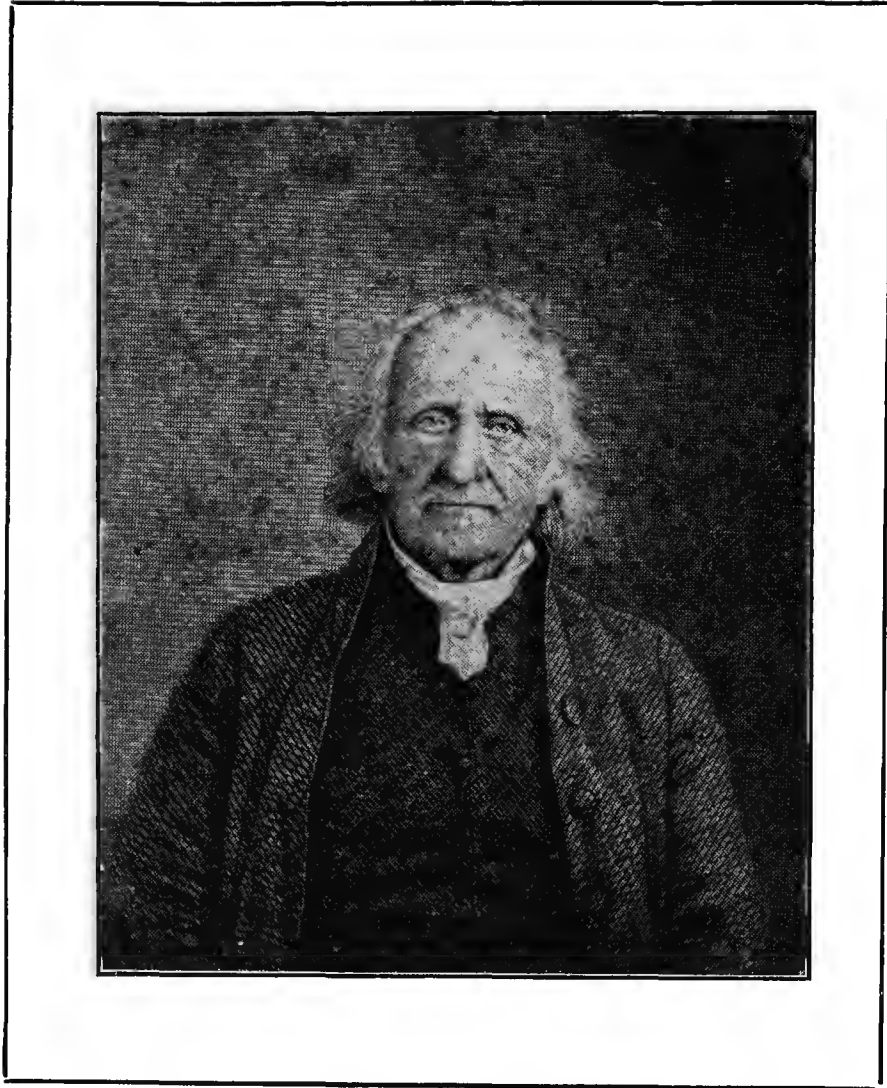




# HOLSTON METHODISM.

(i)



THOMAS WILKERSON.

# HOLSTON METHODISM

FROM ITS ORIGIN TO THE  
PRESENT TIME.

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BY R. N. PRICE.

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VOLUME II.

FROM THE YEAR 1804 TO THE YEAR 1824.

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NASHVILLE, TENN., DALLAS, TEX.:  
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## PREFACE.

By the favor and energy of the Holston preachers three thousand copies of Volume I. of "Holston Methodism" have been sold. Volume I. has paved the way for Volume II. The latter has over the former the merit of bringing the history nearer to our times. The annals proper of this volume do not come further this way than 1824; but the volume is largely biographical, and many of the men sketched died in our times—instance, Samuel B. Harwell, who died in 1874. These sketches, therefore, make this volume somewhat modern.

I had hoped to get into this volume the sketches of Stringfield, Fulton, S. Patton, and Sevier; but these must be deferred to Volume III. The sketches of these men necessarily introduce the subject of the rise and progress of the higher education in Holston, and notices of the controversies which agitated our people in the past—namely, the Arian, the Radical, and the Calvinistic controversies. This fact will make Volume III. the most important and interesting of the series. Whether Volume III. shall ever see the light depends on whether the sale of Volume II. is sufficiently encouraging.

I am not exclusively responsible for the delay in the issuance of the present volume, as the committee advised a season of delay, and as for some reason the Publishing House has seen cause to add further delay; but I must credit the House with great care in the typesetting and the mechanical work generally. An ancient painter, being twitted with the tardiness of his work, replied: "I am painting for eternity." Let us hope that our tardiness will redound to the usefulness and permanency of the work.

Our principal trouble is the financial question. A history so local and so denominational must necessarily be limited in its circulation, and the income from it must necessarily be meager; but I am willing to suffer want and embarrassment, if I may but rescue from oblivion the noble men and women who in the wilderness, amid savage beasts and more savage

men, planted the Methodism which we now enjoy, and if, through these humble pages, I may but assist in reviving and maintaining the martyr spirit which actuated them.

If genius, eloquence, abundant labors, sublime powers of endurance, dogged perseverance, a wonderful unselfishness, a quenchless love of souls, and a burning zeal for God's glory entitle men and women to historic recognition, then the men and women of Holston deserve to be commemorated.

R. N. PRICE.

Morristown, Tenn., June 25, 1906.

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## CHAPTER I.

### JOHN ADAM GRANADE.

JOHN ADAM GRANADE was admitted into the Western Conference on trial in 1801, received into full connection in 1803, and located in 1804. His fields were: 1801, Greene; 1802, Holston; 1803, Hinkstone.

Few men with so brief an itinerant career in the Methodist Church have made so much history. He darted into our sky like a meteor, blazed with splendor for a short time, then disappeared, leaving a luminous trail behind. He was an eccentric man, but his eccentricities were natural and inevitable. They were the eccentricities of unusually profound convictions of gospel verities, of awful apprehensions of the consequences of sin, and of a burning, all-consuming zeal for God and the salvation of men. There is a general disposition to look upon eccentricities as faults; and they are, indeed, disgusting faults if cultivated and artificial. There is also a general disposition to berate eccentric men. High offices in the Church are denied them, and they are placed in positions below their talents and deserts. Yet it is a matter of fact that the very eccentricities which are so severely criticised, and which inure to their present disadvantage, segregate them from the common herd and point them out as conspicuous marks for historical recognition. The eccentricities of Lorenzo Dow, Peter Cartwright, James Axley, Simon Peter Richardson, and the like have served only to trumpet

abroad their real merits and to call attention to the heroic virtues that characterized them.

No man ever did so much good in so short a time as John A. Granade. Fortunately for the Church, Granade wrote an autobiography. This biography is still in manuscript; but some of the most striking events in his Christian and ministerial career, as recorded in this manuscript, have found their way into print.

The Rev. Herve A. Granade, a grandson of John A. Granade, has furnished for publication certain extracts from this journal, which I give substantially as follows:

Granade's ancestors were from France. He was born near Newbern, Jones County, N. C., the precise date of his birth not known. By a very pious and intelligent mother he was early taught the fear of God. At the age of thirteen, after a series of extraordinary exercises of mind, he embraced religion. He, however, soon lapsed into sin, and devoted his poetic gifts and all his energies to the service of Satan. He says in his journal that he had spent as many as seven days and nights consecutively in dancing and frolicking; but he had no relish for drinking, quarreling, and fighting. Becoming perfectly reckless, he rambled into Kentucky and the Cumberland country, returning in a few months to find that he had brought his mother's gray hairs in sorrow to the grave. Terrified by a guilty conscience, he left North Carolina and took up a school in South Carolina, near the line, where he was useful and popular as a teacher.

President Adams proclaimed a national fast to be observed May 9, 1797, and Granade did not observe

it because he was prejudiced against the administration; but, calling to mind that it was his own birthday, he regretted that he failed to observe the fast. On the 16th of the same month began that revolution in his mind to which he devoted much of the journal which was kept and left in manuscript.

Reading in a newspaper of the difficulties between the United States and France, he burned with patriotic zeal, and determined to enlist as a soldier in case of war. The thought of being a soldier, exposed to the hazards of battle, induced self-examination, and, finding himself unready to meet God in judgment, he was plunged into dreadful conflicts with Satan. So distressing was his agony, and so powerfully did the Spirit strive with him, that he became a gazingstock to the family with which he boarded, to his pupils, and to his wicked companions. Instead of loud threats and harsh rebukes in the schoolroom, he now spoke only words of love and sympathy; the brow of brass was covered with shame; his face was bedewed with tears. Ashamed to weep in the presence of his pupils, he fled to the woods; and as he went a powerful sensation of the sufferings of Christ filled his mind. He felt that he had joined in with the Jewish rabble, crying: "Crucify him, crucify him!" While thus buffeted by Satan, and longing for advice from some Christian friend, a Mr. Pace, a justice of the peace of Anson County, N. C., living just across the line, and a Methodist, came by. Granade called him and unfolded to him the troubles of his stricken heart. Mr. Pace carried him to Mr. Hill, a local Methodist preacher, and they took great pains to aid him by advice and prayer. Determined to take every advantage of the



devil, he burned his cards, cut the ruffles from his shirt with his penknife, and had his hair, of which he had been proud, polled. He began to attend the meetings of the Methodists, and sought every opportunity to avail himself of their prayers and counsels. His distress was so great that he gave up his school and set out for Georgia in company with the family of a brother-in-law. Before leaving Carolina, the Universalists attempted to induce him to travel and preach in support of their system, which he had sometime previously embraced. But they found him crying to God for mercy. He told them that he now renounced a poem which he had composed in the interest of Universalism, and which they had published, and he denounced the whole system of "Restoration" as a stratagem of the devil to bring souls to eternal ruin. The party went to Augusta, Ga.; but, instead of remaining there, they journeyed to Tennessee. On this tiresome journey Mr. Granade went to God in secret prayer four times a day. At length they reached Sumner County, Tenn. At his first opportunity Mr. Granade attended a class meeting there, and cast in his lot with the people called Methodists. He stood up in the congregation and exhorted the people. In a few days he had the good fortune to meet William Burke, who was then in charge of Cumberland Circuit. He rode with him and told him of his spiritual troubles, and Mr. Burke exhorted him to press forward till he should find peace. He accompanied John McGee next day to hear Mr. Burke preach, and Mr. McGee's account of his conversion so filled him with distress that Burke's sermon seemed to do him very little good. That evening he

returned to his camp determined not to rest till he found the pearl of great price. At this time there was a little star of hope that shone in his moral sky, as a light in a dark place. He was sometimes in despair, and sometimes hopeful; sometimes he could see in his mind congregations before him, and himself preaching to them with great earnestness. But Satan continued his assaults upon him; and he was driven to the woods, and resolved not to return till God had sent deliverance. He entered a cleft in a rock on the bank of Goose Creek, that his loud prayers and lamentations might not be heard for the noise of the rushing waters. He felt as if he were rowing up a stream, the wind, the Spirit of God, being in his favor, and that if he ceased to ply either oar, faith or prayer, he would go downstream immediately. The two oars acting in concert, he made headway. After returning to camp, his sister stood by him singing, when the glory of God broke in upon him, sweeter than honey or the honeycomb.

This blessing, however, was only temporary; the honey soon turned to gall; after the close of this bright day he spent a terrible, sleepless night in the wagon and in the woods, and in the morning it appeared as if Satan had turned loose all his fiendish might upon his soul. These words rang in his ears continually: "Your damnation is sealed; your day of grace is past; the wrath of God is upon you; you are a vessel of wrath; and the devil can be as readily saved as you." He verily believed that the wrath of God was being poured out on him. A burning flame ran through his whole being, attended with a dreadful sense of the torments of hell. Tormenting voices

followed him at times for two years ; and as he turned quickly from side to side to avoid the tormenting whisperers, the people looked at him with amazement. He rambled here and there with an anguish that no tongue could express. The pains of hell got hold upon him. He was seized with a burning in his stomach, and a fainting sickness ; and so strange were his feelings and exercises that his friends feared that he was losing his reason. When he went to bed at night, he was afraid to close his eyes, lest he should wake up in hell. Under the most unusual and excruciating terrors of mind and bodily distress, he suffered for two years.

At the request of Mr. Burke, Granade spent four weeks on the circuit ; and this good man and his wife, who traveled in company with him, did all they could to console him. The winter of 1797 and the spring of 1798 were spent in the woods. Day and night, through snow and rain, he went about howling, praying, and roaring in such a manner that he was generally reputed to be crazy. Satan tempted him to believe that he was deranged, and that he had lost his poetic talent. To test the matter, he composed his first spiritual poem, which consisted of eighteen verses, without halting or difficulty. The school children—for he was teaching again—liked it so much that they sang it at the close of the school. Mr. Granade continued to teach among the Wynns, Babbs, and Stulls during the year 1799. As schoolbooks were scarce, the Epistles of Paul were used in teaching elocution. The speeches selected from these Scriptures, when recited, produced a powerful impression on the teacher's mind. Although he feared that he

was a hopeless reprobate himself, he was anxious for the salvation of others; and he occasionally took his whole school to hear the Rev. William McGee, a Presbyterian minister. He also went to hear the Rev. Green Hill, and attended class meeting, where occasionally a slight ray of hope would flash upon his gloomy spirit. We here meet with the name of the Presbyterian preacher who accompanied his brother John McGee to Kentucky, and preached at the meeting at which the revival of 1800 began. Also we meet with the name of the local preacher at whose house the first Conference in North Carolina was held. He had moved to Middle Tennessee, and was still active in the work of saving souls.

A great union meeting between the Presbyterians and Methodists had been appointed. Mr. Granade dreamed two nights before the beginning of the meeting that he was at it surrounded by God's people, that he was there delivered from all his spiritual troubles, and he resolved to attend. His account in his journal, of the impression made on his mind by the first sight of the three thousand persons encamped on the ground is interesting. When he arrived, William Lambuth was preaching on "And yet I show unto you a more excellent way." Granade drank in every word. He listened eagerly and attentively to the sermon which followed by the Rev. John Rankin, a Presbyterian. When the minister came to the words, "The wind bloweth where it listeth; . . . so is every one that is born of the Spirit," that very moment heaven, which he had thought was forever sealed against him, was opened; the power of God as a rushing mighty wind descended from heaven and filled his whole being.

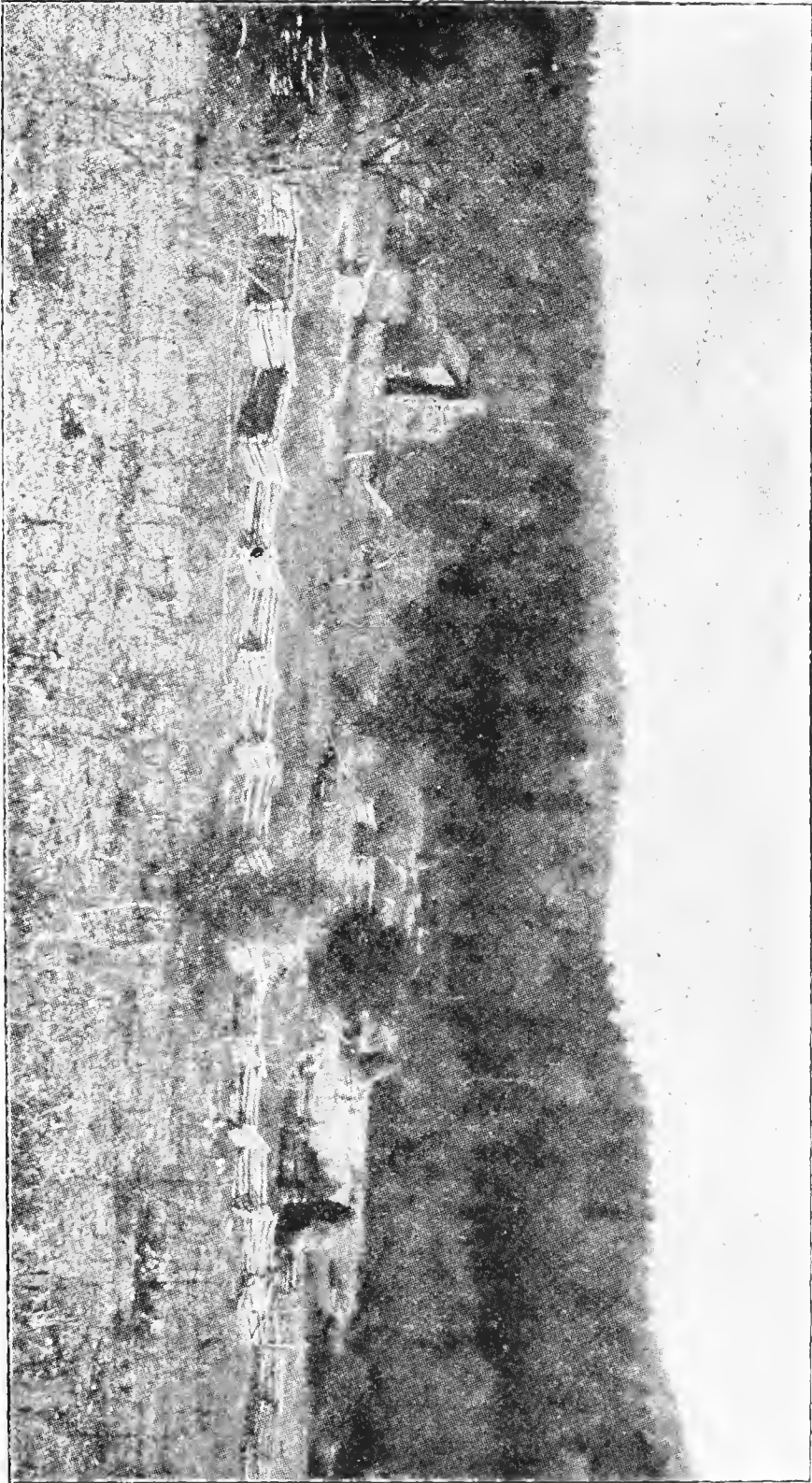
He began to whisper these words, "Adoration to God and the Lamb!" and as he repeated them the power increased, the heavens, the earth, and everything in a moment put on a new aspect. He could hold his peace no longer, but cried out: "Glory to God! Glory and adoration to God and the Lamb forever!" Streams of glory divine poured in upon him, and he went all over the encampment till midnight, praising the God who had brought him such wonderful deliverance. This attracted great attention, for he was noted among the masses as a wicked poet, who had used his gifts for the ridicule of religion and the promotion of unbelief, and for two years had been reported in North Carolina, Virginia, Tennessee, Georgia, and Kentucky as the "wild man," and, indeed, he was the wonder in these sections at that day. Great was the joy among the people when this "second Lazarus," as he called himself, was raised. He next partook of the Lord's Supper with the congregation, and, giving himself in a solemn vow to God, he arose and began to exhort the people. In a few moments sinners fell screaming on every side. Then followed a scene of indescribable power and glory, in which the happy man continued praising God, shouting and exhorting the people all night and a great part of the next day. He went forth from this scene of victory preaching the word of God. Many of his pupils and ungodly neighbors were, under his preaching, brought to realize in their own hearts the saving power of God. Even those who had set themselves against this "madness," as they called it, were swept before it like grass before a prairie fire. At his first effort at preaching five souls were wonder-

fully converted, and such shouting and praising of God were never witnessed in that country before. He soon gave up his school, and went from settlement to settlement warning the people, God attending his word in power everywhere.

Mr. Granade at this time knew scarcely anything of the system of Methodism. One thing he did know: that the people called Methodists were most intolerably persecuted everywhere, but he was glad to cast in his lot with them. He went to a quarterly meeting where he met with Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat, to whom he gave his consent to enter the traveling ministry. He was directed to Cumberland Circuit, to join another young man, Benjamin Young. On his way to his first appointment he was powerfully wrought on by the Spirit, and his limbs were so distorted that he could hardly ride. He visited his old neighborhood on Barton's Creek, and as he went from house to house God attended his strange exhortations with power, and many souls were saved. Having received permission from the Rev. Mr. Page to go and preach where he liked, and having resolved, by God's help, to attack the hosts of Satan wherever he might encounter them, he took the great country road leading to Nashville, and at dramshops and taverns, where rowdies were accustomed to engage in bacchanalian orgies, he went right in and, filled with the Spirit of God, warned them of their danger. Some cried for mercy and found peace; others went off furious and blaspheming. On his way he heard of a ball, and at once resolved to go and meet the enemy on his own field. He reached the place and, being invited in, found that the company were drinking,

swearing, and huzzaing like loons. He went up to the musician and, gently stroking him on his head, asked him if he would not stop playing for fifteen minutes. The fiddler swore at him and kept on playing. At that moment the glory of God as a mighty stream of fire flashed all over him, and his face burned with the holy flame. He took a book out of his pocket, and striking it violently with his hand he thundered out upon the revelers. The dancers were so frightened that they did not know whether they were dancing a reel or a jig, or something else. A fright ran all over the house. Mr. Fury (so Granade names him), one of the bulls of Bashan, ran at him, and landed him on the doorstep. He stepped into the yard, and the crowd without and from within surrounded him like a swarm of angry bees. Hell was troubled and threw up angry billows; but God was with him, and he thundered away on his astonished hearers on every hand. Some said he was a hypocrite, some said he was a good man, some said he was crazy or drunk, while another thought he would be a better fighter than preacher. He told them that Jesus Christ had shed his blood for them, and that if they did not repent of their sins and quit frolicking they would all go to hell. A bold orator of the devil said that, if there was such a man as Jesus Christ, and he had done so much for him, he was much obliged to him; but that he thought Thomas Paine a greater man than Jesus Christ, and would stand on the right hand of God in the day of judgment like a game cock. While uttering these blasphemous words the speaker was wildly leaping and huzzaing. Granade left them and went on his way rejoicing. It was a remarkable

AN OLD-TIME COUNTRY HOME IN HOLSTON.





day to him. As he rode along the glory of the Lord came down upon him and constrained him to praise God aloud for half a mile. What he saw and felt, he says, no mortal tongue could tell, God was so near to him! It was the practice of this intrepid hero to attack every person he met on the road, if he had the least opportunity; and by this course he warned many a poor sinner, and found out many of God's people, whom he would never have known as such if he had gone on silently. The world and even some professors of religion thought him cracked; but God blessed him in the practice, and thus caused him to persevere in it.

In the work of forming a new circuit in that section he had a very disagreeable adventure. One night he was bewildered in the mountains; thick canebrakes matted the valleys; snow was falling rapidly, and it was very cold. His account of this dreadful night spent only with his horse and his Saviour, as he forced his way through the tall, thick cane covered with snow and over the icy mountains, is truly appalling. He labored hard and successfully on this frontier work. He made the mountains, woods, and canebrakes ring louder with his shouts of praise to God than he once did with his howling lamentations. Of his experience at this time, he says: "Though it may be hard for some to believe, yet I declare the truth in Christ and lie not, and am giving only a faint sketch of my happiness, when I say that I never fell on my knees in secret but the Lord so poured out his power that I shouted aloud. Sometimes I shouted for two or three hours, and even fainted under the hand of the Lord. I was ready to cry out at the name of Jesus; and what I

saw by faith and felt by sweet communion with God I was afraid to relate to my best friend. The brightness of heaven rested continually upon my soul, so that I was often prevented from sleeping, eating, reading, writing, or preaching. I would sing a song or pray or exhort a few minutes, and the fire would break out among the people, and the slain of the Lord everywhere were many. I have spent nine nights out of ten (besides my day meetings and long, hard rides) until midnight with the slain of the Lord. Thus I went on, regardless of my life. Many precious souls were converted in a few weeks. I went by the name of the 'distracted preacher,' but I cared not for this."

At a union meeting between the Presbyterians and Methodists the preachers persuaded Mr. Granade to be baptized, for he had never received the ordinance. He told them that he cared but little about it, but that he would ask the Lord about it. Standing up in the pulpit with his back to the people, he prayed, and he says: "The Lord answered by fire, and I stood and shouted with all my strength for fifteen minutes. I got some water, and Brother Page and Brother Hodge (a Presbyterian preacher whom my soul loved) and Brother John McGee went with me in secret before the Lord. We all kneeled; Brother McGee prayed and poured the water on my head, and God poured his heavenly showers on my soul and body, which was enough for me though all the world condemned the baptism."

It was now 1801, and Mr. Granade attended a quarterly meeting, at which he was recommended for admission into the Western Conference, to be held in Greene County, Tenn. He set out for the Confer-

ence with Brother Page, Brother Hodge, brother to the Presbyterian minister by that name, and two young men. They slept on the ground at night and heard the howlings of the furious wolves. They passed by West Point (Kingston) and through Grassy Valley to Sterns's and John Winton's, where they had a glorious meeting; thence they rode to Vanpelt's, and thence to Ebenezer, the seat of the Conference.

The Conference was held in a spacious upper room at the house of Felix Earnest. Bishop Asbury presided, assisted by Nicholas Snethen, William McKendree, and many elders, deacons, and preachers. On Sunday, at the sacrament, great power was felt; twenty souls were converted. Granade was greatly excited, and it was soon known that the "wild man" was at the Conference. He excited great curiosity, which, however, he did not regard. His recommendation was received, and while he was downstairs, and his case was being considered, a collection was taken up in the Conference. When he came in, Bishop Asbury said to him: "We are raising money for a destitute preacher; how much will you give?" Taking out his purse, Granade gave it to the Bishop, saying: "I have two dollars; take as much of it as you want." The Bishop, putting his money and purse with the collected money, handed it to the astonished and overjoyed Granade, and, embracing him affectionately, informed him that he was received into the Conference. The Bishop and all the brethren were exceedingly kind to him.

