. This school was already in existence under the General Board, with an

<sup>1</sup> See chapter by Mrs. Black in "Handbook of Methodist Missions."

attendance of 29 pupils and 6 native Bible women. The first meeting of the General Executive Board of the Woman's Missionary Society was held in Louisville, Ky., in May, 1879. Fifteen conference societies had been organized, with 219 auxiliaries, numbering 5890 members. The receipts for that first year were over \$4000. At the next annual meeting, in Nashville, Tenn., delegates from twenty-two conference societies were present, representing 465 auxiliaries and 12,273 members. The collections for the second year were \$13,775. A second missionary had been sent out in 1879, Miss Dora Rankin. She joined her sister the same year, and the two were together put in charge of a new school established at Nantziang, while the school at Shanghai was put in charge of Mrs. Lambuth. A generous lady of Baltimore purchased and donated a home for the missionaries in Nantziang—the "Louise Home." The need of an official organ was felt, and the "Woman's Missionary Advocate" was established at Nashville, with Mrs. F. A. Butler as editor.

From these beginnings the work has grown until now the society has 2209 auxiliaries with 76,396 members, and there are flourishing missions and mission schools and hospitals in China, in South America, and in Mexico. In the field in China there are 9 missionaries of the Woman's Board, 52 native teachers, 5 Bible women, 4 boarding-schools, 33 day-schools, 758 pupils, and 1 hospital and dispensary. The points occupied are Shanghai, Nantziang, Kading, and Suchow.

The work of the Woman's Board in Mexico extends to a greater number of points. In the Laredo District there are 5 missionaries, 11 teachers, 4 native teachers, 531 pupils. At Saltillo there are 3 missionaries, 5 teachers, 181 pupils. In Durango, 1 missionary, 3 teachers, 80 pupils. In Chihuahua, 3 missionaries, 3 teachers, 109

pupils. In the San Luis Potosi, 1 missionary, 7 teachers, 158 pupils. In the Mexican work altogether there are 13 missionaries, 32 teachers, ten of whom are natives, and 1171 pupils.

In the Brazilian work there are 9 missionaries, 14 teachers, four of whom are native, 3 schools, and 240 pupils. The points occupied are Piracicaba, in the province of São Paulo, and Rio and Juiz de Fora, in the province of Rio.

The Woman's Board has and supports a school at Anadarko, in the Indian Territory, which has 4 teachers and 54 pupils.

In 1890 they had property in China worth \$60,000; in Mexico, \$66,300; in Brazil, \$45,000; in Indian Territory, \$5000; total, \$176,300. The collections of the Woman's Society for 1892-93 amounted to \$99,289.65.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to the Woman's Foreign Missionary Society there is another and a distinct society of women called the "PARSONAGE AND HOME MISSION SOCIETY." This was first organized as the "Woman's Department of Church Extension," but was afterward enlarged so as to take in any work coming under the head of home missions. Its primary object was to collect funds for the building of parsonages in needy places, and corresponded in this respect to the work of the Board of Church Extension in building churches in needy places. Miss Lucinda B. Helm, of Kentucky, to whose fertile brain the conception of the plan is due, was the first secretary and general manager, and under her zealous and successful leadership the society has grown to be an invaluable adjunct to the department of church extension.

Since its organization, in 1886, the general society and its auxiliaries have raised for all purposes \$114,000. They have built or helped to build 550 parsonages, and

<sup>1</sup> "Report of the Woman's Missionary Society for 1893," p. 63.

many of these have been the means of establishing our church where otherwise it would have had no existence, or at best a feeble existence.<sup>1</sup> The society devotes itself also to the encouragement and development of local home mission work, wherever its members may be situated. The local auxiliary in Nashville, for example, employs two excellent and intelligent ladies, who have received special training, in Christian work among the lower classes. The present general secretary is Mrs. Ruth Scarritt, Kansas City, Mo.