The Conference at which he was admitted was held in October. He was appointed to Greene Circuit with Moses Floyd. He at once began on Pigeon

River, and at every meeting there were great outpourings and from one to ten conversions. The news that the "wild man" was preaching brought the people from many miles in great crowds. Many went with him from place to place, and as they went they would alarm the natives with singing and shouting all along the road. Persecution soon began to rage. Some said Granade had some kind of powder to throw over the people; some said he had some secret trick by which he threw them down; but on he went, disregarding the threats of mobbing that met him everywhere. One day, on his way to preach at Tucker's, he asked the Lord to give him twenty souls that day, and he received thirty into Society. He was sent for to go to Holston Circuit, and it was said that two or three thousand people were at the place (Cashe's Meetinghouse), and great power attended his preaching from the first chapter of Ezekiel. He also went to Knoxville, by invitation, and was treated with singular kindness by Gen. White and others; and here also he received many members.

It is claimed that Mr. Granade took into the Church, while on Greene Circuit, between five hundred and six hundred members. Although a petition for his return, signed by two thousand names, was sent to the bishop, he was in 1802 transferred to the Holston Circuit, and associated with Thomas Milligan. There on the first round he brought in one hundred new members, and by the fifth round he had received five hundred. They built stands for him in the woods all round the circuit, for no house would hold the crowds that flocked to hear him. On one occasion they put him up in a wagon to preach, when

he took for his text "A wheel in the middle of a wheel" (Ezek. i. 16); and the people fell all around the wagon and under it, and wonders were wrought.

Granade in his journal speaks of a meeting at McKee's, near Gov. Sevier's, which lasted all night. Five of Gov. Sevier's family were at that meeting converted and received into the Church. He went to Jonesboro, where some lewd men of the baser sort had sworn that he should not preach. When he rode into the town, an awful storm of wind, thunder, lightning, and rain was prevailing. He made his way to the courthouse, and spoke to a great crowd of wonder-struck hearers, from "And he will be a wild man." (Gen. xvi. 12.) Many were convicted and some converted. At Easeley's, on Horse Creek, the people fell as Dagon before the ark, and lay in such heaps that it was feared they would suffocate, and that in the woods.

After a number of great camp meetings on Holston Circuit, Granade was transferred to New River Circuit. His journal speaks of his appointment to this circuit; and as it is not likely that he was mistaken, it is evident that he did not complete the year on Holston Circuit, but was transferred in the winter or spring to New River. He says he went to this field through snow and storm. His first appointment was at John Carr's, on Walker's Creek, in what he calls "a rough, stony region." John Carr, was the grandfather of the Rev. Daniel H. Carr, at present a member of the Holston Conference, and one of our most pious and persevering preachers. John Carr's wife was a member of the first Society organized west of New River. This Society was in Montgomery (now

Pulaski) County. New River Circuit was a large and laborious work. Granade's account of his labors among the rude and wicked inhabitants of this new and sparsely settled country, and of the wonderful manifestations of divine power which everywhere attended his singular preaching, is very interesting. Here he studied Latin, wrote much, and received many into the Church. He was appointed to Hinkstone Circuit, in Kentucky, in 1803, and this was his last work as a traveling preacher. His excessive labors and much exposure brought on a breast disease that rendered his location necessary. After his location he studied medicine under the celebrated Dr. Hinde, near Lexington, Ky., and, returning to Wilson County, Tenn., he married Miss Polly Wynn in 1805. His pious wife, who completed his journal after his death, says: "He continued to preach when able; the Bible was his constant companion; he enjoyed perfect love. On December 6, 1807, full of peace, he passed away. His last words were: 'Glory to God and the Lamb forever!'"<sup>1</sup>

Granade was a remarkable man of a remarkable period. His conviction and conversion were contemporaneous with the outburst of the great revival. While he was seeking God's favor, his mind was evidently more or less morbid. But he was a real sinner, his convictions were real, the Spirit of God was really striving with him; and in his extraordinary mental troubles he was really in process of preparation for the extraordinary work which he accom-

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<sup>1</sup> Letter of Rev. Herve Granade, in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. I, pp. 383-407.

plished afterwards. When God has a work to do, he prepares the proper instruments for it. Conversion never goes deeper than conviction. The crop does not usually send its roots farther down than the plow has gone. He that is forgiven much loves much. Extraordinary struggles in seeking a change of heart usually insure a powerful conversion and a bright evidence of the same. The doctrine of endless punishment, which Granade embraced after his renunciation of Universalism, tinged his convictions with a remarkable melancholy. This same doctrine, united with views of infinite mercy, gave his zeal in saving souls a wonderful boldness and intensity.

The infinite strategy of the God of battles can be contemplated only with adoring wonder. When the great battle of 1800 was to be joined, it was no accident, but a wise provision of Providence, that such men as Page, Burke, McKendree, Wilkerson, the McGees, Hodge, Rankin, McGready, and Garrett were at their posts along the firing line, and that Granade, like a Marion or Mosby, was thrust into the work at the right niche of time.

Granade's methods would have been in ordinary times impertinent and ineffective, but there was a sound of a going in the mulberry trees when he made his assaults upon the works of the devil. An extraordinary interest, awakened by the Spirit of God in the minds of the people, demanded and justified extraordinary measures. The conditions within and the efforts without were in harmony.

It is not strange that such extraordinary zeal as he possessed should have run into extravagance. It did, and at one time he assumed the rôle of prophet; but,

his prophecy signally failing to come to pass, he was suspended from the functions of the ministry for about three months, but allowed to hold meetings and exhort; and it is said that no period of his life was so crowned with success in saving souls as this. This suspension, however, occurred before he was admitted into the traveling connection.



## CHAPTER II.

### FROM 1801 TO 1804—SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

NATHAN JARRATT never traveled in the original Holston country, and was never a member of the Western Conference; but at one time he labored in Buncombe County, which was subsequently included in the Holston Conference, and therefore deserves mention in this history. He was admitted in 1799, and died October 28, 1803. He traveled Swannanoa Circuit 1799-1800. He traveled Wilmington and Bertie Circuits, in North Carolina, the two following years; in 1802 he was appointed to the Bedford Circuit, in Virginia. His last appointment (1803) was Williamsburg and Hanover, in the same State. These appointments would indicate that he was a man of superior ability and promise. His life was a vapor that appeared for a little while and then vanished away. But

"What though short thy date?  
Virtue, not rolling suns, the mind matures;  
That life is long which answers life's great end.

. . . . .  
The man of wisdom is the man of years."

Jacob Young was admitted on trial into the Western Conference in 1802. He labored only one year in Holston (1803-04). Although the Minutes represent him as appointed to Wilderness Circuit, he traveled the whole year on Clinch Circuit. The arrangement was

that he was to travel on Clinch till spring, when his place on that circuit was to be supplied, and he was to form a circuit in the Wilderness between the better settled parts of Kentucky and East Tennessee. Jacob Watson was in charge of Clinch Circuit, and Mr. Young was more than willing to attempt the formation of the new circuit, after coöperating with Mr. Watson for the first six months of the ecclesiastical year. But the presiding elder, John Watson, assumed the responsibility of retaining Mr. Young on Clinch Circuit, where he and his colleague were very useful.

The following is, in substance, the account which Dr. Young gives of his journey from the seat of the Conference at Mount Gerizim, Ky., to Clinch Circuit, and his labors, experiences, and observations while on it. He bade his loving friends a long farewell, and started in company with Samuel Douthit. He spent the night in Lexington, tried to preach, but was bound in spirit. All preachers who rely on the aid of the Holy Spirit know what this means. This was really his first dark time in two years. He attributes his failure on this occasion to the fact that his success in preaching at the Conference had elated him, and that the Spirit was measurably withdrawn from him to let him realize his own weakness. Solomon was right when he said: "Pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." An anecdote is told of a young preacher who, on a certain occasion, entered the pulpit full of self-confidence, began the exercises in a pompous manner, but made a disgraceful failure in his effort to preach. When the services were over he came out of the pulpit much crestfallen, and confessed to an old minister that he was very much

mortified; whereupon the old minister said to him, "If you had entered the pulpit in the same spirit in which you came out of it, you might have come out of it in the same spirit in which you went into it."

Dr. Young joined Bishop Asbury at Richmond, Ky., and the preachers passed through what Dr. Young names the "Crab Orchard Wilderness," the Bishop being in feeble health. At their stopping place in the Wilderness they fell in with rowdy company at the tavern who were drinking freely, using profane language, and playing cards. The landlord had the kindness to give the preachers a room to themselves. An old Englishman came into the room and talked freely with the Bishop on the subject of religion; he was garrulous, but did not greatly interest the Bishop. He said that he had long been a seeker of religion, had never found it, but that he had succeeded in one thing: a Baptist minister had broken him from swearing. He finally left the preachers and returned to his gambling company, where he soon began to talk loudly and to swear profanely. The Bishop, recognizing his voice, arose, opened the door, looked in, and said: "You told me that a certain Baptist preacher had broken you from profane swearing, and now I find you can lie and swear both!" The rowdies quailed under the reproof, and the Englishman came to him saying: "Ah, Bishop, pardon me, if you please, sir!" The Bishop replied that he had better ask pardon of God, gave him suitable instruction, and left him. The house then became quiet. The Bishop's bombshell had silenced the batteries of the enemy. After supper the entire company were called into the room occupied by the preachers, and the Bishop read a chapter, gave a

short lecture, sang a hymn, and prayed. In the morning the landlord came in with a bottle and glass and asked the Bishop to take a drink; he replied, "I make no use of the devil's tea." That night they lodged with a Mr. Ballinger, who was a real gentleman and



REV. JACOB YOUNG, D.D.

his wife a lady. Mr. Ballinger expressed a desire to have a circuit formed in that part of the country, and after getting the consent of Dr. Young to undertake the task, the Bishop promised to try to accommodate him. The cause of Dr. Young's failure to carry out the plan has already been mentioned. The party

parted at Cumberland Gap, the Bishop and Mr. Douthit taking the North Carolina road and Dr. Young proceeding to Powell's Valley. The Bishop's parting words to Dr. Young were: "Pray as often as you eat and sleep, and you will do well." At the end of the day's ride Dr. Young put up at a public house. The landlord appeared to be a decent man; but Dr. Young soon found that the house was a place of dancing, gambling, and drinking. At bedtime the landlord brought his family Bible and proposed worship. Dr. Young remarks:

The inhabitants of this valley were, for the most part, desperate characters. They dressed alike and looked alike, so that if a person of observation had met one of them in New York he would have known he belonged to Powell's Valley. They wore hunting shirts, leather belt around the waist, shot pouch, powder horn, rifle gun, and a big dog following closely behind. It is said that they watched the road leading from old Virginia to Kentucky, and when they saw emigrants going on to the above-named place they changed their costume, dressed like Indians, by a near route through the mountains passed ahead of the travelers, watched them till they pitched their tents and were all asleep, then fell upon them, murdered them, and took their money.

I will here give one case which will illustrate all the rest. There is a spot in that wilderness known by the name of Hazel Patch, where travelers stop at night. At a certain time—date I do not recollect—a large company of wealthy Virginians started for Kentucky to buy and take up lands. They were well armed and equipped to defend themselves, put up at the place, pitched their tents, placed their sentinels, and went to sleep. Sometime in the night they were attacked by a party of, as they thought, Indians; it was generally thought they were Powell's Valley men. The Virginians defended themselves in a masterly manner. It was said that the conflict was long and severe; but the Virginians were all killed with the exception of one, and many thought he turned traitor. Two

facts led the public mind to this conclusion: First, he was very poor when he joined the company; after that he became wealthy, buying farm after farm; secondly, he could give no rational account of his escape. He said when the Indians had killed all the rest he walked off quietly, and they let him alone.

I felt as a stranger in a strange land. I had to travel one hundred miles among these people, and I looked back with mournful joy and pleasant grief on the good circuit I had left behind. I had some imperfect knowledge of what I had passed through, but what lay before me I knew not. I arose very early, and before daylight I was on my way; ate but little, slept but little till I arrived at my circuit, on Saturday about noon.

Dr. Young's remarks about the inhabitants of Powell's Valley, as quoted in the above extract, are rather severe, indeed evidently overwrought. There were, no doubt, desperate men in Powell's Valley as well as elsewhere in the mountainous portions of Virginia and Tennessee at that time; and the passes of the Cumberland Mountains were for a long time infested with highway robbers; but the bulk of the population of Powell's Valley were always honest and peace-loving citizens. The lands, being of superior quality, were bought up by the better class of men at an early day. The people of the valley have kept pace with the progress of education, civilization, and refinement in the country at large, and at the present day it is the home of wealth, refinement, and good morals; especially is it a favorite home of Methodism, and that of a high type.

Dr. Young rode into Rye Cove, which took its name from the abundance of wild rye growing there. He put up with Esquire Gibson, a man of intelligence, piety, and sociability. His circuit was an odd-shaped concern, lying between Cumberland and Clinch Mountains, upward of a hundred and fifty miles long and

about twenty-five miles wide. On the plan there were about thirty appointments. At Stallard's, at the ford of Clinch, he found trouble on hand. Two local preachers had been expelled, and were making fearful inroads on the Society. He next went to Moccasin Gap, and was struck with the natural curiosity of Moccasin Creek flowing right through Clinch Mountain. And this it does; it rises north of the mountain, passes through Moccasin Gap, and flows into the Holston River. Here he found a large Society of Methodists, and the most of them by the name of Lynn. They lived in small houses, cultivated poor land, burned pine knots for light by night, and lived in comparative poverty. But these people were kind and agreeable, and Dr. Young enjoyed his stay among them and association with them. Why people would enter poor land and locate on it, when there were millions of unentered and unoccupied lands of the best quality in the country, I am not able to divine. Yet these people were wiser than Lot, who, attracted by the fertile lands of a Syrian plain, settled his family amid a corrupt and degraded people. "Godliness with contentment is great gain." What is more beautiful to contemplate than a community of poor but decent and godly people who, having food and raiment sufficient, are therewith content? What is more repulsive than vulgar wealth—a godless, vicious, filthy affluence?

On his way to Russell Courthouse Mr. Young preached at a number of places, found pleasant people, and had delightful meetings. Within five miles of the Courthouse he found a large Society of intelligent and pious people. Why did not Dr. Young name this place and Society? He found no Society at the Court-

house. Thence he went to Henry Dickenson's, a distinguished man in that county. There Dr. Young became acquainted with the Ellingtons. One of the family afterwards became a preacher (William Ellington), joined the itinerancy in 1804, and was appointed to Nollichucky Circuit. Dr. Young at this point speaks of his visit to Elk Garden, and of his forming the acquaintance of Richard Price and Francis Browning. On his way to Tazewell Courthouse he preached several times among the Garrisons, Higginbothams, and Youngs. They received him as a messenger from God. He met with a Mr. Whitten,<sup>1</sup> who lived there, and afterwards became the father-in-law of the Rev. James Quinn, a man of considerable eminence in the Methodist ministry. Mr. Quinn was married to Miss Eleanor Whitten, of Tazewell County, Va., October 3, 1824. He was very happy in this his second marriage. She was an interesting companion and a tender, affectionate mother to his children by his former wife.

Mr. Whitten was quite gentlemanly in his appearance and manners. He invited Dr. Young home with him, and when he reached the home he was surprised to find that his host had a large family, for he had thought him but a youth. Dr. Young found this to be an exceedingly pleasant family. Mr. Whitten (I am sorry that Dr. Young did not give his Christian name) emigrated to Tazewell County, Va., at an early day. He became a very extensive landowner, entered largely into the business of stock-raising, and accumulated much wealth. He has a numerous and respectable posterity in Tazewell County and other parts of

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<sup>1</sup>The name is frequently spelled Witten.



the country. The Whittens or Wittens have long been among the best citizens of that county, as well as elsewhere. This neighborhood was near Clinch River, and the community was mainly made up of the Whitten and Ligsell families. They were a very pleasant people, and nearly all became Methodists. Here Dr. Young was solicited to give up traveling and settle down. His natural inclination would have led him to comply, but the Holy Spirit and a wise Providence did not permit him to assume any such responsibility.

Crossing the dividing ridge between the waters of the Tennessee and the Ohio, he went down a stream named Blue Stone, formed several Societies, and saw some happy days. He recrossed the dividing ridge, went down the valley of Clinch about a hundred miles, and preached in a great many places night and day, as he went along, till he came to his starting point, in Rye Cove. This was one round on Clinch Circuit. His first quarterly meeting was held at Whitten's. Here he met his presiding elder, the Rev. John Watson, the Rev. Thomas Milligan, and Dr. Jephthah Moore. Dr. Young remarks of Mr. Watson that he was not a great preacher, but an excellent Church officer, possessing a great amount of sanctified wit, which he knew how to use to advantage. He says that Milligan was a man of strong mind, but that he lacked cultivation; yet that he was an able preacher. Dr. Moore he pronounces a truly great man and an elegant pulpit orator; states that he entered the ministry in early life, traveled a few years with great success, then located and went into the practice of physicks. He also adds that Dr. Moore's sun went down partially under a cloud, and moralizes by adding that when a man is

divinely called to the ministry, it is a dangerous thing for him to leave the Lord's work to accumulate worldly riches or seek worldly honor. At the quarterly meeting Dr. Moore occupied the popular hour on Sunday. The meeting was attended with great spiritual power.<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Jacob Young, D.D., was born in Allegheny County, Pa., March 19, 1776. His father was a member of the Church of England and his mother of the Presbyterian Church, though both were strangers to the work of spiritual regeneration until led in after days by their own son to exercise saving faith in Christ. Dr. Young was ushered into being in the stirring times of the American Revolution, and the parents who rejoiced in the birth of a son were permitted, four months later, to rejoice in the birth of a nation. His first years were spent amid the wildest scenes of frontier life and the turmoil of war. In childhood he was attacked by a malignant disease which terminated in a distressing case of asthma that lasted till his fifteenth year; but his active mind in some degree surmounted the difficulties of bodily affliction, and grappled with the great themes that afterwards enlarged his mind and raised his thoughts to things heavenly and divine. The grandeur of the New Testament impressed his susceptible nature; and as he read of the life and sufferings of Jesus, his heart kindled with love divine. He looked by faith to the Lamb of God, and realized his sins forgiven. For a while he was happy in the love of God, but worldly associations stole the treasure from his heart.

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. I., pp. 501-504.

His health having recovered, and his father having removed to Kentucky, he divided his time between common labor and the customary sports of frontier life. While thus engaged he became alarmed at his own wickedness, and resolved to seek the blessedness he once enjoyed. After having been much troubled by the Westminster Confession, he turned to the Bible alone for the truth. Against the will of his parents, he attended Methodist meetings, and was there guided out of darkness into light. His conversion was as bright and satisfactory as his agony had been deep and unutterable. He united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but felt the power of the tempter, and by experience learned those bitter lessons which afterwards made him such a successful instructor of others in the way of righteousness. He felt an inexpressible desire for knowledge, and seized with eagerness every legitimate means of mental improvement. The word of the Lord was fire in his bones, and under an impression which he dared not resist he preached his first sermon, after a day of fasting and prayer, saw his congregation bathed in tears, and felt within the approval of the Holy Ghost. At this time he had no formal license to preach. In September, 1801, he was licensed as a local preacher; and on February 17, 1802, he was thrust into the traveling ministry by William McKendree to take the place of Gabriel Woodfield on a large frontier circuit. For fifty-five years he was engaged in the active itinerancy. As a helper on a circuit, preacher in charge of circuits, presiding elder of important districts, and taking part in the deliberations of the councils of the Church, he sustained himself creditably and honorably. In the shades of

declining life and the felt decay of vigorous manhood, he was great in the beautiful symmetry of Christian character, sweet submission to the will of God, deep interest in all the improvements of the Church, and the more than martial fire which he infused into his younger brethren. He had long enjoyed the blessing of perfect love, and in his last days the evidence of it was clear and his joy full. At the home of his oldest son, surrounded by the members of his own family and other friends, he breathed his blessings upon them, audibly pronounced the words "Sweet heaven! sweet heaven!" and then passed up to the bosom of God. He died September 16, 1859, in the eighty-fourth year of his life and the fifty-eighth of his ministry. On the following Sabbath the Rev. Joseph Caspar preached an appropriate funeral discourse in Townstreet Church, in Columbus, Ohio.<sup>1</sup>

Such were the attainments of Dr. Young in literature and theology that some institution, I know not what, gave him the well-merited and honorably worn title of Doctor of Divinity. He was, in his day, one of the ablest and most useful ministers of his Church. He not only preached with superior ability, but wielded the pen of a ready writer. He made valuable contributions to the literature of the Church.

Bishop Thomas A. Morris, in the Introduction of Dr. Young's Autobiography, says: "I became well acquainted with Dr. Young when he was probably at the maximum of his physical and mental vigor. He was my presiding elder from the spring of 1816 to the autumn of 1819. He was then regarded as one of

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<sup>1</sup>General Minutes M. E. Church,

our strongest men in the work. Multitudes of people attended his quarterly meetings, expecting to witness displays of awakening power and saving mercy, and were seldom disappointed."

James Douthit was born in North Carolina, October 12, 1766; joined the Methodist Society in 1782; was converted in 1786 and called to preach, but he refused. After this refusal he became sorely afflicted, and was brought down to the gate of death; but upon promising God to do his duty, he began to amend; and, although still upon crutches, he was admitted to the traveling connection in 1793. He located in 1803; was readmitted in 1805, in the spring; and located again in the fall of the same year. He traveled in South Carolina and North Carolina. He was appointed presiding elder of Salisbury District in the years 1801-02. The district at that time embraced the Swannanoa country, in Buncombe County.

The Rev. Joseph Travis says: "James Douthit is another of those Heaven-ordained worthies that I cannot pass by unnoticed. The name of James Douthit is venerated by hundreds in South Carolina. I never had the pleasure of seeing him; but I recollect, when I was but a youth, hearing his fame proclaimed by many as of one of the great ones of the earth; and from what I could learn in after days, Mr. Douthit was ranked far above mediocrity. He was universally beloved as a neighbor, citizen, and gospel minister. He lived and preached in mature old age."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Logan Douglass was admitted into the Virginia Conference in 1801; and died April 9, 1843.

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<sup>1</sup>Autobiography of Rev. Joseph Travis, p. 210.

He touched Holston only one year, 1802-03, when he traveled the Swannanoa Circuit. Mr. Douglass was born in Person County, N. C., in 1781. As he inherited a considerable patrimony, it is evident that he was reared in easy circumstances. A portion of his early years was spent as a merchant's clerk. His education was limited. He was converted and joined the Methodist Church in 1798, and in the early part of 1800 was authorized to preach. He occupied some of the most important stations in Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. He was a presiding elder of some of the most important districts. He was for many years secretary of the Tennessee Conference; was several times a delegate to the General Conference, and was secretary of that body in 1832 and in 1836. Soon after his transfer to the West he was united in marriage to Miss Frances McGee, daughter of Rev. John McGee. Mr. Douglass located in Williamson County Tenn., where he farmed and became a model farmer.

Douglass was a very successful presiding elder. By careful and able administration he brought up all the interests of his districts. He was intellectual, eloquent, and spiritually powerful as a preacher. He was presiding elder of the Nashville District in 1820, when within his field of labor there was one of the most remarkable revivals ever witnessed in that country. During one quarter, in the Lebanon Circuit, more than two hundred people were added to the Church, and about one hundred souls converted at the regular circuit appointments. At a camp meeting at Centre Meetinghouse, thirty-three preachers and about five thousand people were present. The work was glorious. An aged sinner was heard to say: "I never saw

the like before; God had sanctified the very ground, and none could walk upon it without feeling awful." The work became so general on Tuesday of the meeting that the whole camp ground was an altar, with penitents crying for mercy everywhere. This meeting resulted in two hundred and two conversions, and was said to have been the commencement of the greatest work ever seen in the Western country. The holy influence was felt like an electric shock in the surrounding country, and it was felt more than a hundred miles away in less than a week. The Spirit of God knows no limitation of space or time; besides, no system is so well adapted to the general diffusion of intelligence and to the scattering of the holy fire as the Methodist itinerant system.

At the Centre Meetinghouse camp meeting and six others there were over twelve hundred conversions; and even the quarterly meetings were Pentecosts where numbers were brought from death to life. At Conference the district reported a net increase of one thousand eight hundred and twenty members, although at least five hundred had emigrated from the district to Missouri, Alabama, and Jackson's Purchase. This great work was not marred by the irregularities that occurred in the great revival of 1800. There was nothing of the jerks or the dance. Mr. Douglass, the chief instrument in this work, said that it was the most blessed revival he had ever seen.

Although this work did not occur in Holston, it is given as a pointer to the character of a great and good man who belongs to Holston history, and who aided in founding Methodism on the Buncombe Plateau.

Mr. Douglass was of low stature, and in his last

years inclined to corpulency. He was erect in form, grave and dignified in deportment. His features were symmetrical and his face beamed with benevolence. His voice was clear, full, and melodious. His articulation was distinct, and his tone and emphasis natural. His mind was clear and his judgment sound. His theological attainments were respectable. He was a strict disciplinarian, without harshness or tyranny. He was remarkably punctual and honest in all his dealings. As a Christian he was consistent, uniform, and devout. He was a delightful companion. He was an able and popular preacher. He commanded large audiences, and his sermons not only combined logic and eloquence, but they were preached with unction and spiritual power. He died in holy triumph, and after an appropriate discourse by Rev. A. L. P. Green he was buried April 10, 1843.<sup>1</sup>

Samuel Douthit<sup>2</sup> was admitted into the traveling connection in 1797, and located in 1804. In the spring of 1801 he was appointed to Greene Circuit, in the fall of the same year to Holston Circuit, and in 1803 to Nollichucky Circuit. Two years of itinerancy in the Holston country so attached him to its fertile lands, its health-inspiring breezes, and its beautiful landscapes that he made it his permanent home.

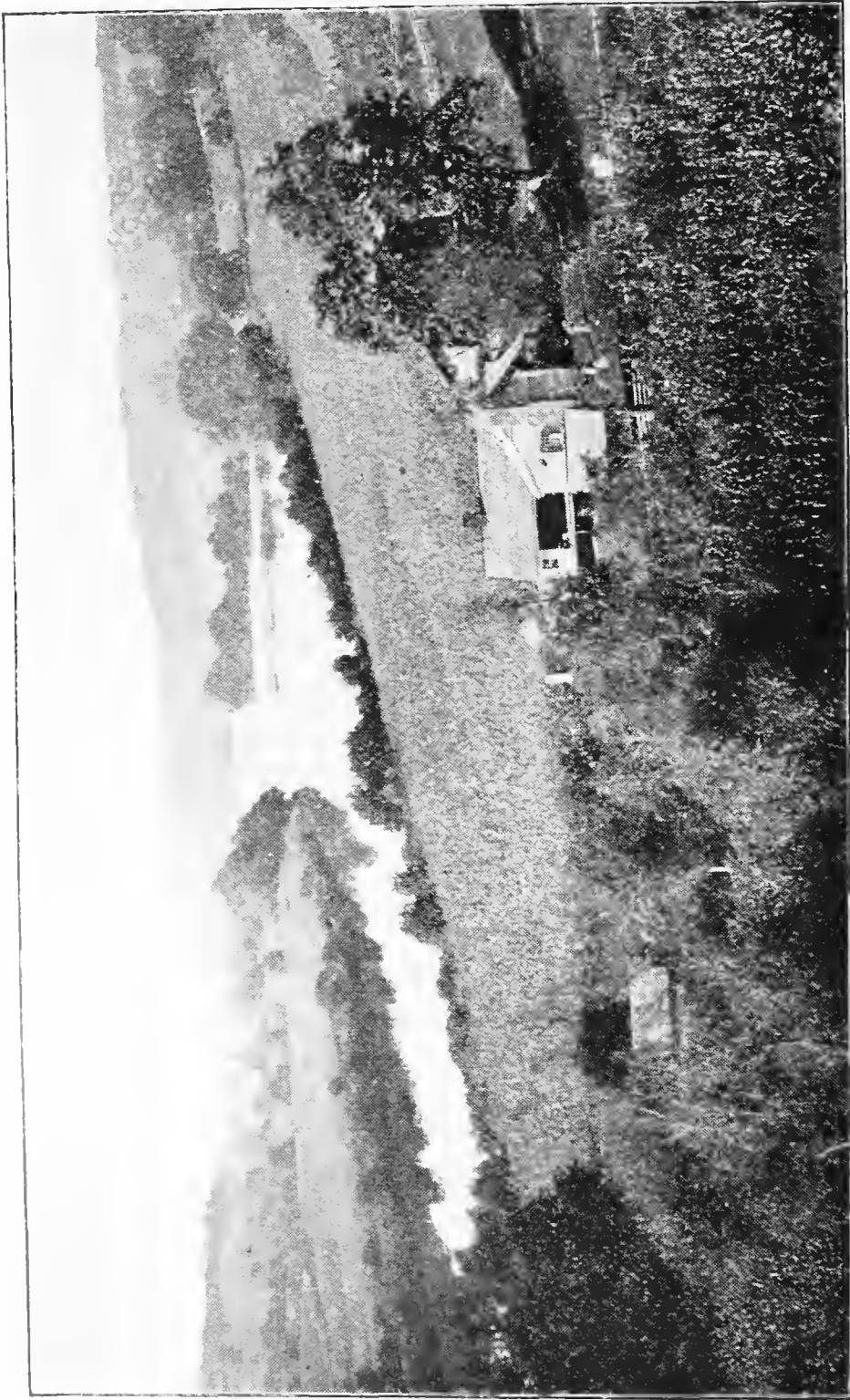
The Rev. Samuel Douthit, M.D., was born on Yadkin River, in Rowan (now Davie) County, N. C.,

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. McFerrin, in "Sketches of Eminent Itinerant Ministers," pp. 203-227. I condense considerably, using a portion of his language.

<sup>2</sup>The name in the General Minutes is spelled Douthat; but the names of Samuel, James, and William should be spelled with an *i*.





**THE HOME OF REV. SAMUEL DOUTHIT, M.D.,  
Now occupied by his granddaughter and her husband, Mr. Arthur Jackson.**

September 20, 1777. His father was originally from Maryland. His father's house, on the Yadkin, was a regular preaching place. Samuel Douthit married Mary Ann Tomotly, whose father was killed by the Indians while he was crossing the Tennessee River at what is now known as the Tomotly Ford, near the McGhee place. The murdered man was one of the first settlers in Monroe County, Tenn.

After his marriage Dr. Douthit located and studied medicine, and settled on the Tennessee River, in Blount (now Loudon) County, between the present towns of Loudon and Morganton. There he practiced medicine, farmed, and exercised the functions of a local preacher. He was the family physician of the Lenoirs for many years. He reared a family of five sons and five daughters, and accumulated a considerable amount of property for that day. Late in life he removed to a farm which he owned in Monroe County, Tenn., near the home of Mr. C. L. Howard, his son-in-law, who lived on Tellico River. He died at the Monroe County residence December 16, 1852, and was buried at the old home above Loudon.

The late Dr. Isaac Douthit was a son of Dr. Samuel Douthit. He married a Rockhold, of Sullivan County, Tenn. He lived and died at the old home above Loudon. It was to that place the Rev. Henry C. Neal went immediately after having been mobbed and almost beaten to death. Dr. Isaac Douthit dressed his wounds, and he and Mrs. Douthit nursed him back to strength. Mr. Neal wished to leave the place as soon as he was able to travel, fearing that his presence there would subject the family to personal abuse; but they would not consent to his leaving. This place is now

owned by Mr. Arthur Jackson, who married a daughter of Dr. Isaac Douthit. Mr. Jackson is a nephew of the Rev. George W. Jackson, of the Holston Conference. Dr. William Douthit, of Louisville, Tenn., is a son of Dr. Isaac Douthit. Elizabeth T., a daughter of Dr. Samuel Douthit, married Mr. C. L. Howard. The Rev. William Reagan Barnett, of the Holston Conference, married a daughter of Mr. Howard. Another daughter married the eccentric William Hurd Rogers. The *William* in Mr. Barnett's name is for Mr. Rogers, and the Reagan is for Dr. James A. Reagan, of Weaverville, N. C.

A sister of Samuel Douthit married a Stanton, and the Rev. P. L. Stanton, of Georgia, is a grandson of hers.

Dr. Samuel Douthit was evidently a man of considerable ability. Mrs. Barnett has the Bible which he carried in his saddlebags, a number of sermon notes which he had used, and a hymn book of his own composing. There are stanzas in this book which rise to the height of respectable hymnology. James Douthit, who entered the traveling connection in 1793, and who for some years, by reason of his incumbency of Salisbury District, in North Carolina, preached in Western North Carolina, west of Blue Ridge, was a brother of Samuel Douthit. He eventually settled in Virginia.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>A letter from the Rev. William R. Barnett.

## CHAPTER III.

### LORENZO AND PEGGY DOW.

A HISTORY of Holston Methodist pioneers and pioneerism cannot be fully and faithfully written without a mention of Lorenzo Dow. This wonderful cosmopolitan occasionally passed through the Holston country, and his visits in our section were seasons of constant travel and preaching and constant effort to save souls and to spread and establish the Redeemer's kingdom on this high and romantic plateau.

Lorenzo Dow was born in Coventry, Toland County, Conn., October 16, 1777. He descended from English ancestors. Before he was four years old he "mused upon God, heaven, and hell." He had a long struggle for pardon and terrible agony. At last he experienced a change, and his soul "flowed out in love to God, to his ways, to his people, and to all mankind." At the age of fifteen, soon after his conversion, he united with the Society of Methodists. He long resisted the impression that it was his duty to preach; but at last yielded to his convictions.

Dow applied for admission into the New England Conference which met at Thompson, Conn., September 19, 1796, but was rejected. Stevens attributes his rejection to the "discerning eye" of Asbury, who, he says, "perceived the peculiarity of his character."<sup>1</sup> He

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<sup>1</sup>"History of the M. E. Church," Vol. III., p. 279.

lingered about the place during the session, weeping sincere tears. "I took no food," says he, "for thirty-six hours afterwards." He attended the Conference which met at Wilbraham, Mass., September 19, 1797, and applied for admission again, but was again rejected. Stevens says: "Mitchell and Bostwick pleaded for him until they could plead no more, and sat down and wept." He was permitted to be employed by a presiding elder, but was not enrolled with the band. Stevens adds: "He was a right-hearted but wrong-headed man, labored like a Hercules, did some good, and had an energy of character which, with sounder faculties, would have rendered him as eminent as he was noted." I shall have occasion to give my estimate of the man farther on, but will anticipate here by saying that I differ with Stevens. I believe that Dow was mentally normal, that he was what God designed him to be, and that in filling a niche which no other man could have filled as well he was eminently useful. It is remarkable that Stevens finds it quite convenient to mention again and again this "wrong-headed" man, who only "did some good." By purity, zeal, and genius, Dow forced his way into abundant historic recognition, as he had to do into opportunities to labor in the cause of God and save souls. He was finally admitted into the traveling connection at Granville September 13, 1798. He received his license from Asbury, and was appointed junior preacher on Cambridge Circuit, with Timothy Dewey, preacher in charge. His written license allowed him to preach only on the Cambridge Circuit. During the year he was transferred to Pittsfield Circuit. On these circuits he did a faithful year's work. Stevens says:

Notwithstanding his singularities, he was remarkably successful. In many places he was repulsed by the Societies and denied the hospitalities of the families which usually entertained the circuit preachers, but his unwearied labors in time produced a profound impression. He sometimes rode more than fifty miles and preached five sermons, besides leading several classes, in a single day. The astonished people, witnessing his earnestness and usefulness, soon treated him more respectfully, and a general revival ensued. In Pittsfield, where he at first received no invitation to their homes, he says: "I visited it extensively, and had the satisfaction to see the Methodists and others stirred up to serve God. Now they offered me presents, which I refused, saying, 'The next preachers invite home and treat well, for my sake.'" "In Alford," says he, in his characteristic style, "I preached Methodism, inside and outside. The brethren here treated me very coldly at first; so I was necessitated to pay for my horse-keeping for five weeks, and, being confined a few days with the ague and fever, the man of the house not being a Methodist, I paid him for my accommodation. I had said in public that God would bless my labors there, which made the people watch me for evil, and not for good. I visited the whole neighborhood from house to house, which made a great uproar among the people. However, the fire kindled; the society got enlivened, and several others, who were stumbling at the unexemplary walk of professors, were convinced and brought to find the realities of religion for themselves. When leaving this place I was offered pay for my expenses; but I refused it, saying, 'If you wish to do me good, treat the coming preachers better than you have treated me.' Now the eyes of many were enlightened to see a free salvation offered to all mankind. In Lenox the Society and people were much prejudiced at first, but the former were quickened afresh."

This eccentric man left the circuit in a state of universal prosperity. One hundred and eighty had been added to the Societies, and about five hundred more "were under conviction for sin." The sensation was wonderful, and some, to our day, stood up in the church as witnesses of his usefulness.

"We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of man."<sup>1</sup>

How does this statement compare with the faint praise of Dow's having done "some good?"

Dow, believing that his health was failing, did not attend the Conference which met in New York June 19, 1799, but wrote to the Conference, requesting the privilege of going to sea. The request was disregarded, and he was continued on trial, and appointed in charge of Essex Circuit. Dr. Anson West, in the "History of Methodism in Alabama," rather ironically observes: "Notwithstanding his ill health and precarious tenure of life, while the other preachers were in attendance upon the session of the Conference he was traveling from twenty-five to fifty miles and preaching from five to six times a day."<sup>2</sup> He went to the circuit, and was remarkably active in the discharge of his duties for three or four months; but in October he left his work and went to Europe, against the advice of all the friends whom he consulted. He spent about twenty months in his European trip, preached incessantly while there, and returned in time for the session of the Conference, June 16, 1801. He was restored to his place in the Conference, and appointed junior preacher on the Duchess and Columbia Circuit. He went to the circuit, but left it before the year was out and made a tour of Georgia. At the Conference, June 1, 1802, his name was dropped from the roll. This was the end of his regular work as a Methodist itinerant. As he had not been ordained, his

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<sup>1</sup>Stevens's "History of the M. E. Church," Vol. IV., pp. 50, 51.

<sup>2</sup>"History of Methodism in Alabama," p. 31.

being discontinued as a traveling preacher and dropped from the roll was tantamount to a repeal of his license as a Methodist preacher. Henceforth he was free to go where he pleased, being amenable to no ecclesiastical body. In other words, Dow found his place; it was that of an untrammelled evangelist. His restless, roving disposition made a circuit too small for him. Besides, it was evidently the will of God that this celebrated irregular should, in his own peculiar way, break the bread of life to the hundreds of thousands who, drawn by the fame of his talents and eccentricities, should flock to hear him in all parts of the Union, and in England and Ireland.

These remarks are not intended to excuse Dow altogether. His leaving his charge in the midst of the year was reprehensible. But there was a restlessness within which, under the guidance of a wise Providence, was thrusting him out into a wider field. God in this case, it seems to me, overruled the mistakes of Dow, to his own glory.

History seems to have accorded to Dow the credit of being the first gospel minister, of the Protestant faith, whose voice was heard in Alabama and Louisiana.

The Rev. E. F. Sevier remembered seeing and hearing Mr. Dow preach in Knoxville. Sevier was quite a child at the time, but he remembered the occasion distinctly. A great crowd of curious people were in and about the village some hours before the time of preaching had arrived. Where the preacher was to take his stand no one knew. The crowd moved and surged from side to side, from point to point. At length a tall, plainly dressed man, with a handkerchief



about his head in lieu of a hat, appeared as if he had come out of the ground or had been let down from the clouds. He made no delay, but mounted a log and began announcing his hymn :

Come, sinners, to the gospel feast ;  
Let ev'ry soul be Jesus' guest ;  
Ye need not one be left behind,  
For God hath bidden all mankind.

The announcement of the hymn and the singing were sufficient notice to the scattered people as to the place where the preaching was to occur, and the crowd soon gathered about the wonderful stranger. Sevier had no distinct recollection of the text, subject, or line of argument ; but the whole manner of Dow was indelibly impressed on his memory. He did not play the orator ; he was not a declaimer ; on that occasion he played the part of a reasoner and polemic. He seemed to single out a particular hearer, to whom he addressed all his remarks. This particular hearer was, perhaps, fictitious, and was addressed as a Calvinist. The sermon was a dialogue between Dow and this fictitious hearer. The preacher heard the man's arguments in support of unconditional election and reprobation, partial redemption, effectual calling, and final perseverance, and answered them. Dow was very pointed and emphatic in his questions and answers. The sermon, in the opinion of young Sevier, was a complete demolition of Calvinism. Dow would frequently make an assertion and then, leaning forward and pointing at his antagonist, say, "It's a fact, and you can't deny it!" giving the broad Italian sound to the letter *a* in the words *fact* and *can't*.

The whole performance was very interesting to the

large audience. Their attention was riveted from start to finish. The people were convinced and swayed; for the matter and manner of the preacher showed that he believed what he preached, and that he was terribly in earnest. The ever-widening influence of such a sermon as that eternity alone can compute. This story I received from the lips of Sevier himself.

This visit of Dow to the Holston country was made in the year 1804. From his journal I take the following particulars: On the 14th of February of that year he spoke in Buncombe County, N. C., to more than could get into the Presbyterian meetinghouse, and he trusted that good was done. Mr. Dow does not tell where this meetinghouse was; but he says that the minister was not "an A double L part man," by which he means that he was not a hyper-Calvinist, and, therefore, did not hold that when the Scriptures say that Christ died for ALL they mean that he died for a PART of mankind. Neither does Mr. Dow name the minister; but in that county there was a Rev. Mr. Newton, of the Presbyterian Church, with whom Bishop Asbury was wont to take sweet counsel, and it is almost certain that he is the minister to whom Mr. Dow alludes. The next day, by a ride of forty-five miles in company with a Dr. Nelson, he crossed the "dismal Alleghany Mountains" by way of Warm Springs. On this trip he filled an appointment at Newport, Tenn. He had heard about a singular phenomenon called the jerks, which, he says, made its first appearance in Knoxville in August, 1803, to the great alarm of the people. At first he considered these reports as vague and false, but he resolved to go and see for himself, and accordingly sent forward some appointments.

When he arrived in sight of Knoxville, he saw hundreds of people collected in little crowds; and, finding that no particular place had been designated for the meeting, he mounted a log and gave out a hymn, the announcement of which caused the people to assemble in solemn silence. This was probably the service which Elbert Sevier recollected, although at that time he was a mere child. In the course of the meeting Dow observed several involuntary motions among his hearers, which he took to be a sample of the jerks. He hired horseback conveyance part of the way from Newport to Sevierville, and attempted to finish the journey afoot; being almost exhausted, he had the good luck to fall in with men on horseback going, as they said, to hear a crazy man preach, and they kindly invited him to ride. They asked him whether he knew the preacher, and what was his opinion of him. He replied that he knew him, had heard him preach, but had no great opinion of him. After being treated to a cup of tea, he spoke to a vast audience, and observed about thirty persons to have the jerks, though they strove to keep still. Mr. Dow remarks that these motions were involuntary and irresistible, as any unprejudiced mind might discern. Here a lawyer by the name of Porter, who had come a considerable distance to hear the stranger and whose heart was touched under the word, learning that Dow had sold a disabled horse and had gotten to Sevierville with difficulty, loaned him a horse to ride a hundred miles and gave him a dollar. The religion that opens the heart always opens the purse. At Maryville he spoke to about fifteen hundred persons; many felt the word and about fifty had the jerks. At night he lodged with one of

the "Nicholites," a kind of Quakers, who did not feel free to wear colored clothing. Mr. Dow preached at his house at night. While at tea he noticed that the daughter of the man of the house had the jerks, and that in the violent agitation she dropped the teacup from her hand. He asked her what was the matter. She replied: "I have the jerks, and have had them several days." She also remarked that the exercise had been the means of awakening and converting her soul.

On Sunday, February 19, 1804, he spoke in Knoxville to hundreds more than could get into the courthouse, the Governor being present. This was John Sevier. About one hundred and fifty had the jerks. Among those who had the jerks was the circuit preacher, John Johnson, who had opposed the jerks, but he now took it powerfully; and Mr. Dow thinks he would have fallen several times had not the audience been so crowded that he could not fall, unless he fell perpendicularly. The General Minutes show that John Johnson was admitted into the Western Conference in the autumn of 1803, and was appointed to the French Broad Circuit, which included Knoxville at the time. At the end of the year he disappears from the Minutes. I scarcely doubt that this was the preacher who proposed to preach the jerks out of the Methodist Church, according to the statement of Dr. Young. (See Vol. I., p. 378.)

After the meeting in Knoxville Mr. Dow rode some eighteen miles to a Quaker settlement, where he held a meeting at night. Some of the Quakers remarked to him that they were informed that the Methodists and the Presbyterians had the jerks because they sang and prayed so much, but that they (the Quakers) were

a quiet people, and therefore were not afflicted with it. However, about twenty of them having come to hear the strange preacher, some dozen of them took the jerks, and had it as violently as he had seen anywhere, being caused to grunt or groan as they jerked.

Mr. Dow observes that many undervalued the strange exercises of the great revival, and attempted to account for them on natural principles; but he gives his opinion in the following words: "From the best judgment I can form, it seems to me that God hath seen proper to take this method to convince people that he will work in a way to show his power, and that he sent the jerks as a sign of the times, partly in judgment for the people's unbelief, and yet as a mercy to convict people of divine realities."

The following observations of Mr. Dow in his journal in regard to the jerks are worth preserving, word for word:

I have seen Presbyterians, Quakers, Baptists, Church of England people, and Independents exercised with the jerks; gentleman and lady, black and white, the aged and the young, rich and poor, without exception; from which I infer, as it cannot be accounted for on natural principles, and carries such marks of involuntary motion, that it is no trifling matter. I believe those who are most pious and given up to God are rarely touched with it, and also those naturalists who wish and try to get it to philosophize upon it are excepted; but lukewarm, lazy, half-hearted, indolent professors are subject to it; and many of them I have seen who, when it came upon them, would be alarmed and stirred up to redouble their diligence with God, and after they would get happy were thankful that it ever came upon them. Again, the wicked are frequently more afraid of it than of the smallpox or yellow fever. These are subject to it; but persecutors are more subject to it than any, and they have sometimes cursed and sworn and damned it while jerking. There is no pain attending the jerks

unless the parties resist it, which, if they do, will weary them more in an hour than a day's labor, a fact which shows that it requires the consent of the will to avoid suffering.

On the 20th I passed a meetinghouse where I observed that the undergrowth had been cut down for a camp meeting, and from fifty to one hundred saplings left breast-high, which to me appeared so slovenish that I could not but ask my guide the cause, who observed that they were topped so high and left for the people to jerk by. This so excited my attention that I went over the ground to view it, and found that the people had laid hold of the stumps and jerked so violently that they had kicked up the earth as a horse stamping at flies. I observed some emotion both this day and night among the people. A Presbyterian minister, with whom I stayed, observed: "Yesterday while I was preaching some had the jerks, and a young man from North Carolina mimicked them, out of derision, and soon was seized with it himself. He grew ashamed, and on attempting to mount his horse to go off his foot jerked about so that he could not put it into the stirrup. Some youngsters, seeing this, helped him on; but he jerked so that he could not sit alone, and one of them got up to hold him on, which was done with difficulty. Observing this, I went to him and asked him what he thought of it. Said he, 'I believe God sent it on me for my wickedness, and for making so light of it in others,' and he requested me to pray for him." I observed that his wife had it; she said that she was first attacked with it in bed. Dr. Nelson said he had frequently striven to get it, in order to philosophize upon it, but could not, and observed that he could not account for it on natural principles.

Mr. Dow left Knoxville and went to Virginia, preaching at different points along the route, among which he mentions Greeneville. The last case of jerks which he saw was that of a young woman at a meeting in or near Abingdon. She was severely exercised by the jerks during the meeting. After service she followed him into the house where he stopped, and he rather rudely admonished her of her folly and the inde-

cency of such gestures and grunts in public, and he urged her in a commanding tone to leave them off, if she had any regard for her character. She meekly replied: "I will if I can." He took her by the hand, and, looking her in the face, he said: "Tell me no lies." He perceived by the motion of her hand that she was doing her best to refrain from jerking; but instantly she began to jerk as if she would jerk herself to pieces. He did all this that he might have an answer to those who accused the victims of the malady of hypocrisy; and he kindly explained to her his motive for his abruptness.

In closing his meeting in Abingdon he announced that on such a day and at such an hour, thirteen months later, he would, God willing, be in town again to hold a meeting. After leaving Abingdon he preached in Tazewell, Wythe, Grayson, and Montgomery Counties, and made his way farther East.<sup>1</sup> In Holston he left a favorable impression wherever he went. He has been remembered ever since with affection and admiration. His namesakes throughout the section rival in number those of Wesley, Asbury, and Washington. His complete unselfishness and spirit of self-sacrifice, his prodigious journeys and labors, his deadness to praise or censure, his strict honesty and purity of character, his sublime faith in Jesus Christ, and his earnest, fearless, powerful preaching endeared him to the people of this hill country in a remarkable degree.

Methodism in the Holston country was not a little aided by the evangelistic tours of Mr. Dow. At one time, when he was evangelizing in Greene County,

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<sup>1</sup>"Dow's Works," pp. 180-184.

Tenn., he selected Mr. Jacob Brunner, uncle of our Dr. John H. Brunner, as his guide. The route lay along Lick Creek. The roads were rough and muddy. It was raining and sleeting. The light of day was fading into darkness. Approaching a house, Mr. Brunner called out, "Halloo!" A lady came to the door. "Madam," said Brunner, "can we stay with you to-night?" She answered: "Mr. Pogue is away, and I do not take travelers when he is not at home." "But it is dark," said Brunner, "the roads are freezing, and we are covered with ice." "I am sorry for that," replied the lady, "but I cannot consent to take travelers when Mr. Pogue is not at home." This was cold comfort to the shivering travelers, but Mr. Brunner determined to try another argument, and said: "But this is Lorenzo Dow who is with me, and he is on his way to his appointment." "Lorenzo Dow! Lorenzo Dow!" exclaimed Mrs. Pogue, "come in and welcome; I did not think of its being Mr. Dow." And they alighted and went in. Servants took charge of their horses, their wet hats and wraps were doffed, and the lady of the house led the way to a cheerful room and seated them before a blazing fire. Then Dow, turning to his hostess, said: "'Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for thereby some have entertained angels unawares.'" The rebuke was received with childlike submission, after which no further allusion was made to the matter.

The next day he reached the place where he was to preach precisely at the appointed time. A vast crowd had collected in the woods, despite the inclemency of the weather. A platform had been erected under a tree. In the midst of his sermon, while warning his hearers against the danger of apostasy, he leaped up-



ward and seized a limb, and while swinging he exclaimed: "Take care, Lorenzo, or you will fall!" "No danger," said he, in a changed voice. "Take care!" he cried again, "or you will fall." "No danger, no danger," he replied again. After several repetitions of the fictitious dialogue, his hands began to relax—relax—and down he came to the platform. Arising, he paused, and then said with emphasis: "Let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.'"

This feat was eccentric; and if it had been done simply for the purpose of gaining notoriety, it would have been reprehensible. But it was Dow's way; it was natural to him, and his motive was good—that of impressing forcibly and indelibly upon the minds of his hearers an important truth, the danger of apostasy.