For the special training of women who are preparing themselves for mission work, either in the home or foreign field, a school has in the last few years been established by the women of the church. It is located in Kansas City, Mo. The beautiful and commanding site upon which it is located and \$25,000 toward the building were donated by the Rev. Dr. Nathan Scarritt. The women of the church subsequently raised \$25,000, and a building has been erected which is a model of convenience and of architectural beauty. It is appropriately named the "Scarritt Bible and Training School." The principal is Miss M. L. Gibson. It has the following departments: Bible Study, Church History, Moral Philosophy and Christian Evidences, Nurse Training, Industrial, City Mission Work, Physical Culture. It has also a hospital department and a medical faculty. It corresponds, in part, to schools for deaconesses in other churches. It is in its second year of operation, and is doubtless destined to a career of enlarging beneficence and blessing in many ways and for all time to come.

<sup>1</sup> See "Report of Woman's Parsonage and Home Mission Society," p. 34.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### GENERAL VIEW AND CONCLUSION.

WE have now outlined the history of the origin of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as a distinct ecclesiastical body ; its development, growth, and work during the years of its early prosperity, from 1846 to 1860 ; its period of depletion, impoverishment, and depression during and following the war, from 1861 to 1866 ; its resuscitation and phenomenal growth from 1866 to 1890. It remains to give a brief outline of its present condition, and to conclude.

While statistics are not an absolutely correct and infallible indication of the actual state and the real forces of a church, yet, with some general knowledge besides, they give a fairly proximate idea, and it would be difficult to form an estimate without them. It has been said that figures will not lie. But it has also been said that lies will figure. In one respect the statistics of a church involve an over-statement of its forces and resources, inasmuch as it is certain that not all those who are counted and who help to swell the numbers are actual Christians or available and effective helpers in its work. On the other hand, there are conditions, influences, and elements of power that cannot be weighed and measured, that cannot be reduced to arithmetical calculation and tabulation. So that, on the whole, statistics will at least afford as correct an estimate of a church's achievements and resources as can be put in a comprehensive and summary statement.

They furnish also a comparative estimate of the work of the several churches. The old rule, with some grains of allowance, applies here, that it is as fair for one as it is for the other.

We are able to give the statistics of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, for the year 1891-92, the returns for 1892-93 not being yet made out.

Traveling preachers.	Local preachers.	White members.	Colored members.	Indian members.	Total membership.
5,368	6,481	1,282,750	357	10,759 <sup>1</sup>	1,305,715

The year 1893 was one of general revival and large ingathering. It is perfectly certain that the total will now considerably exceed 1,350,000. The Southern Methodists outnumber any other single Protestant church in the country except the Baptists, who (without counting the colored churches) reckon, all told, *North and South*, about 2,200,000, and the Northern Methodists, who reported for 1892, *probationers, colored members and all*, 2,473,159.<sup>2</sup>

Further statistics for 1891-92 :

Sunday- schools.	Teach- ers.	Schol- ars.	Churches.	Value.	Parson- ages.	Value.	Total value.
13,426	95,204	754,223	12,856	\$20,287,112	3,015	\$3,693,436	\$23,980,546

Missionary statistics for 1892-93 :

Foreign Missions.	Domestic Missions.	Woman's Board.	Total for Missions.	Church Extension.
\$346,572.39 <sup>3</sup>	\$134,690.74	\$99,289.65 <sup>4</sup>	\$580,552.78	\$80,685.85 <sup>5</sup>

At least a third of the Church Extension collections was used on mission fields. This will make over \$600,000 raised for mission work in 1892-93.

The conference collections for the superannuated

<sup>1</sup> See p. 126 and note.

<sup>2</sup> See "Methodist Year-Book" for 1893, p. 49.

<sup>3</sup> "Report of Board of Missions for 1893," p. 208.

<sup>4</sup> "Report of Woman's Missionary Society," 1893, p. 63.

<sup>5</sup> "Church Extension Bulletin," July, 1893, p. 2.

preachers and the widows and orphans of deceased preachers for 1891-92 amounted to \$148,577.46.