While preaching one day on the south side of the Nollchucky, he was excoriating overindulgent parents, and especially calling attention to the habit of some parents of threatening to punish their children in certain contingencies and then failing to execute their threats. He then pointed out a lady with a red shawl, and said: "That lady with a red shawl is guilty of the conduct which I have described." Of course the lady was embarrassed, but it was said that she was notoriously guilty of the fault pointed out. How did Dow know it? Or did he draw his bow at a venture? One thing is certain—that it was fortunate for her rude critic that it was her shawl and not her hair that was red.<sup>1</sup>

The story of Dow's courtship and marriage is an interesting one. At one of his appointments in the State

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<sup>1</sup>A letter from Dr. John H. Brunner.

of New York a tavern keeper who was accustomed to entertain Methodists invited Dow home with him, saying that his daughter would be glad to see him. This was a young woman, sister of his wife, whom he had reared and called his daughter. Dow stayed all night, but not a word passed between him and this young lady, although there were but three persons in the family. The next day he went to his appointment, and there was a gracious season. While he was preaching, however, an unusual exercise passed through his mind, known only to God and himself. The fact is, he had been powerfully smitten with the charms of this young woman who had desired to see him. This rude Elijah had felt the tender passion. He was accompanied to his evening appointment by the hotel keeper, and he asked him if he would object to his talking to his daughter on the subject of matrimony. The man replied: "I have nothing to say, only I have requested her, if she has any regard for me, not to marry so as to leave my house." In going to his appointment Mr. Dow had occasion to stop at the hotel, to which, perhaps, he was not very averse. When he reached the door he abruptly asked the lady of the house who had been there and what they had been about in his absence. Her reply opened the way for her to remark that Peggy was resolved never to marry except to a preacher who would continue traveling. At that moment the young lady stepped into the room where the conversation was going on, and Mr. Dow inquired of her if the statement of her sister was correct. She replied in the affirmative, whereupon he said: "Do you think you could accept of such an object as I?" She made no reply, but retired from the room. This was

the first time he had ever spoken to her. After dinner he asked her one more question, and then went to his appointment in the neighborhood, and was gone for a few days. He says that, having an oilcloth cloak in process of making, he found it necessary to return to the hotel, where he lodged for the night. But in my opinion the cloak was not large enough nor thick enough nor oily enough to conceal the real motive for the return. When he left in the morning he said to the young woman that he was going to the far South to be gone some eighteen months, that if his life was spared he hoped to return North again, and that if, while he was gone, she did not meet with some one that she loved better than himself, and he found no one he loved better than her, perhaps something further would be said on the subject. He added that if they married she must never ask him to desist from traveling; that if she did he would ask God to take her out of his way, and he would do it. After reaching the Natchez country he wrote to the family of the hotel, requesting them to remove to that section. This they did, and Lorenzo and his dear Peggy were in a short time made one in the sweet bonds of holy wedlock, and they had a long, happy, and harmonious career of usefulness together.<sup>1</sup>

In the year 1831 or 1832 he had an appointment in Reisterstown, Md. The house was densely crowded. The pulpit was high. Suddenly the preacher, who had gone in before the assembling of the congregation, and seated himself on the kneeling stool, thus concealing himself from view, sprang to his feet, and in a

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<sup>1</sup>"Dow's Works," pp. 210-212.

clear voice gave out the hymn, "A charge to keep I have." It was sung by the whole assembly. He prayed a queer but earnest prayer and then read his text: "God shall enlarge Japheth, and he shall dwell in the tents of Shem; and Canaan shall be his servant." (Gen. ix. 27.) The sermon was full of oddities and originalities, and was largely an expansion of the prophecy contained in the text.

In 1826 he stopped with a Mr. Goodwin, at Brookville, Ind. Bedtime coming on, he turned to Mr. Goodwin and said: "Can't I have a room to myself with a hard bed? I don't want a hard bed that you have to take a feather bed off of, thus filling the room with dust." There was no other kind in the house, but finally it was arranged to make him a bed on the lounge in the parlor, which he preferred, saying, "That will do." On the eve of retiring, he asked: "Can I have this room to myself in the morning without being disturbed?" "O yes," was the reply. The next morning breakfast was prepared later than usual, and then kept in waiting on his account; and, after waiting a long time, Mr. Goodwin ventured in and kindly said: "Brother Dow, our breakfast is now waiting. Will you come out and have prayers with us? and we will then take breakfast." Dow looked at him, but made no reply. The family and employees, of whom there were several, gathered and waited for prayers till their patience was exhausted, but Dow did not appear. At length Mr. Goodwin reëntered the room to repeat the call, when, lo and behold! the preacher was gone, and he did not see him again till the hour for preaching in the woods had arrived. He had gone and taken breakfast with a poor family living in a small tenement.

When he appeared at the place of preaching, where some two thousand curious hearers were assembled, he walked around the congregation, pausing occasionally. While all eyes were fixed upon him, he started and ran



LORENZO DOW.

about two hundred yards distant and mounted a log. The people followed him and he preached to them, while the audience listened with wonder at the marvelous sentences which fell from his lips.

About this same period he had an appointment of

months' if not a year's standing, to preach in the courthouse at Covington, Ky., on a Sabbath afternoon. Everybody seemed to know it, and as everybody seemed to desire to hear him, the courthouse was more than crowded. It was expected that he would stand in the judge's desk, but, instead, he stood in front of it on the main floor. Extra seats were provided, allowing not much more space than was necessary for him to deliver his message. About half a dozen young ladies, leaders in society, arranged to go, and, not being easily abashed, walked in together and took the front seat, which brought them near the preacher. He had not progressed far until the merriment of the young ladies was absorbed in curiosity and undivided attention, so much so that they forgot their surroundings and inclined forward, with eyes gazing and mouths open. Dow discovered their absorption, and, stepping suddenly toward them and extending his hands, exclaimed: "Bah!" They were startled, and screamed; but as he went directly on with the sermon, they discovered that he was harmless, and became as composed as could be expected under existing circumstances. Dow, it was supposed, knew, as they themselves said, that their object in coming was to have fun.

This story was told in after years by one of the young ladies, who was then the mother of one of the most distinguished men in the nation.<sup>1</sup>

The story of Dow's simulating the day of judgment, by having a negro boy by the name of Gabriel with his tin trumpet to climb into a pine tree and

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<sup>1</sup>Letter of James Hill, D.D., to the *Western Christian Advocate*, date not preserved.

sound it at a given signal, is an old and familiar one. In the height of an impassioned description of the scenes of the judgment, Gabriel blew, and the people shouted and shrieked and cried for mercy; but when the fake was discovered, the boy was saved from lynching only by the stern reproof of the preacher, who said: "If the blowing of a tin horn by a negro boy so alarms you, what will you do when the sure-enough Gabriel sounds his trumpet and calls you to judgment?"

These anecdotes are given as specimens of the eccentricities of this remarkable man. These eccentricities may be admired or censured; they certainly are not to be imitated. But they have been criticised and condemned by those whose ministry has not been characterized by half the energy and usefulness of that of Lorenzo Dow.

The following description of the person and dress of Mr. Dow is given by a man who heard him preach in 1832: In person, Mr. Dow was of medium height, of slender build, with long, dark hair parted in the middle, and rather long, full beard. His clothes were a long surtout coat made of drab cloth, with dark-colored vest and pants; his socks were white-ribbed and woolen; his shoes were of coarse leather, tied with leather strings; his hat was a cheap, well-worn palmetto. The whole outfit—coat, vest, and pants—was of coarse texture, and evidently not made by a modern tailor. The sermon was of an hour's length, and closed without peroration. He prayed the Lord's Prayer, and, without dismissal, hastened down the pulpit steps, took up his hat and antiquated saddlebags, and, without speaking to any one, hurriedly walked

down the aisle and out to the street, hailed the four-horse mail and passenger coach going to Baltimore, stepped in, and left, never to return.

Dow was above mediocrity in intellect—a man of wonderful will force and working energy. He was a thoroughly regenerated man, and a thorough believer in the gospel which he preached. He was pure, honest, and unselfish. He was a prophet of the Elijah stamp; and Elijah did not discharge his duties more faithfully and boldly than did this prophet of the Western wilderness. Though not formally connected, during the larger part of his career, with the Methodist Church, he was Methodistic in doctrine and spirit, and always coöperated with the Methodist preachers. It is true he did not organize, but he labored with those and for those who did. To use a common figure, he shook down the fruit, while others gathered it. The number of souls he saved and the number of holy impulses that he started or intensified, eternity alone will disclose. The rulers did not favor him, but the common people heard him gladly. The people have announced their verdict as to Lorenzo Dow, and it is one of approval. We may say of Dow as Jacob said of Joseph: “The archers sorely grieved him, and shot at him, and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob.”

Dow's wife, Peggy, was a helpmeet in every respect. The writings of Lorenzo and Peggy Dow which they left behind are valuable. Mrs. Dow was scarcely inferior to her husband as a writer. She traveled with her ubiquitous husband throughout the Union and in Great Britain, a considerable part of



the time on foot, and aided him in his meetings, praying in public, exhorting and laboring privately for the salvation of souls. This heroine deserves historical recognition, and ought to be gratefully remembered when many women celebrated in profane history are forgotten.

Dr. Anson West gives the following unfavorable estimate of Dow :

To come to the facts in the case and the truth in the matter, Lorenzo Dow was inefficient. He was a force, but an inefficient force. He was a force, but an uncertain and unreliable force. His ministry through life was of doubtful utility, was very nearly, if not quite, a failure. He was not successful in anything nor in any respect. His knowledge was limited, and what he had he could not apply to useful ends. He was not a wise man. While he was not crazy in the sense that he was incapable of discerning right and wrong, and was not destitute of responsibility, yet in judgment he was defective, and he was without that necessary element of character, tenacity of purpose. He was restless and unsteady. He was a dreamer. He was restive under restraint, visionary in all his plans, impulsive in all his movements, fickle in all his undertakings, contracted in his range of thought, and seems to have had but one ambition, and that to travel at will and ramble at large. He was, contradictory as it may seem, both sanguine and despondent. He was at the same time unduly hopeful and painfully morbid. He was always looking for some wonderful achievement where there were no adequate causes or efficient means, and he was so despondent and morbid that he always thought himself sick and nearly at the point of death, whereas he had the power of physical endurance possessed by very few men. He was, because of his temperament and make-up, disqualified for success in life's great work. He was, as many of his brethren believed, and as the sequel proved, incapable of making a successful preacher.

The very features of Lorenzo Dow indicated his character; they were both rough and delicate, and, as a whole, his face was smooth and effeminate, while yet there were in that face the very marks of indomitable energy. He parted his hair in the middle, and wore it hanging down on his neck and shoulders. His face was radiant with expressions of kindness. He was a rough man, he was an honest, truthful, and candid man, with generous impulses and kindly feelings. He had in him the impulses imparted to him by an endowment of Christian grace. He was a man of Christian experience. He was a Christian. He was Lorenzo Dow. He died February 2, 1834, in Georgetown, District of Columbia, and was buried in a graveyard then near Washington, now in the city. It is said that his remains were taken up and reinterred in Oak Hill Cemetery, on the borders of Georgetown.

Men who cannot move in the ordinary channels of the Christian ministry will never be efficient in the divine cause, nor very successful in any good enterprise.<sup>1</sup>

The statement in the above extract, that "Dow's ministry through life was of doubtful utility, was very nearly, if not quite, a failure," does not, it seems to me, accord with the facts. This I say with all due deference to my learned and venerable friend, Dr. West, of whose sincerity I have no doubt.

The very severity of this estimate, with its extravagant accumulation of epithets of depreciation, is sufficient, it seems to me, to refute it. This tirade is certainly an unjustifiable assault upon the memory of a man of remarkable piety and usefulness, who is now in heaven.

Dr. West seems to have been incapable of understanding such a man as Dow. With his attention almost wholly directed to his eccentricities, he seems

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Alabama," pp. 33, 34.

to have overlooked the real merits of the man. Pricked by the thorns, he has failed to observe the beauties of the unfolding rose and to sniff its delightful fragrance. Occupied with the eccentricity of the orbit, his eye has not caught the flight of the planet as it describes its vast ellipse. Calculating the elements of the parabolic curve, he has failed to note and admire the splendor of the comet that enlightens a quadrant of the sky.

Besides, the concluding sentence of this estimate contradicts the statements with which it began; for it is impossible to associate the indomitable energy and phenomenal industry ascribed to Dow by Dr. West with the honesty, truthfulness, candor, generous impulses, and high Christian character which he also ascribes to him, and reach, by any legitimate logical process, the conclusion that Dow was a failure as to the matter of usefulness.

In the assertion that "men who cannot move in the ordinary channels of the Christian ministry will never be efficient," the Doctor forgets that Jesus Christ himself set the example of a wandering evangelism; that Wesley and his coadjutors, mostly members of the Established Church at first, ignored all ideas of regularity, as to that Church, in their evangelistic operations in Great Britain and America; and that no Church has all the machinery necessary to the evangelization of the world that throws out the evangelistic wheel and depends exclusively on the work of pastors and teachers. If Dr. West's ideas of regularity had prevailed in the past, Christianity would never have supplanted Judaism, and Methodism would have remained in the womb of nonentity.

The two rejections of Dow's applications for admission into Conference, the refusal to allow him to go to sea, the failure to ordain him, the criticisms and indignities to which he was subjected by his brethren on account of his peculiarities no doubt had a tendency to sour him on the Church. In the rough block of marble his brethren could not see the angel. Besides, God was in these things, separating Dow from the Methodist Church and traveling connection, that he might do that free and extensive evangelistic work for which he was fitted by nature and grace. Had Wesley settled down over a congregation; had Whitefield abstained, in deference to considerations of regularity, from gospel ranging; or had Asbury taken a city station and stuck to it—where would Methodism be to-day? It is a mistake to suppose that, because Dow was restless, was a rover, was eccentric, did not pull in regular harness, did not organize—in other words, did not “follow with us”—he was a failure. There is a little too much red tape in this opinion.

Even the liberal Dr. George G. Smith, the historian of Georgia and Florida Methodism, speaks ironically of Dow's *impressions*. Dow was *impressed* to do this and to do that, and he felt bound to follow his impressions. Does Mr. Smith forget that *impression* is eminently a Methodistic word? The sinner is *impressed* that he is a sinner; after a while he is *impressed* that his sins have been forgiven; men are *impressed* that they are called to preach, and *impressed* to offer themselves for missionary work, etc. Religious impressions are not to be despised. The Spirit of God was sent into the world to guide us into all truth, to teach us all things; and where men are

impressed by the Holy Spirit, as Philip was to join himself to the eunuch, they ought to follow their impressions. But I will let Dr. Smith speak for himself:

Lorenzo Dow, after having consented to take a circuit in New England, was *impressed* that he ought to come to Georgia; and as his lungs were weak and his head hard, he decided, against the advice of his friends, that he would come, and took passage for Savannah. He reached that city early in 1802. He found no Methodist Church there, but a Mr. Cloud, one of the Hammettites (as the followers of Mr. Hammett were called), had a place to preach in, and about seventy hearers. He preached for him and for Andrew Marshall, the old colored Baptist preacher. He then left Savannah and traveled to Augusta. Of his stay the reader is referred to the account of Methodism in Augusta. One morning, *being impressed* that he ought to leave Augusta for Washington, where Hope Hull was, he set out before daylight. He had been converted under Hull's preaching, in New England, and regarded him with great affection. He found him at his corncrib, and saluted him with: "How are you, father?" The father was not enraptured at seeing one whose strange impressions had led him to go on foot through England, Wales, and Ireland, and now to come to Georgia; but he treated him very kindly, and gave him some sound advice about discarding these impressions and sticking to his work. Dow heard him calmly, and soon after, while Hull was sending an appointment for him to the village, he dashed away on foot and reached it first, scattered his tracts, and was ready to preach before the messenger came. There was much about his aspect and manner to arouse attention even at this time, though he grew much more eccentric in after life. Elisha Perryman, a Baptist preacher, heard him on one of his visits, and thus described his appearance: "He wore an old half red overcoat, with an Indian belt around his waist. He did not wear a hat, but had his head tied up with a handkerchief. Coming into the house, he sat down by the fireplace for a few minutes, and

then all of a sudden jumped up and cried out: 'What will this babbler say? They that have turned the world upside down are come hither also.' This was his text, and his talk was much every way, for it appeared to me to run from Britain to Japan, and from the torrid to the frigid zone." Yet this strange man was a man of no common intellect, and preached with real power. He was a great polemic. He had been brought up in New England, among the Calvinists, and as they were the only errorists (for so he regarded them) who had been much in his way, he never preached a sermon without attacking their views. He called them "All-part" people. To relieve the Church in Augusta from debt, he published his chain, which is mainly directed against the Calvinists. It is a fine piece of homely reasoning, and evinces real power in argument.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Jones, the historian of Mississippi Methodism, comes nearer to rising to the height of a due appreciation of this wonderful God-intoxicated man than any writer I know of. Speaking of Dow's visit to the Natchez country, he says:

Lorenzo Dow was generally looked upon as eccentric; but if this estimation of him was correct, his eccentricity was always on the safe side. He was singularly pious, self-sacrificing, zealous, laborious, and useful as a wandering Methodist evangelist. He could not consent to be trammelled by any Conference or local ties; but claimed the right to follow what he considered the indications of Providence, and to labor when, how, and where he could promise himself to be most useful. In regard to temporal comfort and sustenance he seemed literally to desire nothing more than a scanty supply for his present wants. He asked no pecuniary compensation for his services, and often declined receiving the proposed contributions of the people, on the ground that at present they were not needed. If at any time he found he had received more in the way of grateful presents from the people than his present necessities re-

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Georgia and Florida," pp. 95, 96.

quired, he would give the surplus to the more needy, or else employ it in some way to advance the interests of Christ's kingdom. He would sell his watch and appropriate the proceeds to aid some poor community in the erection of a place for public worship; or, as the seasons changed, he would sell any part of his wardrobe to raise a few dollars to pay his current expenses through the Indian Nations or elsewhere, that he might promptly meet all his engagements, which were often published a year or more beforehand.

At the time of which we now write, Lorenzo Dow, by his evident honesty and godly sincerity, and indefatigable devotion to his duties as an evangelist, had so overcome the prejudices of the Methodist public that he was almost everywhere not only tolerated in his eccentric course, but most cordially received and encouraged in his evangelical work. "Dow is a great oddity," the people would say, "but his oddness is all on the safe side. He is not only very harmless in his deviations from the usual course of ministers, but his eccentricities make him the more attractive, and seem to enlarge the sphere of his usefulness." The writer is of the opinion that the Supreme Head of the Church, who has reserved to himself the inalienable right of calling whom he will to preach the gospel, sometimes raises up these comet-like and eccentric men to attract public attention to the saving truth of Christianity, and to be useful in ways and places not readily reached by ordinary ministers.

Lorenzo Dow is necessarily connected with the early history of Methodism in Mississippi, and to leave him out would not only be gross injustice to the memory of a pious, faithful, and useful evangelist, but the history of the early struggles of our Church in this country would be forever incomplete without the record of facts from which he cannot in truth and justice be eliminated. We proceed to mention several facts as connected with his present visit to Mississippi. After his visit, in company with Mr. Blackman, to the afflicted missionary, Hezekiah Harriman, who had lately been at the point of death at Adam Tooley's, he spent several weeks preaching in and around Washington and Natchez. Of Natchez he says, when he was there the year before, he

found it almost impossible to get the people out to hear preaching, and doubted whether there were three Christians in the town, either white or black. Other ministers, representing Protestant Churches, up to this date had met with similar success in Natchez. But Mr. Dow thought himself in good luck on this visit.

Col. Andrew Marschalk, who was then publishing the only weekly paper in Mississippi, in looking over his exchanges for an item, found in a paper published in Lexington, Ky., some rather severe strictures on Lorenzo Dow, written in the style of burlesque, and holding him up to the ridicule of the public. Just as the compositor had gotten this selection in type, Mr. Dow handed him a notice for publication that he would "hold meeting in town on Sunday," at a given time and place. The publisher, in order to give the burlesqued preacher the benefit of both articles, put the notice of preaching next in order to the extract from the Lexington journal. This immediately gave rise to a great deal of talk and speculation about this odd preacher who had been so caricatured in the public prints; for most papers in the Union had copied the article on Lorenzo Dow from the Lexington paper. The result was, he had large audiences while he remained in Natchez, both on Sabbath and week days. Dow, in conclusion, facetiously remarked that this coincidence reminded him of the adage: "Give the devil rope enough, and he will hang himself." He had but little trouble in getting an audience in Natchez after that.

Another incident of much greater importance to the prospective progress of the Church in the territory, connected with Dow's present visit to Mississippi, was the first camp meeting ever held southwest of Tennessee. Mr. Dow had become somewhat familiar with the manner of holding camp meetings, and had witnessed their great utility and usefulness in the Middle and Western States, and he urged the immediate holding of one in close proximity to Washington. Mr. Blackman consented to and encouraged the proposal, but prospects were at first very forbidding. There was not time to fully circulate the appointment; the people had not sufficient time to adjust their home affairs and fix for camping.



Then, it had to be held about the first of December, quite too late in the season even in this mild climate. But Dow was persistent in his plea for a camp meeting. Many predicted that he would get no campers; but about the last of November he united with Messrs. Blackman and Barnes in holding their first quarterly meeting, on Clark's Creek, six or eight miles from Port Gibson. During the quarterly meeting Mr. Dow invited backsliders who desired to be reinstated in the favor of God to come forward for the prayers of the Church. An old backslider, who had once been happy in the love of God, with flowing tears came forward and fell upon his knees, followed by several others. The power of the Holy Ghost came upon the congregation, which was instantly succeeded by loud cries and shouts. Some of the bystanders showed their hostility to such exercises, while others were awe-struck and felt that God was there. "This," says Dow, "prepared the way for the camp meeting," though it was to be held at a distance of thirty miles from this place. Randall Gibson, with his family and several other leading families, making in all about thirty persons, set out forthwith for the camp meeting. They were favored with good weather, considering the lateness of the season; and though some of the sons of Belial tried in various ways to disturb the exercises of the meeting, their efforts were fruitless, and good behavior, under the prudent leadership of Mr. Blackman, generally prevailed. About fifty persons were awakened, and five professed to find peace with God. The members of the Church were greatly strengthened and united in love, and returned to their homes rejoicing.

We will now give the reader a specimen of what were termed the oddities of Lorenzo Dow in connection with this camp meeting. The Sabbath afternoon is, on some accounts, the most unpleasant part of a camp meeting. Many are hastily preparing to start for home; many who intend to remain are out helping their friends off, and bidding them farewell; the religious interest seems to relax, and something like universal hurrying back and forth prevails. The question came up among the few preachers as to who should attempt to preach at that inauspicious hour. It was soon

decided that "Brother Dow is the man for the hour." Dow walked hastily toward the stand, and called out at the top of his voice to the intermixing multitude to assemble immediately, that he had in his possession the latest authentic news from hell, and was going to publish the same for the benefit of his congregation. A general suspension of all other matters was the immediate result, and the congregation rushed *en masse* to the stand. Dow went through with a short but earnest preliminary service, and then announced as his text, "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment," etc. He preached a telling sermon on the unspeakable folly of seeking our chief happiness in the good things of this life, and thereby plunging our souls into the eternal torments of hell. The congregation remained quiet and solemn to the end, and no doubt many of them went away with an awful scriptural truth deeply impressed upon their minds.

Soon after the camp meeting closed, Lorenzo Dow, with two other men, began to prepare for a journey through the Choctaw and Creek Nations to the State of Georgia. As the most important item in their outfit, they wished to procure three Spanish mustang horses, because they could subsist mainly upon grass and leaves of the cane, and would require but little corn. For this purpose they crossed the Mississippi River into Louisiana, and, it is presumed, went into the Attakapas region, as those vast prairies were the place to find mustangs in those days. Mr. Dow says in his journal of this trip that he visited several settlements and held religious meetings. This was his usual way of speaking of an appointment for preaching.

We mention this in order to give it as our opinion that Lorenzo Dow was the first Methodist preacher that ever visited and preached in Louisiana west of the Mississippi.<sup>1</sup>

While Jacob Young was in charge of Natchez District, often swimming rivers, losing himself in woods and swamps, making his way by Indian trails, lodging

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," pp. 120-125.

in filthy cabins, and encountering at his appointments the most reckless and degraded population of the whole American frontier, Lorenzo Dow reached this section, and for some time coöperated strenuously with the pioneers. Though he was a Connecticut man, Young found him as competent for frontier service as any of his itinerants; and bore him along over his immense district, both of them preaching night and day to rude, half-civilized throngs in the wilderness.<sup>1</sup>

As evidence of Dow's effectiveness as a preacher, I mention the following instances: In 1802 Mr. Colbert was presiding elder of the Albany District, New York. The famous and erratic Lorenzo Dow came into the section and worked mightily with the circuit preachers. Colbert writes of him:

He is tall, of a very slender form; his countenance is serene, solemn, but not dejected, and his words, or rather God's words delivered by him, cut like a sword. At night Lorenzo Dow delivered one of the greatest discourses I ever heard against atheism, deism, and Calvinism. He took his text in about the middle of his sermon. Brother Covel arose after him, and said that a young man desired the prayers of the preachers. Several others desired to be prayed for, and at length there was a wonderful display of divine power in the large congregation, beneath the boughs of the trees and the starry heavens.<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Colbert speaks of another sermon by Dow in the woods by candlelight. He says that it was a "powerful sermon, under which many were made to cry for mercy."

In the days of Dow Methodists believed in the doc-

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<sup>1</sup>Stevens's "History of the M. E. Church," Vol. IV., p. 406.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., Vol. III., pp. 469, 470.

trine of sanctification as a second and distinct blessing, and the manner in which he sought and obtained it is related in his own language as follows:

I felt something within that wanted to be done away. I spoke to one and another concerning the pain which I felt in my happiest moments, but no guilt. Some said one thing and some another; yet none spoke to my case, but seemed to be like physicians that did not understand the nature of my disorder. Thus the burden continued, and sometimes seemed greater than the burden of guilt for justification, until I fell in with Thomas Dewey, on Cambridge Circuit. He told me about Calvin Wooster, in Upper Canada, that he enjoyed the blessing of sanctification. I felt a great desire arise in my heart to see the man, if it might be consistent with the divine will; and not long after, I heard that he was passing through the circuit, going home to die. I immediately rode five miles to the house, but found he was gone another five miles farther. I went into the room where he was asleep; he appeared to me more like one from the eternal world than like one of my fellow-mortals. I told him, when he awoke, who I was, and what I had come for. Said he: "God has convicted you for the blessing of sanctification, and the blessing is to be obtained by the simple act of faith, the same as the blessing of justification." I persuaded him to tarry in the neighborhood a few days; and a couple of evenings after the above, when I had done preaching, he spoke, or rather whispered out an exhortation, as his voice was so broken, in consequence of praying in the stir in Upper Canada, where from twenty to thirty were frequently blessed at a meeting. He told me that if he could get sinners under conviction, crying for mercy, they would kneel down, a dozen of them, and not rise until they found peace; for, said he, we did believe that God would bless them, and it was according to our faith. At this time he was in a consumption, and a few weeks after expired. While whispering out the above exhortation the power which attended the same reached the hearts of the people, and some who were standing and sitting fell like men shot in the field

of battle; and I felt it like a tremor run through my soul and every vein, so that it took away my limb power, and I fell to the floor, and by faith saw a greater blessing than I had hitherto experienced, or, in other words, felt a conviction of the need of a greater work of grace in my soul—some of the remains of the evil nature, the effect of Adam's fall, still remaining, and it my privilege to have it eradicated or done away. My soul was in an agony—I could but groan out my desires to God. He came to me, and said: "Believe the blessing is now." No sooner had the words dropped from his lips than I strove to believe the blessing mine now, with all the power of my soul; then the burden dropped or fell from my breast, and a solid joy and a gentle running peace filled my soul. From that time, to this I have not had the ecstasy of joy or a downcast spirit as formerly; but more of an inward, simple, sweet-running peace, from day to day, so that prosperity or adversity does not produce the ups and downs as formerly; but my soul is more like the ocean, while its surface is uneven by reason of the boisterous wind the bottom is still calm; so that a man may be in the midst of outward difficulties, and yet the center of the soul may be calmly stayed on God.<sup>1</sup>

Dow was a very eccentric man. Many of the anecdotes published in regard to him have some foundation in truth; but it is more than probable that most of them have been exaggerated, and that some of them are apocryphal. I could fill many pages with these anecdotes, but I have not space for them, and it is doubtful whether their republication would do any good.

The opposition which Dow encountered from the beginning was equaled only by his pluck and perseverance. Before he and his young wife had entered

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<sup>1</sup>Stevens's "History of the M. E. Church," Vol. III., pp. 201, 202.

upon their voyage to England and Ireland, he was publicly denounced by Nicholas Snethen in the pulpits in New York City, and the same man wrote to parties in England warning them against Dow as a dangerous man. But before Dow left England and Ireland he received abundant testimonials of the confidence reposed in him there, and of his great usefulness while laboring there. This Nicholas Snethen looked upon Dow as a dangerous man, because he preached as an independent, and yet this truly loyal man did what he could in later years to draw off people from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

## CHAPTER IV.

### FROM 1804 TO 1807.—SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE Western Conference met at Griffith's, in Scott County, Ky., October 2, 1805. Asbury and Whatcoat were both present. There were about twenty-five members of the Conference present. Six hours a day were steadily occupied with business. On Sabbath Bishop Asbury preached to about three thousand people. The Holston District reported numbers in Society as follows:

	Whites.	Colored.
Holston .....	639	32
Nollichucky .....	514	29
French Broad.....	478	19
New River.....	296	37
Clinch .....	661	53
Powell's Valley.....	145	1
Carter's Valley.....	40	..
— — —		
Total .....	2,773	171

Grand total, 2,944; a decrease of 360.

These figures show that the preachers of Holston did not have a walk-over; that worldliness, infidelity, and sectarian opposition were contesting every inch of ground. Revivals had swept over the country, and the reaction had set in. There had been harvesting; now there was sifting. The car of progress was slowing up. But Methodism had come to stay, and the pioneers were sowing in hope, whether it rained or shined.

At this session the following were admitted on trial: George C. Light, William Hitt, Zadok B. Thaxton,

Thomas Hellums, John Thompson, Charles B. Matheny, Samuel Sellers, David Young, Henry Fisher, Moses Ashworth, William Vermillion.

The Holston District was manned as follows:

Thomas Wilkerson, presiding elder.  
 Holston, Anthony Houston, William Vermillion.  
 Nollichucky, Moses Black.  
 French Broad, Ralph Lotspeich.  
 New River, Joseph Williams.  
 Clinch, John McClure, George C. Light.  
 Powell's Valley, William Hitt.  
 Carter's Valley, Thomas Milligan.

A new circuit, Carter's Valley, was formed of the beautiful and fertile valley by that name between Rogersville and Kingsport, Tenn., and contiguous territory.

After the session of the Conference Bishops Asbury and Whatcoat made their way into the Holston District, and thence, by the French Broad route, into North Carolina. Bishop Asbury's journal, in giving an account of the journey from Kentucky to South Carolina, fails to mention Bishop Whatcoat. He speaks of preaching himself, and of the preaching of others, whom he names, but Whatcoat is not named. Why, I cannot tell. They rested a day at Stubblefield's, at County Line. The Bishop in his journal complains:

Sure I am that nothing short of the welfare of immortal souls, and my sense of duty, could be inducement enough for me to visit the West so often. O the roads, the hills, the rocks, the rivers, the want of water even to drink; the time for secret prayer hardly to be stolen, and the place scarcely to be had! My mind nevertheless was kept in peace. I prayed in every house I lodged in, and at almost every place I stopped at.

No one but a person addicted to secret prayer can



fully sympathize with the Bishop in his complaint of a lack of opportunity for retirement. His devotion to the duties of the closet accounts in part for his power in the pulpit; and his constant communion with God, together with his habit of praying with all the families he visited, accounts for his wonderful success in planting Methodist Christianity in these ends of the earth. The stream never rises higher than the fountain; and congregations seldom become spiritual under the ministry of a frivolous, time-serving man; and intense devotion and diligence in the preacher seldom fail to develop zeal and spirituality among the people.

While in Tennessee Asbury met with Moses Black, who was at that time on Nollichucky Circuit, and mentions with disapproval the fact that Mr. Black, forty years old, had married a girl of fifteen.

The bishops stopped with William Neilson at Warm Springs. They breakfasted with Mr. Newton, a Presbyterian minister, near Buncombe Courthouse, a man after Asbury's own mind. The two took sweet counsel together. The bishops stayed a night with Mr. Fletcher on Muddy Creek, in what is now Henderson County, N. C.; thence proceeded to South Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

In passing through East Tennessee Bishop Asbury was accustomed to visit the Stubblefields at County Line. Martin Stubblefield's was a favorite stopping place of his. At County Line there were three brothers, Thomas, Joseph, and Martin Stubblefield. The late Wyatt Stubblefield, of Morristown, Tenn., was a son of Joseph Stubblefield. Two sons and four daughters of Wyatt Stubblefield live in and near Morristown, and they are staunch Methodists; another son,

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<sup>1</sup>Asbury's "Journal," Vol. III., pp: 179, 180.

the Rev. Joseph A. Stubblefield, is joint President with Dr. David Sullins, of Centenary Female College, Cleveland, Tenn.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Mary Counts, who resided many years in Morristown, and is now in heaven, was a daughter of Martin Stubblefield, and Mrs. Bettie Huffmaster, for many years a venerable member of the M. E. Church, South, in Morristown, is a daughter of Mrs. Counts. Martin Stubblefield at an early day removed a family to Ohio, driving the team himself. In Cincinnati the team became frightened, ran away and killed him, and he was buried there.

The Western Conference met at Ebenezer meeting-house, Greene County, Tenn., September 15, 1806. Bishop Asbury presided. I infer from a statement in Asbury's journal that William McKendree, who was at that time presiding elder of Cumberland (Middle Tennessee) District, was present also.

Numbers in Society for Holston District were reported as follows:

	Whites.	Colored.
Holston .....	600	52
Nollichucky .....	576	22
French Broad.....	554	16
New River.....	380	36
Clinch .....	519	42
Powell's Valley.....	185	4
Carter's Valley.....	209	10
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Total .....	3,023	182

Grand total, 3,205; an increase of 261.

James King, Milton Ladd, Hector Sanford, Frederick Hood, John Tarver, Abbott Goddard, Hezekiah

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<sup>1</sup>Since this was penned Professor Stubblefield has resigned his position in the college for considerations of health.

Shaw, John Collins, John Travis, John Crane, and Joseph Bennett were admitted on trial.

The Holston appointments for the coming year were :

Thomas Wilkerson, presiding elder.

Holston, Ralph Lotspeich, John Crane.

Nollichucky, William Houston.

French Broad, James Axley.

New River, Thomas Milligan.

Clinch, Richard Browning, George C. Light.

Powell's Valley, John McClure.

Carter's Valley, Joshua Oglesby.

West Point, to be supplied.

The appointments show that a new circuit, or rather mission, was added to the district this year. West Point was the present site of Kingston, at the confluence of the Tennessee and Clinch Rivers. The circuit embraced the country along the Tennessee and Clinch Rivers in the vicinity of Southwest Point. The circuit was left to be supplied, but by whom it was supplied we know not; it was, however, returned at the next Conference, under the name of Cumberland, with forty-five members.

Bishop Asbury entered Holston this year from the Valley of Virginia by way of Pepper's Ferry. It was a season of distressing and alarming drought, and at Page's meetinghouse, August 24, he used as a text 2 Chronicles vii. 13, 14. He says that it was an awful talk, and the people were alarmed. He breakfasted at Wythe C. H. He enjoyed a night's rest at Charles Hardy's, and rode to the salt works. He preached at Widow Russell's, and found his hostess as happy and cheerful as ever. August 31 he preached at Mahanaim meetinghouse, which had been built since his last visit to the salt works. Mahanaim church

was a substantial log house situated on the road between the salt works and Abingdon, about two miles southwest of the former. Sick and weary, the Bishop continued to go and to preach. On the night of September 7 he lodged at William Nelson's, "an ancient home and stand for Methodists and Methodist preaching." On Sunday, the 14th, the Bishop preached at a stand in the woods, and Mr. McKendree followed. It was a season of feeling. It is probable, but not certain, that this service took place at Ebenezer, where it is likely that the stand was erected to accommodate the audiences that were expected at Conference.

The Conference began its sessions on Saturday, 19th, and ended Monday, 21st. The Mississippi preachers were not present. One thousand and four hundred members had been added in the bounds of the Conference during the year. Fifty-five preachers were stationed, and all pleased. The preachers were in want; and the Bishop, to aid them, parted with his watch, a coat, and a shirt. By order of the Conference the Bishop preached a farewell discourse from John i. 47-50 in memory of Bishop Whatcoat, who died on July 5.

The Bishop and his traveling companions were lost within a mile of Killian's, in Buncombe County, N. C., but were fortunate in getting to a schoolhouse to shelter for the night. They had no fire, but had a bed wherever they could find a bench. The Bishop's aid (as he calls him), Moses Lawrence, had a bearskin and a dirt floor to spread it on. On Saturday, 26th, the Bishop attended a camp meeting on Turkey Creek. On Sunday he preached to a congregation of about five hundred people; and the Spirit of the Lord was present, and a few souls professed converting grace.

October 1 the Bishop preached at Samuel Edney's. He left Buncombe by Mills' Gap, and he thus describes his rough experiences: "I rode, I walked, I sweated, I trembled, and my old knees failed. Here are gullies and rocks and precipices. We came upon Green River, crossed, and then hobbled and crippled along to Martin Edwards, a local preacher." The Bishop's journal shows that camp meetings were held on Turkey Creek, Buncombe County, as early as 1806. He calls the meeting there that year "a kind of camp meeting." This county was quite primitive at that time, and for a sparsely settled country a congregation of five hundred to hear the Bishop on Sunday was quite a good showing for the meeting. Camp meetings have been kept up at Turkey Creek camp ground from that day to the present. It has been a very popular camp ground. Large crowds have attended from year to year, some of the best preachers of the connection have preached there, and revivals of great power have taken place there from time to time.

The Western Conference met at Chillicothe, Ohio, September 14, 1807. Bishop Asbury presided. Numbers in Society from the Holston District were:

	Whites.	Colored.
Holston .....	624	56
Nollichucky .....	491	22
French Broad.....	600	19
New River.....	346	40
Clinch .....	636	47
Powell's Valley.....	153	3
Carter's Valley.....	214	11
Cumberland .....	45	..
	—	—
Total .....	3,109	198
Grand total, 3,307; a gain of 102.		

The names of those admitted on trial were: John Henninger, John Craig, William Lewis, Thomas Kirkman, Edmond Wilcox, Jedidiah McMinn, Jacob Turman, William Mitchell, Josiah Crawford, Thomas Stilwell, Mynus Layton, Henry Mallory.

John Henninger was afterwards a very popular and useful preacher in the Holston Conference. The name Cragg should be spelled Craig. The misspelling was kept up in the minutes for a number of years.

The appointments for the Holston District for the coming year were:

Learner Blackman, presiding elder.  
 Holston, Caleb W. Cloud, Hezekiah Shaw.  
 Nollichucky, Nathan Barnes, Obadiah Edge.  
 French Broad, Benjamin Edge.  
 Clinch, Miles Harper, Thomas Trower.  
 Powell's Valley, Abbott Goddard.  
 Carter's Valley, John Henninger.

A ride of three hundred and sixty miles, after leaving Chillicothe, brought Asbury to Martin Stubblefield's, October 12. There, weary as he was, he preached at night, and felt powerfully disposed to sing and shout as loud as the youngest. Saturday, October 16, finds him at Killian's. On Sunday, October 18, he preached in Buncombe Courthouse, and the people were all attention. He spent a night under the hospitable roof of his very dear brother in Christ, George Newton, a Presbyterian minister, an Israelite indeed. On Monday he made Fletcher's, and then proceeded to South Carolina. It is appropriate that we should watch the flight of this blazing comet as he darts through the Holston skies, but we cannot follow him beyond our own horizon.

John Watson was admitted into the traveling connection in 1792, placed on the supernumerary list in 1805, made effective in 1807, made supernumerary again in 1824, superannuated in 1826, and died in 1838. His Holston charges were: 1797, Russell; 1800, Holston, Russell, and New River; 1801, New River; 1801-03, presiding elder of Holston District; 1805, presiding elder of Swannanoa District. We thus see that he spent seven years in Holston, and he is therefore eminently entitled to be included in the story of Holston. Mr. Watson labored three years in Kentucky. The remainder of his valuable labors were dispensed within the bounds of the Baltimore Conference. He was stationed in Washington City in the spring of 1807, and his other appointments indicate the confidence which was placed in his piety and ability. He has often been spoken of in the Holston Conference with reverence and affection. He was a man of solid though not brilliant parts, and of great earnestness in the discharge of his ministerial duties.

Mr. Watson was born in Calvert County, Md., and died at the house of Mr. Weller, near Martinsburg, Va. His long continuance in the superannuate relation accounts for his meager historic recognition. Dr. Redford says that during the three years Mr. Watson spent in Kentucky he contributed largely to the building up of the Church in that section. He organized the celebrated "Level Woods" Society, that in early days sent out such a salutary influence into all the surrounding country, and that is still blessing the community within its range of influence.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. I., p. 210.

Joab Watson entered the itinerancy in 1801, and located in 1805. He was appointed to Swannanoa Circuit in the spring of 1803, and in the fall of the same year to Clinch. In 1804 he was placed in charge of Holston Circuit, which was his last pastoral charge. After his location he spent many years in North Alabama, and died west of the Mississippi at an advanced age. He was a man of more than ordinary literary and scientific acquirements. He was a good Hebrew scholar and an able expounder of the word of God. His manners were peculiar, and his style in the pulpit was not the most popular. He followed teaching as well as preaching, and the depth and thoroughness of his attainments eminently fitted him for the duties of the schoolroom. The preacher who preaches rapidly and readily and skims the surface is the popular preacher with the masses; while, on the contrary, the man of research and profundity is often required to preach to vacant benches. Dr. Bledsoe said of Dr. Sparrow that "he preached to empty pews because he did not know how to preach to empty heads."

William Ellington was admitted into the Western Conference in 1804, and located in 1808. His first year of itinerant service was rendered on Nollichucky Circuit. His other works were in Kentucky and Ohio. Dr. Jacob Young became acquainted with the Ellington family in Russell County, Va., in 1803, and William Ellington was one of this family. Russell County made an early start in raising up Methodist traveling preachers; and up to the present date it has put more than its quota of laborers into the itinerant ranks.

Thomas Lasley was the third son of Manoah Lasley,



and was born in Virginia March 31, 1782. He was converted during the revival of 1800, which swept over Kentucky and Tennessee. Feeling it to be his duty to preach, he went to a country school six months, where he learned to write and gained some knowledge of figures. At a quarterly conference held for Barren Circuit June 12, 1804, he was licensed to preach, and a short time afterwards admitted into Conference. Lasley was right in going to school, for a call to preach necessarily implies a call to prepare to preach. The wise mechanic sharpens his tools before beginning his job. In the history of this man we shall be surprised at the learning which he evinced, and the neat, faultless style with which he wrote, after this small educational beginning. He joined the Western Conference in 1804, and located in 1812. Nollichucky was his first circuit. After his year in Holston he labored in Mississippi, Louisiana, and Kentucky. In 1809-10 he was the traveling companion of Bishop McKendree. At the Western Conference of 1805, a call for volunteers being made for Mississippi and Louisiana, Elisha W. Bowman volunteered for the latter State, and C. W. Cloud, William Pattison, and Mr. Lasley volunteered for the former. The company passed through the wilderness in thirteen days, having packed provisions for man and beast on their horses; but the provisions being exhausted at the end of eleven days, there was an enforced fast of two days. Mr. Bowman proceeded to New Orleans, while Mr. Lasley and his colleague remained to coöperate with Blackman and Barnes on the Natchez Mission. The minutes of 1806 represent Lasley as appointed to Wachita and Bowman to Opelousas. The reverse,

however, was true: Lasley was appointed to Opelousas. His difficulties and dangers in swimming deep waters and passing through miry swamps to reach his field of labor were appalling. In climbing out of a stream up a steep, muddy bank, his horse became so crippled that he could not put the foot of his crippled limb to the ground, and was trembling with agony. Mr. Lasley's condition was sad; he was far from home, a stranger in a strange land, in the midst of an ugly swamp, with no human help at hand. But "Man's extremity is God's opportunity." Mr. Lasley's heart sinking within him, he threw himself on his knees before God, and prayed earnestly for God to heal his horse and bless him with faith and courage. He arose from his knees to find the horse perfectly sound. Mr. Lasley established a circuit three hundred miles in circumference, and did a very successful year's work. At the close of the year his financial resources were exhausted, and his clothes worn out; and his appointment to Red River, in Kentucky and Tennessee, was a relief from the hardships of the past year, although he would willingly have spent the remnant of his days laboring among the people of Louisiana. In 1810 he was fortunately married to Miss Susan, a daughter of Ambrose Nelson. In the division of the Western Conference in 1811 he fell into the Ohio Conference. In 1812 he located and became a tiller of the soil. As a local preacher he was diligent and useful. He was successful in business, and made ample provision for his family. In 1835 he entered the Kentucky Conference in an effective relation, and was presiding elder of Greensburg District for two years, laboring successfully and usefully; but his health failing again, he took

a supernumerary relation and later located again, and returned to a small but well-cultivated farm to spend in the bosom of his family the evening of his days. He labored as a local preacher with more than ordinary success. He kept up a monthly appointment forty-five miles away from home, and without remuneration, for a number of years. It is surprising with what self-complacency some people professing to love the Lord will sit month after month under the ministry of a local preacher without feeling under the slightest financial obligation to him. Indeed, I have known some Methodists who seemed to think that the honor of their attendance upon the ministry of a local preacher was a sufficient compensation to him for his services, however laborious and valuable. It is a shame to our common Christianity that there have been well-to-do Methodists who are accustomed to take an inventory of the holdings of preachers, both local and traveling, before they are willing to contribute anything to their support, thus placing their grudging contributions to the support of the ministry on the list of charities. It is to be hoped that an increase of piety and intelligence in our membership is raising them above this Pickwickian sort of Christianity.

Mr. Lasley died at the residence of his son-in-law, M. McMillan, in McMinnville, Tenn., January 20, 1857, in his seventy-fifth year.<sup>1</sup>

Richard Whatcoat deserves mention in Holston history because, before his election to the office of General Superintendent, he was for some time the traveling companion of Bishop Asbury, and preached occa-

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., pp. 148-166.



BISHOP WHIATCOAT.

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sionally in Holston, because he labored amongst us as Bishop after his election, and because he sustained to us the relation of General Superintendent, whether present with us or absent. He was born in Gloucestershire, England, in 1736; was converted September 3, 1758; sanctified March 28, 1761; began to travel in 1769; came to America in 1784; was elected General Superintendent in May, 1800; and died at Dover, Del., July 5, 1806. He greatly excelled in the virtues of gravity, sincerity, and simplicity. He moved extensively through England, Ireland, and Wales. He served the Methodist connection in America in various important stations, in cities and towns, on circuits and districts, with pious faithfulness. He served six years in the general superintendency. No one ever saw him light or frivolous. No one ever heard him speak evil of any one. No one ever heard him speak an idle word. He was dead to envy, pride, and praise. He was careful without covetousness, and neat in his apparel without vanity. He was not a man of great erudition, but he was mighty in the Scriptures. His knowledge of Scripture was so great and so accurate that he was called a concordance. He gave himself much to reading. Although elected to the bishopric in advanced life, he traveled annually three or four thousand miles. He was a prodigy of pain and patience for his last thirteen weeks. He died at the residence of Richard Bassett, Esq.<sup>1</sup>

Bishop Whatcoat was above medium size, robust, but not corpulent. He was a man of venerable appearance. A man of truly apostolic character, he

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<sup>1</sup>General Minutes, Vol. I., pp. 145, 146.

commanded universal respect. His face indicated a well-disciplined mind and a heart full of love divine. His reproofs, though always faithful, were given with such tenderness as to prevent needless pain and to secure the best results. He was always about his Master's business. His remains lie in Dover Methodist Episcopal Church burial grounds.<sup>1</sup>

There has been among the descendants and admirers of Jesse Lee an abiding regret that he was not elected to the office of bishop in 1800, when Richard Whatcoat was chosen to that office. Lee's wit and humor were in the way of his promotion to that dignity at that early day of puritanic notions among Methodist preachers. Besides, his positiveness and independence of character, coupled with enlarged ideas of freedom and opposition to prerogative, caused many of the members of the General Conference to vote for a man more negative and more symmetrical than he, though greatly inferior to him in physical and intellectual vigor. But it was then as in the days of Solomon, and, indeed, as it is always, "The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; . . . but time and chance happeneth to them all." Whatcoat filled the office creditably and usefully; but Lee was greater than bishop—just as Clay, Calhoun, Webster, each was greater than President. As to the election of 1800, "the unkindest cut of all" was that Lee was defeated by a false report put in circulation just before the election, and not corrected soon enough to rescue him from defeat. This simply shows that men have al-

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. Laban Clark as quoted in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 67, 68.

ways been men, and that the former days were not better than these.

Ralph Lotspeich joined the Western Conference in 1802; and died June 15, 1813. He traveled in Kentucky, Ohio, and the Holston country. He was appointed to the French Broad Circuit in 1805, and to Holston in 1806. In the bounds of the old French Broad Circuit he has a number of relatives by his name; and so far as they are connected with any Church, they are generally Methodists. He was of German descent. He was a son of Christopher Lotspeich, who emigrated from Germany to Culpepper County, Va., and afterwards removed to Greene County, Tenn. Christopher was buried at Harrison's meetinghouse, on Nollichucky. James Lotspeich, a brother of Ralph, was born and died in Greene County. His son, Amos, still lives, and he has children living in Greene, Hamblen, and other East Tennessee counties. This is a Methodist family out and out; and it has given to the country some of its best citizens. James Lotspeich married as a second wife a Whittenberg, and his widow is still living.

Ralph Lotspeich was not endowed with great natural gifts; but being deeply pious, and very studious, he became deservedly esteemed as a sound and useful gospel preacher. He was a weeping prophet, frequently weeping over his congregations and enforcing his exhortations with tears. Practical and experimental religion was his theme, while his life was an excellent comment on his teachings. His health began to fail nine months before his death; but he continued to travel till three or four weeks before his dissolution. His complaint, which finally took the

form of inflammation of the kidneys, bade defiance to medical skill. He suffered much for nine or ten days before his death, but was never heard to complain. On his deathbed he frequently sang his favorite lines:

Great spoils I shall win  
From death, hell, and sin;  
'Midst outward affliction,  
Shall feel Christ within.

Having requested a friend to adjust his temporal affairs, and ascertaining how much money he had left, he said with a smile: "That will keep my wife and children one year, and the Lord will provide." The day on which he died, being asked how he was, he replied, "I can only say. I am sure of heaven; not a doubt has appeared since my sickness began;" and just before he breathed his last he said, "Tell my old friends all is well, all is well."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. James Quinn tells the following story of Lotspeich: On Quinn's last round of quarterly meetings before Conference, on the Scioto District in 1813, at the close of the meeting on Scioto Circuit, Mr. Lotspeich said to him: "Brother Quinn, I shall not be at Conference. I wish you to obtain a location for me. I must retire. I have struggled as long as I can. I have exhausted the principal part of my funds, and I shall soon have nothing left. This I would not regard if I had no family; but my duty to my family is, in my judgment, paramount to every other consideration." "O brother," said Mr. Quinn, "try it a little longer; trust in the Lord; it may be that matters will improve; the people will certainly lay

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<sup>1</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. I., p. 238.



your case to heart." "No," said Lotspeich, "the matter is settled with me. Our people will never in my time make provision for a married ministry." So saying he turned off and wept; and Mr. Quinn wept too, for the same feelings were struggling in his breast. They prayed and parted to see each other's face no more on earth. As Mr. Quinn was on his way to Conference, one met him with the inquiry: "Have you heard of Brother Lotspeich's death?" "Is he dead?" exclaimed Quinn. "Yes; he died at Dr. McDowell's, on Deer Creek, two weeks after he left us, and died shouting." He was taken from the evil to come. This man of God wept at the thought of locating on earth, so a merciful God located him in heaven.<sup>1</sup>

George C. Light entered the Western Conference in 1805, and located in 1809 in the Baltimore Conference. He was born in Westmoreland County, Va., February 28, 1785. His father removed from Virginia to Kentucky, and settled in Maysville (then called Limestone), where he lived till 1799. The family then removed to Ohio. In 1804, when he was in his eighteenth year, at a meeting in his father's neighborhood, he was powerfully converted at the "mourners' bench." Before his conversion he was a society youth, taking an active part in the amusements common among society people at that day; but after his conversion he renounced all purely worldly pastimes, and endeavored to win his friends and companions from the frivolities of the world to the more serious and yet more joyful exercises of religion. His gifts gave him prominence in class and prayer meetings,

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<sup>1</sup>"Life of James Quinn," pp. 221, 222.

for he was powerful in prayer and exhortation. William Burke, presiding elder of the district, observing the signs of promise in the young man, invited him to attend one of his quarterly meetings, where he put him up to exhort, then to preach. Mr. Burke, satisfied that he was called to preach, sent him to assist Jacob Young, then in charge of the Muskingum and Kanawha Circuit. Mr. Young was in the bounds of his work, in feeble health, when some person rapped at the door of the house where he was stopping. A tall young man entered, in slovenly dress, but of keen eyes, high forehead, and manly step. He took his seat by the fire. The man of the house, who was inquisitive, said: "Are you traveling?" "Yes, sir." "Where are you from?" "Clermont County, Ohio." "Where are you going to?" "Marietta." "What is your business?" "I am hunting for a Methodist preacher by the name of Jacob Young." "Well, he is here at the table." Mr. Young then asked him his business with him. He replied: "I am come to help you preach. I am sent here by the Rev. William Burke, presiding elder." "What is your name?" inquired Young. He answered: "George C. Light."