Educational statistics for 1891-92:

Schools and Colleges.	Teachers.	Pupils.	Value of property.	Endowment.
179	897	16,620	\$4,485,042	\$1,538,000

The history of the church will vindicate the claim that according to her ability she has been the patron of education. Retaining in 1845 possession of the institutions which were located in her territory, she at once inaugurated and between the years 1846 and 1860 carried forward an educational movement of great vigor and wide extent. During that period more than thirty schools of collegiate grade sprang into existence, some with liberal endowments, while the older ones were enlarged or more adequately endowed. The Journal of the General Conference of 1858 gives the names and statistics of 106 schools and colleges owned or controlled by the church.<sup>1</sup> During the war all or nearly all these were closed; many of them were destroyed. After the devastations of the war, and under the embarrassments of her impoverished condition, the church addressed herself to the task of restoring her educational institutions. Considering the inadequacy of her resources, her lack of means, and the difficulties to be overcome, her success has not been small. The results of her earnest efforts have received generous recognition upon the part of observant men of other churches and sections and countries. Bishop Merrill, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, says: "The zeal of our Southern brethren in rebuilding their church institutions since the desolations of the war has been phenomenal. The history of Methodism scarcely affords a parallel to the successes they have achieved."<sup>2</sup> Dr. Waller, the fraternal delegate of the Brit-

<sup>1</sup> "Journal of General Conference of 1858," pp. 523-532.

<sup>2</sup> "Organic Union of American Methodism," p. 109.

ish Wesleyan Conference to the General Conference of the Southern Church in 1890, said: "The way in which Southern Methodism rose from the ashes after the war is one of the most remarkable facts in modern church history."

Her leading institution is the Vanderbilt University, at Nashville, Tenn., representing the munificent gifts of father, son, and grandson of the great family of that name in the Knickerbocker State. After this comes Randolph-Macon College, with its two affiliated fitting-schools and Woman's College, in Virginia; Emory College, in Georgia; Emory and Henry, in Western Virginia; Wofford, with its two fitting-schools, in South Carolina; Trinity, in North Carolina; Central, in Missouri; Southern, in Alabama; Southwestern, in Texas; Wesleyan, in Kentucky; Millsaps, in Mississippi; Centenary, in Louisiana; Hendrix, in Arkansas; Pacific, in California. These schools have been and are more or less crippled for lack of ample endowments. Most of them have some endowment, and are making most vigorous and not altogether unsuccessful efforts to increase it.

Vanderbilt University has property approximating a million dollars in value and a productive endowment of \$900,000. While this is a good beginning, the University is in great need of at least a million more.

The establishment of this institution in the South has given a great impulse to the cause of education in general, whose momentum increases with the advancing years. It created the necessity for a class of training-schools which are springing up in all parts of the connection to meet the increasing demand. On the other hand, the University is furnishing trained teachers for these training-schools, as well as for chairs in many of the colleges, both in the church and out of it; who in their turn are preparing students for the University and directing them with enthusiasm to the halls of their own honored *alma mater*.



Students from the training-schools enter the University to take the regular course: students from the colleges enter the higher classes of the undergraduate course, or take post-graduate or professional courses. The University, on the one hand, and the colleges and training-schools, on the other, are interdependent, correlative, and complementary. The University in ever-increasing measure supplies trained teachers for the colleges and training-schools, while these in turn supply students for the University classes, and there is endless and ever-increasing progression.

This correlation, however, has, so far, been only partially realized in practice. The universal application of the principle would give us a complete, effective, and almost ideal educational system. This will involve mutual concessions, and the subordination of local and personal to general interests. For this consummation many of the leading men are devoutly wishing and hoping, and toward it they are looking and working.

We have four theological schools: the theological department of Vanderbilt University, a theological school at San Luis Potosi, in Mexico, another at Kobe, in Japan, and the theological department of Paine Institute, for colored preachers.