He remained on this circuit till October, when he was admitted into Conference. He was appointed to Clinch Circuit in 1805 and also in 1806. Having married, he located. The Methodists of that day were poor, the Societies small, the members imperfectly educated on the question of ministerial support, and the marriage of a preacher almost necessitated his location. But at the same time there were ample fields for the exercise of the talents of local preachers. The circuits were large, the Societies widely separated,

and most of them could be served by only week-day preaching. The local preachers gave the people Sunday preaching, and in the absence of the circuit rider married the couples and buried the dead. They also assisted in protracted meetings in their own, and sometimes distant, neighborhoods. The city and village stations were few, the circuits large, and the local preachers preached wherever there was an open house and a congregation without the fear of a writ of ejection from some pastor. Indeed, if a local preacher did not make it appear at the fourth quarterly conference that he had preached much during the year, he usually got a hackling from the presiding elder. It mattered not where he preached, so he preached to immortal souls. If he did this, he heard nothing but plaudits. It was silence, not preaching, that gave offense at that day.

Mr. Light was diligent and useful while a local preacher. In 1821 he was readmitted into the traveling connection, in the Kentucky Conference. After his reëntrance into the itinerancy, he filled some of the most important and honorable stations in the Kentucky and Missouri Conferences, as circuit preacher, station preacher, presiding elder, and Agent of the American Colonization Society. On account of his wife's health and his own he was transferred to the Mississippi Conference in 1849, where he was effective until 1859, when he was placed on the superannuate roll.

Dr. Light died suddenly of rheumatism of the heart at the residence of Dr. C. K. Marshall, in Vicksburg, Miss. After his superannuation he continued to preach as much and as often as he was able; but for

rheumatism in his shoulder he was as able to preach as he ever was, and could have preached, as he claimed, three times on the Sabbath without exhaustion. On the last two days of his life he had some bodily intimation of his approaching end, and in company with Dr. Camp he talked much of divine things, commenting beautifully upon various passages of Holy Writ. Walking from the Book Depository to the house of Dr. Marshall, a severe pain struck him in the region of his heart, and to Dr. Marshall, who met him at the door, he said: "I am almost dead." He entered, was seated, and while expatiating on the years he had spent in preaching, his early labors, and the success with which God had honored him, his right hand dropped and his head fell forward, his chin resting on his breast. Dr. Marshall caught him and sustained him in his arms, while, without a groan or struggle, his spirit passed away. "He was not; for God took him."

Dr. Light was honored by some institution with the degree of Doctor of Divinity, and well did he deserve this honor. He was a remarkable man. Possessing fine natural endowments, with a wide grasp of thought, he used his faculties and attainments to the best advantage. Error in doctrine fell before the well-mounted battery of his logic and eloquence. Though careless in dress, a real fault, he was commanding in person, and he possessed a robust constitution. He was affable and courteous, and was therefore a welcome guest wherever he went.<sup>1</sup>

John Crane was born in 1787 in Eaton's Station, a

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. III., pp. 126-134.

fort about two miles below Nashville. His father, Lewis Crane, was amongst the first settlers in Cumberland, and one of the first fruits of Methodism in that section. John was born at a time when all the settlers there were in constant danger of massacre by the Indians, and he was taught the fear of God. He had serious religious thoughts at the age of six, and at the age of twelve he experienced saving grace in the great revival which began about that time in the Cumberland country. He was one of the most remarkable youths of his age; for at the age of twelve he frequently exhorted, and his exhortations were accustomed to produce weeping among his hearers.

Mr. Crane was admitted into the traveling connection at the age of nineteen. He joined the Western Conference in 1806. He traveled Holston Circuit from the fall of 1806 to the spring of 1807, and completed the year on French Broad Circuit. On these circuits his labors were honored and blessed of God, and he was the instrument of bringing many souls to the knowledge of salvation through Jesus Christ. In successive years he labored with great zeal and success in Ohio, Louisiana, Missouri, and Kentucky. In 1811 he was stationed on Duck River Circuit, where hundreds flocked to hear him preach by day and by night, while the earth was trembling under repeated earthquake shocks. About the first of February, 1812, he was compelled by overfatigue and a severe cold to desist from his labors; and about the 14th of that month his spirit took its flight. He died at the home of a Mr. Mitchell, on Duck River. Not long before he expired he died away, and it was thought that his spirit had fled; but in a little time he revived,

and cried out: "What has brought me back? I have been on the very margin of heaven. O father, I love you; but I have a Father in the kingdom of heaven; I shall soon be with him; I have not a doubt of my acceptance with God; my body will soon be laid low in the dust, but this mortal shall put on immortality." He exhorted the people around him to meet him in heaven, while he calmly bade them a last and long farewell. What a sermon there is in such a triumphant death! What an assurance there is in it of the genuineness and power of the Christian religion and of a glorious immortality!

## CHAPTER V.

### THOMAS AND SARAH WILKERSON.

IN Thomas Wilkerson we meet with one of the strong men of the Church. He stood high as a man and preacher. He is said to have been a favorite of Bishop Asbury for the bishopric. He married three times within the bounds of the Holston Conference, died a member of the Holston Conference, and was during a large part of his life identified with Holston Methodism. I knew him personally in his old age, when he resided near Abingdon, Va., and I yet have a distinct and sacred memory of his venerable, patriarchal appearance and manners. I heard him preach once at Emory and Henry College, a plain, sententious sermon. It was not in his palmy days. I heard him exhort occasionally during a revival meeting in Abingdon in 1849; and his exhortations were full of tenderness and spiritual power. He was admitted into the traveling connection in 1792; located in 1807; was readmitted into the Holston Conference in 1827, placed on the supernumerary roll in 1828, and he was either supernumerary or superannuate to the day of his death, which occurred February 3, 1856.

Mr. Wilkerson traveled in Eastern Virginia two and a half years, in Kentucky and Middle Tennessee three years, and was then (1798) appointed to Holston Circuit. His appointments after that were Yadkin, in North Carolina; Baltimore, Hinkstone, and Lexing-

ton, in Kentucky; Cumberland, in Tennessee; Nashville, Lexington Town (a station). In 1805 and in 1806 he was appointed presiding elder of Holston District. After his readmission (1827), he was assigned to the presiding eldership of French Broad District, but at the end of the year he ceased to be effective on account of feeble health. In 1829-30 he was supernumerary on Abingdon Station, and also in charge, and he gave great satisfaction as preacher and pastor.

Thomas Wilkerson was born in Amelia County, Virginia, April 27, 1772. His parents were unconverted, hence he was not brought up in the admonition of the Lord. The history of his conviction, conversion, call to the ministry, and of his labors and trials in the ministry, is a story of thrilling interest. In his thirteenth year he was seriously convicted of sin under the preaching of the despised Methodist preachers; but by associating with wicked companions he became sevenfold more the child of the devil than before. He sought comfort in infidelity, scoffed at religion; but like the devils, he believed and trembled. At the age of eighteen he was powerfully awakened. After spending a Sabbath in its shameful desecration, he was informed of a revival of religion in the neighborhood, and at this information his repugnance to religion ripened into malice against the instruments and subjects of the excitement. But a harsh remark of his about the fruits of the revival, in which he predicted that his companions, some of whom had been subjects of converting grace, would soon be as wicked as ever, reacted and threw him into an awful gloom; the pains of hell gat hold upon him, and his weight



of guilt seemed sufficient to crush him into endless ruin. He hastened to his father's orchard, and spent the night in prayer. The following week was spent in agonizing prayer, and on the next Sabbath he surprised his friends by joining the Church. The next week was spent about as the preceding had been spent—in intolerable distress. He says: "About dark I took to the woods in despair. As I was making my way through the bushes, I thought I saw a flash of lightning, which was almost instantly repeated. I recollect nothing more that occurred until I found myself on my feet with my hands raised, while loud shouts seemed to burst from the bottom of my heart." He did not know that what he had realized was religion, and he tried to return to his former state of mourning; but as soon as he would fall to his knees, he would involuntarily rise to his feet and commence shouting. This he thought was very strange, as he had been violently opposed to shouting. While reasoning on his case he lost his comfortable frames and feelings and was plunged again into darkness and despair. On the next Sabbath he attended class meeting, and recounted his experiences and exercises, and although he was overburdened with shame and sorrow, some of the brethren smiled, and this seemed to him cruel and unfeeling. But these brethren had been along the same road, they knew the young man's spiritual whereabouts, they saw the rainbow of hope that spanned his cloud of gloom, and their smile was one of complacency and not of contempt. A few days afterwards, while on his knees in a grove, his burden was lifted, and he felt the love and joy which he had felt before. He there obtained the faith of assurance,

and never afterwards doubted the genuineness and thoroughness of his conversion. I am writing history; not philosophy, but I take the liberty of remarking that conversion, a term too superficial to express the idea as understood by Methodists, is not simply a change of purpose or a reformation of life; but it is a tremendous psychic revolution, a radical renovation, a new creation, by which old things are abolished and all things become new. No other change can bring sweet peace of mind and introduce us into the joys of the great salvation. This psychic change can supervene only upon a state of absolute passivity, in which the helpless soul becomes perfectly amenable to the divine suggestion contained in some Scripture passage, or some Scripture sentiment, or some correct view of the divine economy in the work of redemption. The flash of light which Mr. Wilkerson saw was a psychic phenomenon, which indicated that the state of passivity had been reached. This strange light has been seen by thousands of others. Moses saw it in the burning bush; and it is probable that then and there he experienced that mighty change which made him indeed and in truth a child of God and fitted him for his future labors, trials, and responsibilities.

Mr. Wilkerson immediately became so impressed with a view of the lost condition of sinners and of the endless ruin to which they were exposed, and gave himself so constantly to prayer for them, that he lost flesh and seemed to be wasting away with consumption. His physician, however, believing that his disease was mainly in the mind, and so stating, Mr. Wilkerson modified his habits, and soon recovered

strength. He was in a short time put in charge of a class, and then urged by the preacher to enter the traveling connection. Convinced of his unfitness for the sacred office of the ministry, he determined to marry in order to quiet his own mind and to avoid the solicitations of his friends. Preparatory to this step he planted a crop, and when urged to enter Conference he would reply that he had to take care of his crop; but the Lord took care of it for him by sending a killing frost, which destroyed the larger part of it, while his neighbors, with the exception of his father, escaped the misfortune. This he took as a judgment sent upon him for his disobedience, and he then yielded to his conscience and the advice of his friends and entered the traveling connection. On his first circuit, Franklin, feeling his incompetency for the work and lack of usefulness, his mental distress reduced him to a skeleton; but he was soon encouraged by being made instrumental in bringing a few souls to Christ. While he was on Greensville Circuit, in Eastern Virginia, some incautious brethren told him that on a certain occasion he had preached a great sermon. This inflamed his vanity; but the Physician of souls applied the proper remedy in entailing upon him disastrous failures in his attempts to preach for a week, and he fell into despair of ever being able to recover his lost gifts. One night he went to bed in great mental agony, and while musing on his wretched situation a great light shone round about him. His first impression was that the day of judgment had come. A young man who was in bed with him, and was unconverted, was suddenly seized with agony. The whole family below arose from

their beds. All the inmates of the house assembled, and realized a powerful baptism of the Holy Ghost, and the remainder of the night was spent in praising God. The next day Mr. Wilkerson was humble enough to justify the restoration of his lost gifts.

In the spring of 1795 Mr. Wilkerson and John Buxton, having volunteered for the West, started to Kentucky. They spent a few days in East Tennessee, and attended the Conference at Earnest's, in Greene County, Tenn. At that time Mr. Wilkerson was suffering with chills, and feared that the exposure to which he would be subjected in the wilderness would be fatal to him. They packed provisions for man and beast for a ride of two hundred miles, and had to lie on the ground at night. The first night of this experience he had an ague, and that was his last ague. What he thought would kill him cured him. From this time his health improved. In 1798 he was sent to Holston Circuit with that excellent man, Tobias Gibson. Gibson's health failed, and Wilkerson had all the work to do. Also the preacher on Clinch (or Russell) Circuit, resolving to quit traveling, requested Wilkerson to annex that circuit to his. He thus had the work of three men to do. We have only the authority of Mr. Wilkerson himself for this last statement. He names the man who abandoned Russell Circuit Jeremiah Minter, a name which does not appear in the minutes, and of which I find no other mention. Returning to his Virginia Conference in 1799, he was appointed to Yadkin Circuit, an extensive field which extended so far west as to embrace Buncombe County, N. C. He was appointed to Baltimore Circuit in 1800, and on that charge witnessed a

pleasing revival. He was appointed to Hinkstone and Lexington Circuit (Ky.) in 1801 with William Burke, and there they had a revival. This appointment brought him into immediate connection with the great revival, in which he was an efficient instrument. When he was on the Cumberland Circuit, he was eyewitness of the remarkable exercises which characterized that work—jerking, running, dancing, etc. In 1803 he was appointed to Lexington Town, a station, because of his feeble health. "Lexington Town" was a pleonasm to distinguish the station from the circuit. The Church in Lexington had petitioned for a separation from the circuit, and accordingly a *station* was formed, the first in the State. At that date stations were very rare anywhere in the connection. The towns were usually centers of circuits, and two or three preachers were placed on the circuits. This, perhaps, lightened somewhat the burden of ministerial support, relieved the preachers of the necessity for the preparation of a large number of sermons, thus giving them more time for the active duties of the field, furnished the people with a greater variety of pulpit talent than they would have had otherwise, and maintained in the congregations a greater readiness to hear and a fresher and more buoyant ministration than are usually realized in the settled pastorate of other Churches, or even in our present station system.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>The bulk of the above items are from the pen of Mr. Wilkerson, as published in the *Southwestern Christian Advocate* in 1841, and reproduced in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. I., pp. 238-259.

In 1805 and 1806 Mr. Wilkerson was appointed presiding elder of the Holston District, a large and laborious field. Here his long rides and incessant labors broke him down, and at the end of his second year on the district he located. About the time of his location he married, and settled on a farm a short distance east of Strawberry Plains, Knox County, Tenn., and labored with his own hands, fearing, as he was heard to say, that he would come to want, although his temporal circumstances were by no means gloomy. The lady whom he married was a Mrs. Cobb, a widow. She did not live a great while after the marriage, and died without children. I have not learned her maiden name. At her death she left all her property, consisting of land and negroes, to her husband.

Some time after her death Mr. Wilkerson married an intelligent widow at Strawberry Plains, Mrs. Williams, the mother of Mrs. Stringfield, wife of the Rev. Thomas Stringfield. Mrs. Williams belonged to one of the most respectable and influential families of Tennessee. She had an ample fortune, and lived in elegant simplicity. After her marriage to Mr. Wilkerson she observed the same manner of life. They lived on a beautiful and fertile farm on the Holston River, some fifteen miles east of Knoxville. Here was displayed a liberal hospitality. Here weary travelers and faithful ministers found a hearty welcome. Mrs. Wilkerson presided in her home and at her table in an unaffected and queenly manner. She was a woman of culture and piety, was neat and plain in her apparel, and she always conducted herself as

became a woman professing godliness. Her death was peaceful.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Wilkerson's maiden name was King. She was a daughter of Col. James King, and was born in Fort Knox, the site of what is now the city of Knoxville. Colonel King was appointed commandant of the post by Governor Martin, of North Carolina. After Colonel King's retirement to private life, at Strawberry Plains, his daughter, Sarah, spent her time partly at home, partly with her brother William at "Shady," near the Cranberry Iron Works, and partly with her brother James at King's Meadows (now Bristol). James was a minister of the Presbyterian Church. She was educated at Salem, N. C., under Moravian influence. Here she developed that gentleness and gentility which, joined to strong will force, impressed all her acquaintances with her dignity of grace and her grace of dignity. She was a born leader. At Salem she contracted a strong friendship with Micajah Watkins, a young heiress of Virginia. These friends became sisters through the marriage of her brother James to Micajah. Sarah King was married to William Williams, of North Carolina, April 10, 1808, and they made their home at Strawberry Plains, Tenn. Mr. Williams became a farmer and merchant. The young couple were blessed with wealth, culture, and fine social standing. Mr. Williams lived ten years after his marriage, dying of pulmonary consumption. While William and Sarah Williams were traveling for his health, they both professed religion in Raleigh, N. C., and joined the Meth-

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. I., pp. 258, 259.

odist Church. They received Church letters written on parchment. The proposition to join the Methodist Church came from Mr. Williams. She at first opposed the step on two grounds: their families on both sides were Presbyterians, and then the Methodists were such common people! "Yes," he replied, "but they have vital Christianity." Mrs. Williams began her Christian life with a childlike faith and a thorough consecration to God, from which she never departed. When she found that her husband must die, she conveyed him to his father's home. His dying injunction was: "Sallie, see to it that our child marries a Christian." After the death of her husband, her brother James brought her back to her home at Strawberry Plains. Here her social life was regulated in conformity to her Church vows. The elegant matron laid aside her jewels and costly array, not for the season of mourning alone, but for all time, and donned the plainest Methodist costumes. In the course of time she was happily married to the Rev. Thomas Wilkerson. Mrs. Mary Ray, a step-granddaughter of Mr. Wilkerson, remembers him as gentle, courteous, and hospitable. His voice was love and his looks benign. He was not, however, equal to his wife in general culture, and probably not characterized by the same degree of self-sacrifice. She heartily coöperated with him in his ministerial labors. She was thoroughly versed in the sacred Scriptures. She was the counselor and succorer of many. Her life was largely blended with that of her son-in-law, Thomas Stringfield, who was a man after her own heart, and she approved of his course and encouraged him in his labors as a champion of Methodism. Between



Mrs. Williams and her adopted son there sprang up a lifelong friendship. The complete consecration of each to Christ was the undying bond between them. When others charged the bold controversialist and pamphleteer with being a spendthrift and a waster of her daughter's means, and when even her prudent husband counseled greater moderation in his expenditures for literary purposes, she held up his hands and bade him go forward. She gave him more than words of encouragement; she backed them with substantial aid and comfort. When his literary ventures had begun to produce financial embarrassment, she came to him one day and placed ten thousand dollars in his hands, and authorized him to use it in the promotion of the cause of God. There was nothing sordid or temporizing about this great-souled woman. Her name was held in the profoundest reverence by those who knew her best. Having resolved to live with her daughter at Nashville, she had her goods packed for removal. She was sitting by her fireside engaged in conversation when she sank under a stroke of apoplexy, and, realizing that her end had come, she said: "O, what a blessed thing it is to be always ready to die!" She took her flight on Sabbath, November 18, 1838. A very plain slab marks the resting place of her dust at Strawberry Plains.<sup>1</sup>

After the death of his second wife, Mr. Wilkerson married Mrs. Millie Clark, relict of Mr. Job Clark, of Washington County, Va., and situated himself on her farm, not far from Abingdon, Va., where he lived till the day of his death. This also was a happy

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<sup>1</sup>Letter of Mrs. Mary Ray.

marriage. Mrs. Wilkerson was a pious and intelligent lady, and much beloved by all who knew her.

Mr. Wilkerson was of medium height, very erect and well-proportioned. In his make-up he was well-rounded and compact. He had symmetrical features and a benevolent face. He was graceful and dignified in his movements, though by no means stiff and formal in his social habits. His voice was full, clear, and musical, his manner in the pulpit grave and free from affectation, and his style neat and simple. He was a model man and a model preacher. He was plain but neat in dress and polished in his manners. His notions of integrity and personal honor were of a high order. He despised littleness. He abhorred all hollow pretension, and most of all when exhibited in the sacred stand. He was scrupulously just in his business transactions, and those who had business dealings with him were made to feel that they had to do with the firmness of an old Roman when truth, justice, and personal rights were involved. But he was not austere; his kindness to his friends was hearty and sincere. As a friend and companion he was affable and agreeable. His sermons were usually characterized by great earnestness, but he was never boisterous. His delivery was deliberate and his enunciation distinct and well-modulated. His imagination was sufficiently strong, but it never ran away with him. His mind grasped vigorously the main features of his subject, and adjusted them with great force to the leading design of the sermon.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. I., p. 238, and a sketch of Thomas Wilkerson from the pen of Dr. C. D. Smith, in *Holston Methodist*.

Mr. Wilkerson had what all successful Methodist preachers of his day had to have, courage. On one occasion he started with a company from Holston to Kentucky; but his horse failing, he was left behind. When his horse was able to travel, he started by himself, while his friends endeavored in vain to dissuade him from the perilous journey. He had a hundred miles of unbroken wilderness to traverse, and that at a time when hostile Indians were very active. In the midst of the wilderness he met one of General Wayne's soldiers who was almost in a starving condition, and he divided his dried beef with him. On this lonely trip he passed through a narrow defile where the Indians had recently murdered a number of travelers; but God had use for him, and he was mercifully preserved.

Mr. Wilkerson by his marriage came into possession of a good deal of property, including a considerable number of slaves. But his simplicity never forsook him. He was always neatly dressed in homespun. Small minds have no way of judging of a man but by his dress, place of his residence, or some other circumstance. He was once a delegate to a General Conference which sat in Baltimore. The Committee of Entertainment, judging him by his plain apparel, and supposing him to be a rude backwoodsman, assigned him to a poor family that lived outside of the corporation, where he had to rock the cradle while his landlady prepared his meals. But the Committee on Public Worship, having consulted the bishop as to who should be appointed to preach at a certain central point at an important hour, were advised to appoint "Brother Wilkerson." They notified Wilker-

son of the appointment; but he refused to preach on the ground that, being outside of the corporation, he was not under their jurisdiction! They came to him again and said that the bishop wished him to preach. He replied: "If the bishop says so, I will preach, for he is general superintendent; I am under his jurisdiction." He did preach; the audience was large; the sermon was powerful; and penitents, being called, crowded to the altar, and there was a time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord.

A few weeks before his death, while on his death-bed, Mr. Wilkerson said: "This old, worn-out frame I shall willingly consign to the grave; the grave cannot hurt it; storms may rage, the earth may continue to revolve, the lightnings may flash, and the thunders roar; war with iron heel may tramp on my grave; but my body will be at rest. God will take care of it till the resurrection. My soul is his. He gave it; to him, blessed be his name! it will return." His last connected words were: "If I had my life to live over again, I would preach differently. I would preach more about eternity. I would strive to keep eternity always before the people. What is time but a vapor? Eternity is all."<sup>1</sup> Mr. Wilkerson died at his residence, three miles east of Abingdon, Va., February 3, 1856, in the eighty-fourth year of his age. He was buried in the rear of the old Methodist Church in Abingdon, near the graves of four other Holston preachers.

Father Wilkerson was a good financier. He was economical and exact in his business transactions. During his life he accumulated a good deal of prop-

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<sup>1</sup>"General Minutes M. E. Church, South," Vol. I., p. 674.

erty, mostly by marriage. He was a slaveholder, but was kind and benevolent in his dealings with his slaves. By his will he liberated some twenty-three or twenty-four slaves, and directed his executors to remove them to whatever country they might think best. He was an honest and conscientious slaveholder, and his ownership of slaves did not interfere with his piety; but he was amongst those who believed that after the negroes had been civilized and Christianized by contact with the superior race freedom would furnish them with better opportunities for development and progress. While he did not believe that slaveholding was essentially wrong under all circumstances, yet he embraced the sentiment of St. Paul in the following sentence: "Art thou called being a servant [slave]? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather."

## CHAPTER VI.

### FROM 1807 TO 1810.—SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE General Conference assembled in the city of Baltimore May 1, 1808. At this Conference William McKendree was promoted to the office of bishop. The Western Conference was held at Liberty Hill, Middle Tennessee, beginning October 1, 1808. Bishop Asbury was present, having passed through Kentucky to reach the place. After Conference he visited East Tennessee, and preached at several places. Some of the Holston preachers attended, but they bore the marks of toil and hardship. Their clothes were of the plainest homespun; their shoes (for boots they had none) were of strong, coarse, home-tanned leather, and there was not a decent overcoat among them. Their pay had been next to nothing.<sup>1</sup>

The Holston District reported:

	Whites.	Colored.
Holston .....	653	80
Nollichucky .....	491	22
French Broad.....	694	16
Clinch .....	655	44
Powell's Valley.....	239	11
Carter's Valley.....	211	9
Cumberland .....	74	..
	3,017	182
Total .....		
Grand total, 3,199; a decrease of 108.		

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<sup>1</sup>Bangs's "History of the M. E. Church," Vol. IV., pp. 200-202.

The following were received on trial: William Young, John Bowman, Horatio Barnes, William Winans, Lewis Anderson, John Lewis, Isaac McKowen, David Hardesty, Richard Richards, William B. Elgin, John Johnson, Isaac Lindsey, John Sinclair, Wood Lloyd, Moses Crume, Eli Truett, John Watson.

The Holston appointments for the coming year were:

Learner Blackman, presiding elder.  
 Holston, William Pattison, Moses Ashworth.  
 Watauga, Thomas Milligan.  
 Nollichucky, Thomas Trower, Horatio Barnes.  
 French Broad, Nathan Barnes, Isaac Lindsey.  
 Clinch, Isaac Quinn, Lewis Anderson.  
 Powell's Valley, James Axley.  
 Carter's Valley, Moses Black.  
 Tennessee Valley, Milton Ladd.