With all that has been said, our educational institutions, especially the Colleges and the University, are in great need of large pecuniary aid, and it must in all candor be confessed and declared that men of means in the South have not yet risen to an appreciation of the opportunity that is set before them, and of the responsibility that is laid upon them.<sup>1</sup>

For twelve years after its organization the Methodist

<sup>1</sup> It was the purpose of the author to devote a full chapter to the history of education in the church, but the exigencies of space absolutely forbade it.

Episcopal Church, South, had no publishing-house of its own, for causes given in other parts of this history. In 1862 the nascent institution was taken and used during the remainder of the war as a United States printing-office. In 1872 the house was burned. In 1878 its liabilities exceeded its assets by \$124,383, and it was declared insolvent. On April 1, 1893, its total assets amounted to \$659,516.58, with an insignificant debt of \$13,396.18. The volume of business for the fiscal year ending April 1, 1893, amounted to \$343,707.94, out of the profits of which \$17,500 was appropriated for the benefit of worn-out preachers and the widows and orphans of deceased preachers.<sup>1</sup> These facts and figures speak for themselves.

"The Christian Advocate," one of the leading weeklies of the country, with Dr. E. E. Hoss as editor and Dr. E. M. Bounds, assistant editor, has a circulation of nearly 25,000. "The Pacific Methodist Advocate" (San Francisco), Dr. H. M. DuBose, editor, is the organ of the church in the West. Both these are the property and the official organs of the church. Besides these two there are twenty-seven other papers published as organs of conferences or by private enterprise. One of these is in German, one in Spanish, one in Portuguese, two in Chinese. The church publishes a "Quarterly Review," Dr. W. P. Harrison, editor, which will compare favorably with other church reviews. "The Methodist Review of Missions" has been noticed elsewhere. "The Woman's Missionary Advocate," edited by Mrs. F. A. Butler, has a circulation of 13,000, and richly deserves as many more. The Sunday-school publications, of which Rev. Dr. W. G. E. Cunyningham is editor, reach up into the millions.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is at peace with herself. While her progress has been singularly

<sup>1</sup> Report of Barbee and Smith, Agents, for 1892-93.

beset with difficulties and discouragements from without, she has been singularly free from dissensions or disturbances within. " She has pursued her course and performed her heaven-appointed work with a unity and continuity of purpose to which church history affords few parallels. A more homogeneous ecclesiastical community does not exist on the American continent. Throughout her entire history her peace has never been disturbed by heresy, or by wild and venturesome speculation, or even by serious doctrinal controversy. She has kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace: one body, one Spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. On this point Bishop Merrill bears generous testimony: " Soundness of doctrine is maintained with reference to all that is vital in the Christian system. The Word of God is laid upon the consciences of the people with its stern requirements and penalties, as well as with its promises and grace, as the only standard of moral obligation." <sup>1</sup>

The church has studiously and persistently kept herself aloof from all entanglements with or interferences in political matters. This is not because she is insensible of her position and relations in the world, or indifferent to these things, but because she believes that the way to make a good state is to make good citizens, and the way to make good citizens is to make good men, and the way to make good men is to hold upon their consciences God's eternal law of right and God's eternal gospel of grace. To appeal to political motives or to arouse partisan passions would seriously if not effectually hinder this higher and holier work. Hence her doctrine is that the function of the church and ministry is to take care of the man; and the citizen and the state will take care of them-

<sup>1</sup> " The Organic Union of American Methodism," p. 108.

selves. She interferes with no man's political liberty; she neither dictates nor suggests any man's political action. The conviction is thoroughly ingrained and universal that by political interferences she would lose her hold on men and lessen her power for higher good. Hence her ministers instinctively abstain even from political allusions. This does not mean that the church or her ministers are non-committal and silent upon great moral and social questions. The caustic deliverances of the last two General Conferences on the question of *prohibition*, and the emphatic action of the last one on the subject of *divorce*, are proofs to the contrary.