Two new circuits are named in this list—Watauga and Tennessee Valley. Watauga Circuit was an extension of the work along the Watauga River and its tributaries in the direction of North Carolina, and its chief field was Carter County, Tenn. Tennessee Valley Circuit was a reinstatement of West Point Circuit, so named in the Minutes of 1806, but called Cumberland in the statistical reports of 1807 and 1808. From 1808 and forward it is named Tennessee Valley Circuit in the list of appointments. It embraced the settlements in the vicinity of what is now Kingston, and along the Tennessee River Valley toward what is now Chattanooga, but how low down is not known.

On his way to the seat of the Conference (1808) Bishop Asbury passed through Nashville, and remarks in his journal that the town had greatly improved in

eight years—that several valuable residences, an elegant courthouse, and a college had been built. The Bishop put in at Green Hill's, Williamson County. The reader will probably remember that in a former chapter it was stated that the first Conference in North Carolina was held at the residence of the Rev. Green Hill, in the eastern part of the State, in 1795. He was a pious, influential, and wealthy local preacher. He subsequently removed to Middle Tennessee, and has an occasional mention in Asbury's journal for that section. By his money, his preaching, and his pious example he was one of the chief founders of Methodism in Middle Tennessee. The Bishop now has the happiness of meeting and greeting his old friend again.

The Conference, as we have seen, began October 1. It was a camp meeting where the preachers ate and slept in tents. Eighty-three preachers were stationed. On Friday the Lord's Supper was administered, and souls were converted, strengthened, and sanctified. The Conference made a regulation concerning slavery. It was that no member of Society, or preacher, should sell or buy a slave unjustly, inhumanly, or covetously; the case, on complaint, to be examined for a member by the quarterly meeting, and for a preacher an appeal was allowed to the Annual Conference. Where the guilt was established, the offender was to be expelled. The bishops passed the wilderness on their way to East Tennessee in company with about fifty persons. They lodged at Hailey's. The bishops breakfasted at Southwest Point, now Kingston, and hastened to Winton's. Bishop Asbury preached on the Sabbath at Winton's Chap-



el, to a crowd within and without. There was a revival going on at that place. On their way to Maryville, they stopped with a local preacher, Mark Moore, a short sketch of whom was given in Volume I., Chapter IV. They evangelized south of the French Broad on Big and Little Pigeon, in rain and mud, being under the necessity of fording and swimming the swollen streams. At a camp meeting at O'Haver's, in Cocke County, Asbury, McKendree, Boehm, Blackman, and Bowman spoke. The party spent a night with George Wells, and next day rode to Warm Springs, which was at that time in Buncombe County, N. C. At Buncombe C. H. Asbury fell in with Jesse Richardson, who was very much opposed to carrying on the spiritual war in that mountainous section by militia—men who fire and fall back. On Sunday Bishop Asbury preached in the courthouse and lodged with a chief man, Erwin. Henry Boehm went to Pigeon Creek, in what is now Haywood County, to preach to the Dutch. The Bishop went to David Jay's, where he supposed he was a stranger; but the woman of the house, the mother of seven children, recognized him as the man who had joined her to her husband in holy wedlock. Here he met Daniel Asbury and got encouraging reports from Georgia and from North and South Carolina. A number of camp meetings had been held, with thirty, forty, and fifty souls converted at a meeting. The news from Virginia was still better.<sup>1</sup>

In his account of the Conference the Bishop says: "We made a regulation respecting slavery." It will

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<sup>1</sup>Asbury's "Journal," Vol. III., pp. 251-253.

be observed that at the Conferences of 1808 and 1809 the Holston District reported a decrease in membership. This falling off could not be attributed to emigration. It is known that the Methodist connection had enacted very vigorous measures for the suppression of domestic slavery. Most of the early preachers were antislavery, and some of them enforced the rule against buying and selling men, women, and children with great rigor; and the people were annoyed with sermons leveled against the institution, with trials, suspensions, and expulsions. The preachers did not realize that they were confronted with a condition rather than a theory, and the harsh measures which they employed drove some from the Church and deterred others from joining it. A statement in Asbury's journal to the effect that the Western Conference "made a regulation respecting slavery" sounds somewhat strange to us of the present day. We are accustomed to look to the General Conference for legislation, and the fact that Annual Conferences legislated in the days of Asbury shows only the chaotic state of Methodist Church government at that date.

The regulations made at this Conference, however, seem to have been a relaxation of the rigor of the rule against slavery. In its enforcement the preachers had met with practical difficulties which they could not overcome, and they had found that there was principle in policy as well as policy in principle. They now found it best not to treat slaveholding as a sin *per se*; but to hold as an actionable offense only the buying or selling of a slave "unjustly, inhumanly, or covetously," a convicted member to have the right of appeal to the Quarterly Conference, and a preacher

the right of appeal to the Annual Conference. This regulation made the rule somewhat elastic, and adjusted discipline on the subject of slavery to a sliding scale. The fact is, when a preacher in the slaveholding South got to be better than Jesus Christ and his apostles, he soon found his welcome exhausted and his usefulness at an end. Hence the Conference at Liberty Hill underwent a softening and a broadening. The reports of the numbers in Society from Holston from this time forward show the good results of the more liberal interpretation of the rule and a milder application of it. From 1810 forward the increase of membership in Holston was very encouraging. The vital energy of the ministry, which had hitherto spread over too much surface, now focalized in purely evangelical work, and such concentration, intensified by the Holy Ghost, wrought very gratifying results.

The Western Conference met in Cincinnati Saturday, September 30, 1809. Bishops Asbury and McKendree were both present. The Conference at that time embraced a large portion of the Mississippi Valley. The circuits lay in Southwestern Virginia, East Tennessee, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, and Louisiana. Isaac Lindsey was, in 1808, appointed to the French Broad Circuit, in East Tennessee, and in 1809 he was appointed to Cold Water Circuit, which was west of the Mississippi and north of St. Louis. This was itinerancy with a vengeance! The Western Conference was at that time a Conference of magnificent distances, and that too when the itinerant did not enjoy the advantages of railway transportation, and when his long rides were, for the most part, necessarily accomplished on horseback.

But few of the Holston preachers attended the Cincinnati Conference, owing to the distance and the expensiveness of the trip, which most of them had not the means to defray. After Conference Bishop Asbury passed through Holston to South Carolina. The reports of numbers in Society from the Holston District were:

	Whites.	Colored.
Holston .....	364	20
Watauga .....	170	31
Nollichucky .....	449	18
French Broad.....	442	31
Clinch .....	642	42
Powell's Valley.....	239	26
Carter's Valley.....	206	19
Tennessee Valley.....	375	6
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Total .....	2,887	193

Grand total, 3,080; a decrease of 119.

At this Conference the following were admitted on trial: James Finley, Henry McDaniel, Thomas Nelson, John Manley, Samuel West, Francis Travis, Alexander Cummins, John Brown, Samuel Hellums, Charles Holliday, Samuel H. Thompson.

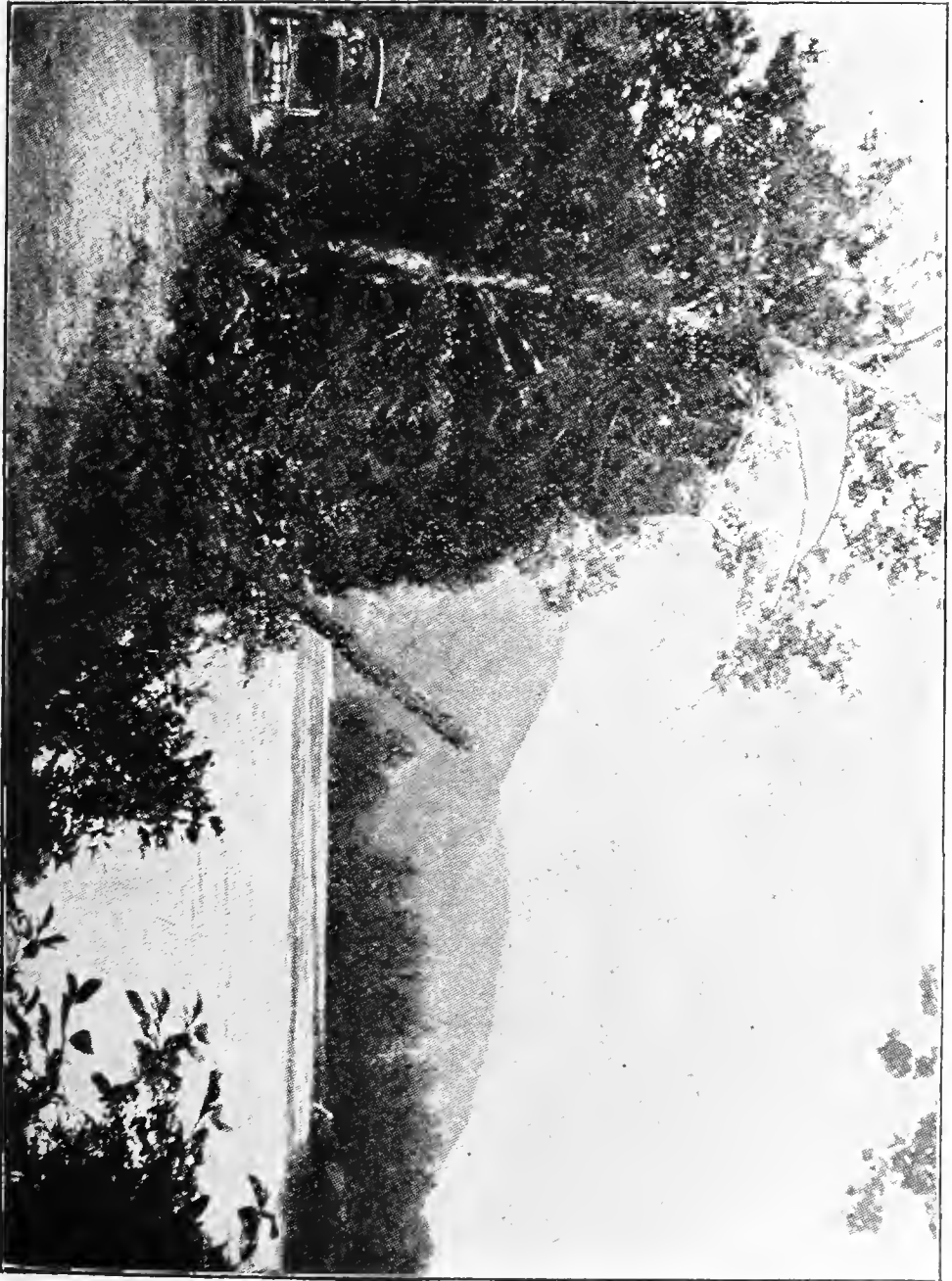
The appointments for the Holston District for the coming year were:

Frederic Stier, presiding elder.  
 Holston, James Axley, John Brown.  
 Saltville, James King.  
 Nollichucky, William Pattison.  
 French Broad, Thomas Trower.  
 Clinch, William B. Elgin.  
 Powell's Valley, Lewis Anderson.  
 Carter's Valley, John Bowman.  
 Tennessee Valley, William Young.

Here Watauga falls out of the list, and Saltville is added to it. Watauga was evidently absorbed by Holston or Nollichucky or both. Saltville was probably carved from Holston. Saltville was a village that had been built up by the manufacture of salt at King's and Preston's Salt Works, in Washington and Smyth Counties, Va., the village being on or near the line between the two counties. The manufacture of salt at that place has been kept up ever since, and during the War between the States it was the main dependence of the people of the Confederate States for salt. The immense plaster beds at the same place have furnished a valuable fertilizer to the farmers of the South. At present the manufacture of soda ash and other by-products, added to that of salt, is carried on there on a large scale; and these industries have built up at that place a considerable town.

On Sunday of the Conference at Cincinnati Learner Blackman preached at nine o'clock, Bishop McKendree at twelve, and Mr. Burke at three. There were about three thousand souls on the ground, for it was a camp meeting. Bishop Asbury preached on the morning of the 8th, the second Sabbath of the Conference. The Conference closed its labors that day, and the preachers dispersed on Monday. The Bishop, accompanied by his traveling companion, Henry Boehm, passed through the Holston country after Conference. Boehm was a German, and from the frequent mention made of him in early Methodist history I judge that he was a man of learning and of fine abilities as a preacher. He was born in 1775 and died in 1875, his life and labors having extended through a century. He was a Methodist preacher for

THE FRENCH BROAD RIVER IN NORTH CAROLINA NEAR THE TENNESSEE LINE.



seventy-four years, and was a traveling companion of Bishop Asbury covering forty thousand miles of travel. In his entire itinerancy he traveled more than a hundred thousand miles on horseback.

The Bishop and Mr. Boehm crossed Powell's and Clinch Rivers. They crossed the Holston at Marshall's Ford, more recently Marshall's Ferry. It appears that the party held services at a neat pine chapel built by Mr. Read, a few miles south of Marshall's Ford. This church was located at the Morelock place, about two miles east of Morristown, and was subsequently supplanted by Liberty Hill Church, which is about a mile northwest of the site of Read's Chapel. Read's Meetinghouse was built by Phelps Read, grandfather of the late Thomas Read, of Grainger County. Mr. Read was also maternal grandfather of the late Wyatt Stubblefield, of Morristown. This information I have received from Mr. W. H. Long, a great-grandson of Edward Cox, of whom notice has been given in this work. At this chapel Asbury preached and Pattison, Stier, and Boehm followed. Stier was presiding elder of the Holston District, and Pattison was in charge of Nollichucky Circuit. On Monday Asbury preached in Vanpelt's Chapel, on Lick Creek. On Tuesday he preached at Warrensburg from Romans vi. 1-5. On Wednesday he preached at O'Hayer's Chapel. He afterwards preached at Harrison's Chapel on Galatians v. 7-10. In Buncombe (now Madison) County, N. C., Mr. Asbury found Mr. Barnard sick; the case was a desperate one, and he "gave him a grain of tartar and a few composing drops, which procured him a sound sleep." The patient was very thankful, and charged

the preachers nothing for their entertainment. Saturday, the 28th, finds the preachers at Killian's. Asbury reflects: "Eight times within nine years I have crossed these Alps." At Buncombe C. H. the Bishop preached on Luke xiv. 10, dined with Mr. Erwin, and lodged with Mr. James Patton. He says, speaking of these families: "How rich, how plain, how humble, how kind!" Thence the Bishop made his way into South Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

The Mr. Barnard spoken of by the Bishop was, I think, father of the late Hezekiah Barnard, who for years farmed on the French Broad, and kept a house of entertainment a few miles south of Hot Springs. It was a noted stopping place for preachers, who always had the freedom of his home. "Aunt Hettie" Barnard, wife of Hezekiah Barnard, was a lifelong Methodist, and she was distinguished for her kindness to preachers; her donations to the Church were very large in proportion to her means; and preachers, irrespective of their denominational relations, seldom left her house without a present of money or some valuable article of apparel. What she did she did very quietly, not allowing her left hand to know what her right hand did. Eternity alone will reveal the number and extent of her private benefactions to ministers and the poor. Her blessing has descended to her posterity, who are among the best citizens of that country.

The James Patton of whom the Bishop speaks in his journal was father of the late James W. Patton

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<sup>1</sup>Asbury's "Journal," Vol. III., pp. 276, 278.



and John E. Patton, of Asheville, N. C. They were not Methodists. They are still remembered as wealthy and enterprising citizens of Buncombe County, and some of their posterity are still among the best citizens of Western North Carolina.

The year 1809-10 seems to have been a prosperous year in Holston; not only was the downward tendency in numbers in Society arrested, but a very encouraging increase was reported at the Conference of 1810. There was a general awakening throughout the district about this time. This awakening showed itself in the building of meetinghouses and the establishment of camp grounds. I have mentioned one instance of the establishment of a camp ground. The venerable Edward Johnston, of Giles County, Va., in a letter to Dr. Cunningham written from Poplar Hill, Va., February 4, 1875, says:

The first camp ground in this country was built about the year 1809 or 1810. It was known as Chinquapin Camp Ground. The next was built at Mechanicsburg, now in Bland County, about the year 1813. In 1819 or 1820 a cloth tent camp meeting was held about two miles west of Poplar Hill. In 1822 or 1823 another camp ground was built near the old Chinquapin Camp Ground. The last meeting held there was held in 1833 by Revs. Daniel B. Carter and Hugh Johnston. After the close of this meeting, ground was bought at Wash and a camp ground established there, where it has remained ever since.

In a future chapter more will be said about this camp ground and the meetings held there.

The Conference of 1810 met in the new chapel, Shelby County, Ky., November 1 of that year. Asbury and McKendree were both present.

The Holston District reported numbers in Society as follows:

	Whites.	Colored.
Nollichucky .....	430	7
French Broad.....	599	30
Clinch .....	808	63
Holston .....	410	30
Powell's Valley.....	370	27
Saltville .....	258	35
Carter's Valley.....	180	16
Tennessee Valley.....	420	30
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Total .....	3,475	238

Grand total, 3,713; an increase of 633.

At this Conference there was a large influx of new preachers. The following were admitted on trial: John McFarland, John Page, Matthew Nelson, Baker Wrather, James Dixon, Jacob Mills, Thomas Wright, James G. Leach, Joseph Haines, Stephen Timmons, Walter Griffith, Thomas A. King, Samuel Griffin, Samuel King, John Phipps, Daniel Fraley, John Strange, James McMehan, Michael Ellis, Joseph Piggot, Vivian Daniel, Caleb J. Taylor, Isaac Pavey, Marcus Lindsey, George A. Colbert, Nathan Pullam.

The Holston District was supplied as follows:

Frederic Stier, presiding elder.

Holston, Thomas Trower.

Saltville, Josiah Crawford.

Nollichucky, Samuel H. Thompson.

French Broad, William Pattison.

Clinch, Samuel Hellums.

Powell's Valley, John Brown.

Tennessee Valley, Thomas Hellums.

Carter's Valley, Richard Richards.

Bishop Asbury in his journal makes a brief mention

of the Conference and his trip through Holston. The Friday before the beginning of the session was observed as a day of fasting and prayer. Conference began in great peace. The Bishop preached in an open house to a cold auditory. On Sunday, the 4th, Bishop McKendree preached and Bishop Asbury exhorted. On Thursday Asbury preached, speaking at considerable length and with great plainness of speech. He sold his sulky and purchased a horse, that he might the more easily make his way through the wilderness to Georgia. On this journey the Bishops visited James McKendree, brother to Bishop McKendree, who had lately removed from Virginia to Middle Tennessee. They also lodged with John McGee, the hero of the revival of 1800. From Crab Orchard they passed the wilderness and came to Major Hailey's, who lived some thirteen miles from Kingston. From Kingston, a ride of twenty miles brought them to Winton's, where Asbury preached. Sabbath, December 2, finds the Bishop and his companions at Buncombe C. H. McKendree and McGee rose early and went to preach at a place some twenty-five miles off, while Asbury and Boehm went to Newton Academy, where both preached and Mr. Newton followed with an exhortation. They dined with Mr. Newton. The Bishop says: "He is almost a Methodist, and reminds me of dear Whatcoat—the same placidity and solemnity."

Thomas Milligan was admitted into the itinerant ranks in 1798, and located in 1809. He was appointed to the following Holston charges: In 1802, to Holston Circuit, but was changed to Clinch during the year; in 1803, to Holston; in 1804, to Powell's Val-

ley; in 1805, to Carter's Valley; in 1806, to New River; and in 1808, to Watauga. Thus it appears that he tarried longer amid the hills of Holston than most of the early pioneers. His long continuance in the same section indicates that he was an acceptable and useful preacher. He was an uneducated man, lacked polish; but being a man of superior native talent, he was said to have been an able preacher. Education is a matter of great importance; and, as a rule, the greatest achievements in the ministry, as well as in other callings, have been made by educated men. But there are other qualifications of the useful preacher besides education. Natural gifts, prudence, common sense, piety, and diligence, and, not least of all, such breeding, views, and manners as cause the man to feel at home among the common masses and the common masses to feel in sympathy with him, are conditions of ministerial usefulness equally important with the polish and style imparted by scholastic advantages. Many an educated, or rather scholarly, man is wholly out of sympathy with the common people, and can do them very little good. Really there is a difference between education and scholarship. If the preacher were educated in the right manner for his profession, he would be better adapted to it; and not the least element of this adaptation is a versatility by which he can make himself at home equally among the rich and cultured and the poor and illiterate. The Methodist system that encourages education in the ministry, but at the same time does not absolutely demand classical scholarship in its preachers, has proved to be wise; for this system not only furnishes a sufficient number of laborers for the work, but it enables

the authorities to place over the charges the men specially adapted to them, intellectually and socially. In other denominations stringent regulations in regard to ministerial education have kept down many a man who, if authorized to preach, would have forged his way to the front by dint of genius and untiring application.

Learner Blackman, son of David and Mary Blackman, was born in the State of New Jersey in the year 1781. His religious training had been good, and he had the best education afforded by the country where he was reared. Indeed, his educational advantages were far in advance of those usually enjoyed by the men who entered the Methodist ministry at that day. He was converted and joined the Methodist Church at the age of sixteen. Being impressed that he was called to the work of the ministry, he made the question a matter of prayer, advised with friends, and resolved not to be disobedient to the heavenly calling. In the summer of 1800, when he was nineteen years old, he joined the Philadelphia Conference, and was appointed to Kent Circuit, in Maryland, as assistant to William Bishop, where at first he had painful exercises of the mind growing out of a fear that he had run before he was called; but after long struggles the Lord gave him some liberty in preaching, he saw fruit of his labors, and was encouraged. The next year he was appointed assistant to the same man on Dover Circuit, in Delaware, where he and his colleague had great success, receiving five hundred people into the Church. This was in the summer, but late in the same year (1801) he was transferred to the West, and appointed to Russell Circuit, in Holston,

as colleague to James Hunter. In the fall of 1802 he was appointed to New River Circuit, but was transferred by his presiding elder to Holston Circuit in December, and in 1803 he was appointed to Lexington Circuit, in Kentucky. In 1804 he was appointed to the Natchez Mission to take the place of that man of God, Tobias Gibson, who had recently died. In 1805 he was appointed to the Mississippi District, and was continued on that work till the fall of 1807, when he was placed in charge of the Holston District, on which he remained two years. He was appointed presiding elder of the Cumberland District in 1809, and again in 1810. In 1811 he was appointed in charge of the Nashville District, and was continued on it three years. His last charge, to which he was appointed in 1814, was the Cumberland District. I have been the more particular to give the dates of his different appointments because in some of the published sketches of Mr. Blackman the dates have been much confused.

It is not worth while to give a detailed account of Mr. Blackman's labors in his various fields. Suffice it to say that he was constantly about his Master's business, and that he laid an unusual wealth of intellect and learning upon the altars of the Church. On Natchez Mission and the Mississippi District he did a glorious work; was more energetic and successful, if possible, than any of his predecessors, which is saying a great deal. He was not less energetic and useful in the Holston country and in Middle Tennessee.

Blackman's social opportunities had been good, he had a superior mind, solid rather than showy, was well-built physically, had a great thirst for knowledge and a mind that could receive and retain it, was pro-

foundly convinced of the truth of the Christian religion, had been radically converted, felt the power of the gospel in his own heart, bent every energy and availed himself of every opportunity to save men from hell and lead them to Christ and heaven. He had a short ministerial career of only fifteen years; but in that brief space of time he placed himself alongside of the leading men of the Church in purity of life, intellectual attainments, ability in the pulpit, and success in saving souls and building up the Church. He purchased to himself "a good degree and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus," and obtained a name which will be remembered with affection and tenderness for hundreds of years to come.

At the Philadelphia Conference in the summer of 1801 there were loud calls for volunteers for the wild West. Owing to the perils of the work in that section, Bishop Asbury would not exercise his prerogative in sending men there unless they consented in advance. Blackman and Louthier Taylor volunteered, and made the journey to the Holston country together. In Baltimore they met Wilson Lee, who had been several years in the West and knew how to sympathize with the young preachers who were *en route* to that section. He took out his purse and gave them ten dollars apiece. I gladly mention this little incident to show the brotherly and self-sacrificing spirit of the Methodist preachers of that day.

While Mr. Blackman was on the Holston Circuit, he fell in with Granade at a quarterly meeting in Rich Valley above King's Salt Works. He says in his journal that Granade was among the most extraordinary

men he ever met in his travels, that he was strong in faith, that no man appeared to possess more zeal than he, that thousands flocked to hear him and about one thousand joined Society under him while he rode the Holston and Greene Circuits. He says also that Granade had a fine address, a good voice for singing and preaching, and that he was a considerable poet; that many songs composed by him were to be found in the different collections of hymns published upon the continent, and that they were read and sung with avidity. He further says that Granade frequently preached two or three hours or more; that, though a corpulent, heavy-set man, he quite exhausted his strength in these long sermons and generally ended them on his knees.

Like most men who are brought up in the low countries and in the older sections, Mr. Blackman had gotten the idea that Western people were rude and ignorant; but on coming West he was forced to revise his opinion. He found that enterprising men from every part of the continent and from Europe were here; that many underwent an enlargement of their views by coming West; that a general spirit of inquiry and of thirst for knowledge was more apparent among all grades of society in Kentucky than in any other State through which he had traveled, and that a preacher needed all the wisdom of the serpent as well as the harmlessness of the dove to be useful in that State.

These remarks of Mr. Blackman would have applied in a measure to the people of the Holston country about as well as to Kentucky.

Mr. Blackman and Nathan Barnes volunteered for the Natchez Mission in 1804. To reach it, they had to



pass through a howling wilderness infested with savages and wild beasts. It was a journey of about nine hundred miles. The young evangelists hurried their preparations for the journey in order to have the company of Lorenzo Dow and a Rev. Mr. Miller, of New York. At Harrodsburg, Ky., some of the preachers were robbed, while they slept, of all their money; Dow lost thirteen dollars, and Barnes six. Two men who slept in another room were also robbed. Mr. Blackman was more fortunate. The company now had their faces set southwestward, with an immense wilderness before them, with a capital in the whole company of only six dollars! Here was faith, and the faith that overcometh the world. The journey through the wilderness had many thrilling incidents. Blackman found that Lorenzo Dow was an agreeable traveling companion, and he records the fact that his preaching was at times in great power. The travelers stopped at a meeting at Liberty Hill, on the Nashville Circuit, in Tennessee, and there for the first time Mr. Blackman witnessed the dancing and jerking exercises. He says that he noticed that those thus exercised would begin to jerk as though their limbs would be dislocated, and that the jerking would increase until the dancing began, when the jerking would almost cease.