The agitation of certain questions of church polity or economy, which so seriously disturbs the peace of some other churches, has not invaded the Southern Methodist fold. The tendency to Congregationalism, of which so much has been written in Methodist journals of late, if in reality it exists at all, exists to a very small extent in Southern Methodism. The preachers go where they are sent, even to the barren missions of the remote rural districts, and there are many noble and touching examples of the ancient heroism of the Methodist itinerancy throughout the South. If any preacher has refused to go to a "hard appointment," or has afterward left the church on account of a "hard appointment," since the beginning of this writer's ministry (1877), he does not know of it. On the other hand, the wealthy metropolitan congregations receive and support the ministers who are sent to them, though sometimes against their choice and judgment. And in comparatively few instances is any undue pressure brought to bear upon the bishop by laymen to control appointments. Indeed, some of the bishops have said that the laymen do not give expression to their views and wishes as frequently and as freely as they ought.

Upon the broader and more fundamental matters of church polity, as the relations of the different departments of church government, their functions, powers, and rights, there is practical unanimity of view. The relations and prerogatives of the episcopal office, the powers and limitations of the General Conference, the rights and functions of the body of elders constituting the Annual Conferences, and the rights of individual ministers and private members—all these are articulately defined and securely fixed and guarded by the constitution. These definitions and safeguards are clearly understood by the ministry and the laity of the church, and are accepted with a consensus that is little short of unanimity. Witness the vote of the Annual Conferences creating the veto proviso of the constitution—2024 yeas to 9 nays.<sup>1</sup> There is at present some little breeze of discussion among the newspapers concerning the criticism of bishops and their official acts, which is all right and proper; but it hardly touches the constitutional aspects of the subject, and there is no real demand for any essential change.

The sphere of woman in the work of the church has quietly settled itself, and to the entire and unfeigned satisfaction of the women as well as the men. There has never been the slightest agitation, disturbance, or discontent in the adjustments of this great question in the past; there is not the slightest at the present.

The colored problem is unknown in the Southern Methodist Church. That problem solved itself long ago, and quietly. The General Conference, at the request of the 60,000 colored members, set them up as an independent church in 1870. They have their own conferences, Annual and General, they have their own bishops, they manage their own affairs, they are satisfied, and they are

<sup>1</sup> See page 90.

doing well. Those who wished to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, did so without let or hindrance. A few so preferred, and our statistics report 357 colored members. But the Southern Church did not in one sense set *off* her colored members, she only set them *up*, as one of the colored bishops wittily remarked; and the "Mother-Church," as they affectionately call us,<sup>1</sup> still takes a parental interest in them and renders them substantial help. "It was widely thought," to quote once more the words of Bishop Merrill, "that when the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, organized this colored church and ordained its bishops, the chief aim was to get rid of its colored membership. But better things have come to pass. The newly opened fountain of liberality is pouring streams of blessing on the needy. Both churches are to be congratulated."<sup>2</sup>

The Southern Methodist Church has fraternal relations with all Methodisms, and with the leading evangelical churches of other names and orders. She exchanges either fraternal messengers or messages with the principal Methodist bodies, white and colored, of the United States and Canada, and the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Great Britain, with the Northern and Southern Presbyterians, the Cumberland Presbyterians, and the Baptists.<sup>3</sup> As to federation she is, perhaps, over-conservative, a trifle provincial, but it is to be hoped that ere long she will be ready to coöperate in the way of federation with other Methodisms and other evangelical churches, in all prudent and practicable ways. As to fusion with other bodies, the mass of her ministry and membership holds

<sup>1</sup> See article of Bishop Holsey in "The Independent" for March 5, 1891.

<sup>2</sup> "The Organic Union of American Methodism," p. 105.

<sup>3</sup> "Handbook of Southern Methodism," pp. 120-128.

that it is safest and best to leave that momentous question to "the leadings of Providence and the logic of events."

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, along with her sister evangelical churches, stands for the faith once for all delivered to the saints, for the pure and simple gospel of Jesus Christ, and for the conversion of the world; along with other Methodist bodies, she stands for every doctrine of Arminian Wesleyan theology, "from prevenient grace to perfect love"; more than any other church in the world, she stands for Constitutional Episcopal Methodism.

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