In the war of 1812 Andrew Jackson organized a division, and in November of that year was ordered to descend the Mississippi. He offered Mr. Blackman the chaplaincy of the division, and the offer was accepted. A number of boats conveyed the troops down the river from Fort Pickering, now Memphis, and Mr. Blackman was unremitting in his labors

among the soldiers, going from boat to boat for preaching and prayer. The officers were wicked, and the soldiers very little better; but they were compelled to reverence this intensely earnest man of God, and to listen to him with respect. Old Hickory, however, found that he had in the Chaplain a man of iron will like himself. When the General questioned the Chaplain as to his method of speaking to the men when very sick, and suggested that when he found a man likely to die he should not tell him that he was going to die, even if he believed it, Mr. Blackman politely but firmly replied that on that point he would be independent and do as he thought best. The troops remained in the Mississippi country only one month, and Mr. Blackman returned through the Indian country on horseback.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Blackman was in person unusually attractive. He was of medium height and size. He was neither lean nor corpulent, had a full face and an uncommonly expressive eye. In speaking his face gave ready expression to his thoughts and feelings; every feature seemed instinct with life. He always spoke out of a full heart. His manners were easy and graceful, showing that he was accustomed to the society of the refined and intelligent. He was an accomplished gentleman. He was not eccentric. In his private intercourse with people his genial spirit, winning manners, and fine common sense made him a pleasant and instructive companion. He had great influence in the Conference. He was not garrulous; but when duty

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<sup>1</sup>Article of Bishop Galloway in *Methodist Review* for November-December, 1899, pp. 863-876.

demanded it, he spoke with freedom and pertinence, and always had a respectful hearing. In the pulpit he was not boisterous, but his utterance was easy and fluent.<sup>1</sup>

One cause of the success and prominence of Mr. Blackman was his diligence in study. While on the Lexington Circuit, in Kentucky, controversy was raging, and he found it necessary to post himself carefully upon the points at issue between the Methodists and other denominations. He often arose at three o'clock A.M., and by the dim light of a tallow candle labored to master the arguments of the fathers in defense of the doctrines of Methodism. Fletcher's "Checks" was his *vade mecum*, and in a few months he had read forty or fifty duodecimo and octavo volumes on the sciences and on divinity, while doing the full work of a traveling preacher. In speaking of those studious days he says: "A man can no more preach without ideas than he can walk without feet."<sup>2</sup>

Mr. Blackman's wife was originally Miss Elizabeth Odom. She was at the time of her marriage to Mr. Blackman a widow—Mrs. Elliott, of Sumner County, Tenn. She was a polite, cultured woman, indeed a most estimable lady, and admirably adapted to the place of a minister's wife. They were married June 22, 1813. And now comes a tale of sorrow—not altogether of sorrow, for our hero dashes suddenly and unexpectedly into the dark tunnel of death, only to emerge at the other end into lovelier scenes and brighter skies.

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<sup>1</sup>The Rev. Laban Clark, D.D., as quoted in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 103, 104.

<sup>2</sup>Bishop Galloway, in November-December number of *Methodist Review* of 1899, p. 867.

The happy couple had just been on a visit in Ohio to the Rev. John Collins, brother-in-law of Mr. Blackman, and were returning. They were traveling on horseback. They dismounted and entered a ferryboat at Cincinnati; but the ferryman raising a sail, the horses became frightened, and in his effort to hold them Mr. Blackman was dragged into the river, and, though a good swimmer, he was drowned. His wife, wild with grief, was scarcely restrained from joining him in his watery grave. This occurred June 6, 1815. His remains were interred in the rear of the "Old Stone Church," afterwards Wesley Chapel, in Cincinnati.<sup>1</sup>

Years after the death of Mr. Blackman Mrs. Blackman was married to Joseph T. Elliston, Esq., of Nashville, where she long lived, honored by a large circle of relatives and friends. Her elegant home was a place of rest and refreshment for the weary preachers. In her house a room was set apart for Bishop McKendree, called the "Bishop's Room."<sup>2</sup>

Caleb McCloud was admitted into the itinerancy in 1804, placed on the supernumerary roll in 1810, and located in 1811. He traveled in Ohio, Mississippi, Tennessee, Virginia, and Kentucky. He was appointed to Holston Circuit in 1807. He traveled in five States in seven years, such was the itinerancy of that day! While traveling McCloud was useful; after location he was, as a preacher, zealous and enterprising. In 1812 he became dissatisfied with the Church, withdrew from its communion, and built a neat brick

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. I., pp. 445-447.

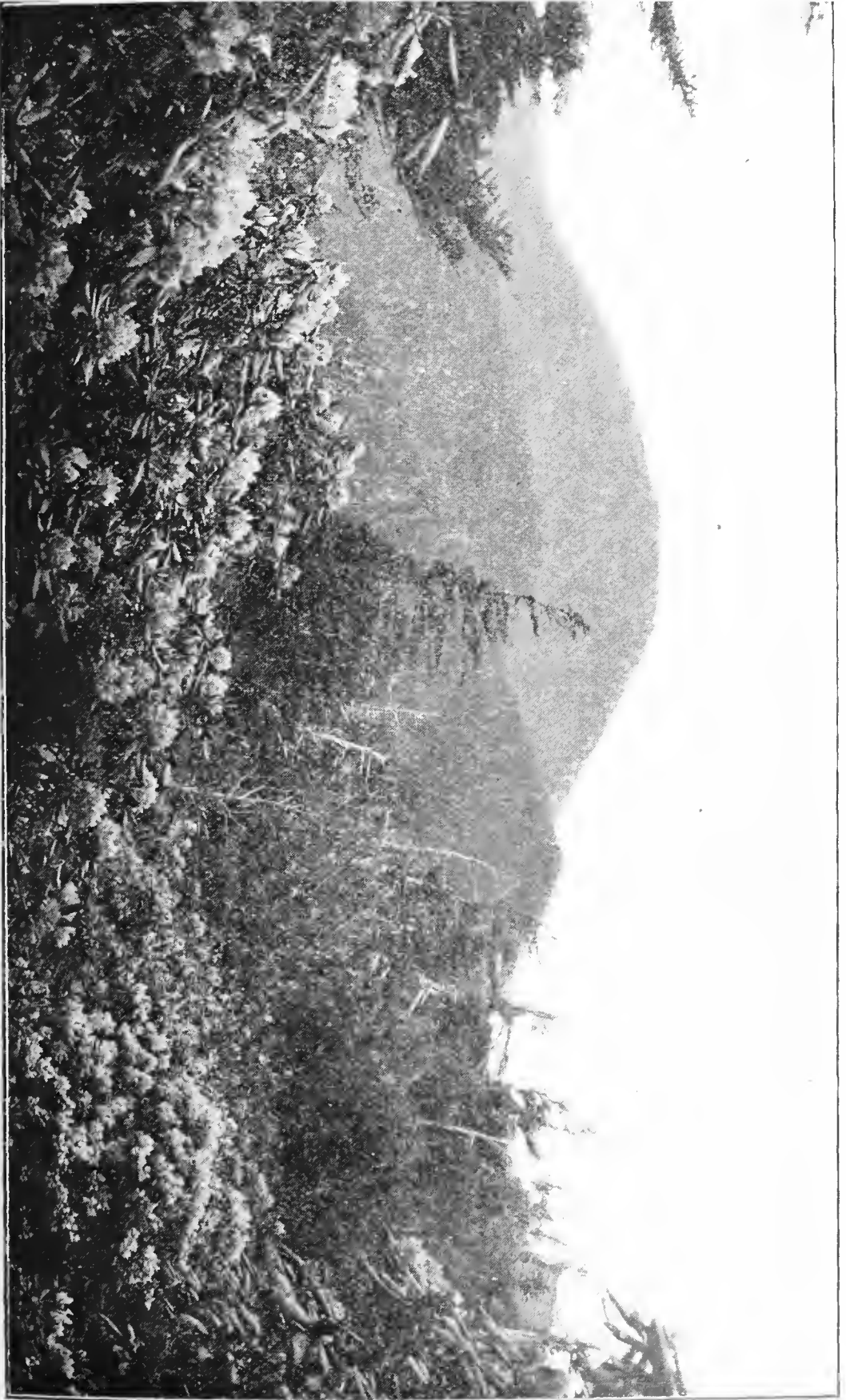
<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 105.

church on Main Street, Lexington, Ky., in which he preached occasionally. He remained out of the Methodist Church for twenty years, but during that time he maintained his Christian integrity. The membership of his independent Church became smaller from year to year till it dwindled to nothing. He returned to the Church of his first love about two years before his death, and died in peace. After his location he engaged in the practice of medicine, and continued in that profession to the close of his life.<sup>1</sup>

Miles Harper. was admitted in 1804. He labored only one year in Holston, having been appointed to Clinch Circuit in 1807. During the year 1805 the religious excitement was very great in Middle Tennessee. Among the active laborers in this extraordinary work was Miles Harper, who stood shoulder to shoulder with James Axley. Mr. Harper was a zealous and able preacher, very popular, commanding large audiences and exerting great influence for good over the multitudes who attended upon his ministry. He served on circuits and districts, and was especially useful about Nashville and in the Cumberland section generally. In 1808 he was placed in charge of the Cumberland District; in 1809 he was sent to Natchez; in 1810 he was appointed presiding elder of the Mississippi District; in 1811 he was appointed to New Orleans; in 1812 he took charge of the Louisiana District and Wachita Station. Without following him in all his appointments, we find him back in Tennessee in 1817, preaching with power. Again he returns to Mississippi, and resumes his labors among a delighted people.

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<sup>1</sup>Redford's "Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., pp. 55. 56.



MOUNT MITCHELL, N. C., FROM CLINGMAN'S DOME.

Mr. Harper was accustomed in his preaching to denounce the vices of the age with severity, and to rebuke plainly, if not harshly, the faults and inconsistencies of the membership of the Church. He thus not only incurred the hostility of many men of the world, but made enemies among the members of the Church. He was also a rigid disciplinarian—a fact that did not make him friends among inconsistent and immoral members of the Church and their friends and relatives. Some unguarded remarks of Harper, which got into the gossip of the country and passed through several editions with considerable coloring and exaggeration, furnished the basis for charges of falsehood against him at the Mississippi Conference held in December, 1829. Willing and prejudiced witnesses, possibly unscrupulous, were not wanting to criminate him, and he was expelled from the Church by the Conference. In his day accused preachers were not tried by committee, but were arraigned before the whole Conference. There was much informality in the bills of charges, if any bills were made out at all, and in the introduction of evidence. The Methodist judicial régime had not crystallized into a regular system, prejudice and excitement were likely to go far in determining a case, and it is more than likely that, in his case, indiscretions were magnified into crimes. He remained out of the Church for four years, but conducted himself as a man of God. He always maintained his innocence, and maintained it to the last. In 1834 he was invited by the pastor and leading members of the Church in Natchez to return to the Church “without contrition and confession,” and he accepted the invitation. He was soon relicensed to preach, and

his parchments were restored. A few years before his death he removed to Tensas Parish, Louisiana, where he finished his course in peace. After his restoration to the ministry he was honored with important hours at camp meetings and other popular meetings, and the people were delighted to find that he had lost none of the fire and eloquence of his palmy days.

Harper was not a philosopher, metaphysician, or logician. He was not literary in any high sense; but he was a fluent speaker, an eloquent declaimer, and he knew the near way to the hearts of his hearers. Mrs. Harper belonged to one of the most pious, intelligent, and influential families in the Southwest. A portion of Mr. Harper's interesting family became estranged from the Church by the treatment their father had received; but others became useful members of it.<sup>1</sup>

Isaac Lindsey joined the Western Conference in 1808, and located in 1816. He labored his first year on French Broad Circuit. He traveled his other years in the West and Northwest. Mr. Lindsey possessed fair talents as a preacher, but after spending the flower of his early manhood in the itinerant work he retired and engaged in secular pursuits. He was successful in business; but his love of money, possibly not excessive or sinful, was to him the snare of the fowler. A young man by the name of Carroll, who seemed to be a friend and admirer of his, came to him one day and claimed to have discovered a very rich silver mine, and expressed a wish that he should

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<sup>1</sup>"History of the Introduction of Protestantism into Mississippi and the Southwest," by Rev. John G. Jones, pp. 127-133.



become his partner in the property. Mr. Lindsey, credulous and confiding, was persuaded to accompany him by a private route to Nashville to have the ore tested. Carroll claimed that the private route would take them by where he had some of the ore concealed. When they reached the Cumberland River, Carroll, who had a gun with him, shot and killed Mr. Lindsey, and robbed him of his money, which amounted to only one hundred dollars. A few days after the murder the body was found in the river; but the criminal had fled, and no one knew where he was to be found. In Mr. Lindsey's neighborhood a young man by the name of W. R. Saunders, resolving in his mind to find the criminal and bring him to justice, left home and kept up the search till he found him in the Indian Nation. He had him arrested and brought back to Tennessee in irons, where he was tried and convicted of murder and hanged. A reward had been offered for the arrest of the murderer; but Mr. Saunders, having received it, refused to retain more than his expenses, and paid the remainder to a young man who had given him the clue by which his search became successful. We know not which is the more a matter of astonishment, the folly and villainy of the murderer or the unselfish devotion to justice of his noble detective. I cannot fall in with those who would look upon the sad death of Mr. Lindsey as a judgment sent on him for leaving the pastoral work or for his love of money. Money is a good thing in its place, and men have a right to seek it by honorable means. Methodists have no right to claim that leaving the pastoral work and dropping back into the local ranks is a sin, as the local ministry is held by the

Church to be a useful and honorable relation. The tendency to look upon every misfortune as a punishment for sin is condemned by the book of Job, and finds a disapproval in the words of Jesus, when he speaks of the Galileans whose blood Pilate mingled with their sacrifices.<sup>1</sup>

James King was admitted into the Western Conference in 1806, and located in 1810. He traveled in the Northwest till 1809, when he was assigned to Saltville Circuit, in Virginia. At the end of his year on this charge he located.

William Young was admitted into the Western Conference in 1808; and died July 20, 1812. His active itinerancy seems to have embraced only three years. He was appointed to Mad River in 1808, in 1809 to Tennessee Valley, in Holston, and in 1810 to Cincinnati.

William Young was born in Washington County, Va., May 16, 1786. Through the instrumentality of the Methodists he was powerfully convicted and converted in 1805; in 1807 he began to exhort; in the fall of 1808 he joined the traveling connection. In 1811, while riding down the Ohio River facing an extremely cold wind, he caught a violent cold, which terminated in pulmonary consumption; and January 20, 1812, he changed worlds. He was naturally of a strong mind and retentive memory. Though his manner of preaching was boisterous, therefore injurious to himself and not the most agreeable to his hearers, yet he was so humble and otherwise pious that good men loved him, and so meek was he in his disposition and courteous

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 153-157.

in his manners that nonprofessors sought his presence and delighted in his conversations. While able to travel he was very useful. On all his charges he had revivals. By his prayers and his visits from house to house he accomplished more than many preachers with more splendid gifts. Three days before his death he rode a half mile to a newly laid out camp ground, where people were adjusting their tents and getting ready for the services. He viewed the tents, surveyed the stand, looked around on the people, and burst into tears. Turning his horse, he said: "I am done with these things now; I shall be at camp meeting no more." So it was, for before the meeting closed he had ascended.<sup>1</sup>

Moses Black was admitted into the traveling connection in 1796; located in 1806; was readmitted in 1808; and died February 10, 1809. He traveled in South Carolina and Georgia till the fall of 1802, when he was appointed to Clinch Circuit. His appointments after that were: 1803, Powell's Valley; 1804, Clinch; 1805, Nollichucky; 1808, Carter's Valley. He was born near Charleston, S. C., and died in Carter's Valley, Hawkins County, Tenn., aged about forty years. In his last moments he possessed an unshaken confidence in God. Just before his death he was very restless on account of a violent attack of what was supposed to be colic; he requested his friends to open the windows and doors and to move him so that he could see without; he then cried out: "Behold! how beautiful everything looks! I shall soon go now." In a few moments he quitted this mournful vale.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. I., pp. 222, 223.

<sup>2</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. I., p. 179.

May I not venture a brief comment on one point of this dying scene—namely, the transfiguration of earthly scenes to the dying man? This experience of dying persons is not unusual. Newly converted souls have a similar experience, where the change is radical, where there is a revolution in the whole psychic nature. The modern theory of double consciousness might be used in explaining this phenomenon. The theory is that men have two minds or two functions of one mind. These two minds or functions of one mind are named the objective and the subjective minds. The former depends on brain cell action; the latter acts independently of the brain and of the physical senses. With the former we take cognizance of the material universe around us through the five senses; with the latter we take direct cognizance of our environment, and it has, therefore, been called the sixth sense. When the objective mind is in abeyance, the subjective mind rises above the horizon of consciousness. In cases of intense concentration, such as the mental state of the newly converted soul, the objective mind is in abeyance, and the subjective mind comes to the front, takes possession of the man, and he sees directly what the physical sense of sight could not behold. When a man is dying, his objective mind is in abeyance, and the subconscious mind takes the place of the conscious mind; and the man sees things which the physical senses cannot apprehend; he sees physical objects shining with an unnatural brightness, and he sees the spirits that have come to escort him to the spirit land. This transfiguration of physical objects cannot be attributed to imagination; the burning bush was not a hallucination of Moses; the radiance of his counte-

nance when he came down from the mount was not an imagination of the children of Israel; the transfiguration of Jesus on the mount was not the work of the heated imaginations of his disciples; in these cases there was real light and a state of mind to perceive it. Mr. Black, as I believe, saw a real brightness, an objective transfiguration. I cannot believe with some, that such a phenomenon is only "the phosphorescence of a decaying brain." No; the light of the sun is only the faint image of a purer and more glorious light that illumines the spiritual world, and that will flood the halls of the New Jerusalem with a glory vastly above the splendor of the king of day.

Anthony Senter was admitted into the South Carolina Conference in 1808. His incumbency of Buncombe Circuit in 1811-12 brings him within the purview of Holston history. With the exception of this year his labors were confined to South Carolina and Georgia. The last two years of his ministry he was presiding elder of the Broad River District.

Anthony Senter was born in Lincoln County, N. C., January 28, 1775; and died at Georgetown, S. C., December 23, 1817. At eighteen he was apprenticed in the blacksmith trade. In his business he was indefatigable, sober, and moral. After setting up for himself, he saw his way open to affluence. The pious walk of one of his neighbors led him to investigate the claims of religion, and he was soon convinced that he was destitute of "the one thing needful." In 1806, at a meeting on Enoree Circuit, he was overwhelmingly convinced of sin. On his way home he fell or alighted from his horse, and was found prostrate on the ground in utter agony, pleading for mercy. A short time

afterwards he found peace in believing, joined the Church, became a class leader, and soon thereafter entered upon the work of the ministry. He had a strong mind, a benevolent heart, a single and a steady purpose to glorify God. While able to work he was abundant in labors in the cause of God. He was a victim of consumption. On his district, when so wasted that he could not preach, he held Quarterly Conferences and instructed the members in their duties. At last unable to do that, he retired to his home in Georgetown, where after a few weeks he laid aside his emaciated frame to enter a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens.

## CHAPTER VII.

### FROM 1810 TO 1813.—SKETCHES OF PROMINENT LOCAL PREACHERS.

THE Western Conference met in Cincinnati, Ohio, October 1, 1811, and lasted ten days. This was its last session. When the Conferences were first mapped out and named in the Minutes, this Conference headed the list. It was first named the Western Conference—that is to say, in the Minutes for 1802; in the Minutes for 1801 it was called Kentucky Conference, but retained that name only one year. At the General Conference of 1812 the Western Conference was divided into the Ohio and Tennessee Conferences. The Ohio Conference was made to embrace the Ohio, Muskingum, Miami, Kentucky, and Salt River Districts. These districts embraced a part of Northwestern Virginia, a part of Pennsylvania, all of Ohio, nearly the whole of Kentucky, and a considerable part of Indiana. The territory of this Conference, however, though extensive, was less than that assigned to the Tennessee Conference, which included the Holston, Nashville, Cumberland, Wabash, Illinois, and Mississippi Districts. Consequently Southwestern Virginia, the whole of Tennessee, the settled portions of Illinois, Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Louisiana, with a part of Alabama, were included.

Hereafter I shall confine myself to the statistics of the Tennessee Conference so far as I go outside of the Holston District for them,

At the Conference of 1811 the following report of numbers in Society from the Holston District was made:

	Whites.	Colored.
Nollichucky .....	456	17
French Broad.....	910	49
Clinch .....	888	79
Holston .....	541	40
Saltville .....	295	41
Powell's Valley.....	468	37
Carter's Valley.....	180	7
Tennessee Valley.....	330	21
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Total .....	4,068	291

Grand total, 4,359; a gain of 646, or over 17 per cent.

The downward tendency had only been arrested in 1810, and this increase was, therefore, quite encouraging. Indeed, the year just ended had been characterized by signal displays of divine power in different parts of the district. At a camp meeting in Blount County there was a most extraordinary season of revival influence, and scores were gathered into the fold of Christ. There was also a powerful work and great ingathering in Lee, Tazewell, and Washington Counties, Virginia, and in Greene, Washington, Hawkins, Knox, and other counties in Tennessee. This year also a number of half-breed Indians were converted and taken into the Church—perhaps the first case of the kind in the Southwest.<sup>1</sup> This success does credit to the laborers in that part of the vineyard. But in meting out honors, it is necessary to remember that they had entered into the faithful labors of their predecessors. Others had sown in tears, and

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<sup>1</sup>McAnally's "Life of Samuel Patton," p. 140.



now they were reaping in joy—they were building on a foundation laid by others. The amount of force which raises a body is not to be estimated wholly by the height to which it raises it; the weight of the body, and therefore the resistance, must enter into the calculation. Judged by this canon, thousands of the most illustrious men of the world have been failures; they have been nothing but chips on the bosom of the flood, which, standing up in their pride, have imagined that they raised the flood; and judged by the same canon, thousands of men who have gone down in defeat, and whom the world has pronounced failures, have achieved a most wonderful success. The courage, endurance, and dogged perseverance of a man in defeat and discouragement exhibit more of the morally sublime than the triumphal march of the illustrious hero, where numbers, superior equipment, and favoring conditions have insured victory. Poets have sung and historians celebrated the deeds of successful men; now we need a book that shall chronicle the deeds and celebrate the virtues of the greater men who have, in the eye of the superficial observer, gone down in defeat. In such a book we might study the saying of Him who was wiser than all the philosophers, that “the last shall be first, and the first last.”

At this Conference (1811) the following were admitted on trial: John Cord, John Caliman, Francis Landrum, Jonathan Stamper, Elias Turner, Jesse Spurgeon, Robert W. Findley, Charles Bonnell, George Ekin, Benjamin Rhoton, Jesse Cunnyingham, Richard Conn, Thomas D. Porter, William Dixon, William McMehan, Charles Waddle, John McMehan,

Samuel Belamy, David Goodner, Shadrach B. A. Carter, William Hart, Samuel Lewis, Joseph Foulks.

The appointments for the Holston District were:

Frederic Stier, presiding elder.

Holston, Lewis Anderson, Jesse Cunnyngnam.

Nollichucky, Samuel Sellers.

French Broad, George Ekin, Josiah Crawford.

Clinch, Samuel H. Thompson, Richard Conn.

Powell's Valley, Thomas A. King.

Carter's Valley, John Henninger.

Tennessee Valley, William B. Elgin.

At the division of the Western Conference the whole connection in the United States numbered 195,357 members; Western Conference, 30,741; and Holston District, 4,359; and in the connection there were only 688 traveling preachers, operating in the entire habitable domain from the Lakes to the Gulf.

Bishops Asbury and McKendree were both present at the Cincinnati Conference. Asbury preached in the city the Sunday before Conference (September 29), and ordained twenty men. On Sunday, October 6, both the bishops preached, as did others. The Conference used two preaching places, the market house and the chapel. On Sunday, the 13th, Bishop Asbury preached, met the Society, baptized some children, and visited the sick.

Bishop Asbury went directly through Kentucky and Tennessee to Georgia, and seems not to have touched Holston this year. He preached in Kentucky Sunday, October 20, and in Georgia Sunday, October 27. This ubiquitous invalid traveled like a comet, with no railroads or navigation to give him wings. Surely the zeal of the Lord's house was eating him up!

The General Conference of 1808 had provided for delegated General Conferences in the future. At that Conference the following members were present from the Western Conference—namely, William McKendree, William Burke, Thomas Milligan, Benjamin Lakin, John Sale, Learner Blackman, Nathan Barnes, Elisha Bowman, John McClure, James Ward, and George Askin. On the committee to draft a plan for a delegated General Conference William McKendree and William Burke were members from the Western Conference.

The first delegated General Conference convened in New York City May 1, 1812. The delegates from the Western Conference were: Learner Blackman, Benjamin Lakin, James Quinn, Frederic Stier, John Sale, William Pattison, Isaac Quinn, William Houston, John Collins, Samuel Parker, James Axley, David Young, and Thomas Stillwell.

Such is the Constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Churches that their history necessarily embraces mainly only a narration of the acts of the traveling preachers, while local preachers and eminent laymen must remain comparatively unnoticed. But it is my purpose to introduce into these pages notices of the locality and the laity as far as possible. In pursuance of this design I here introduce a very interesting story related to the Rev. B. W. S. Bishop by the Rev. Zechariah Mitchell, one of the heroes of the story. In 1812 New River Circuit was included in the Greenbrier District of the Baltimore Conference, Christopher Frye being presiding elder and James Paynter being preacher in charge. According to the story as related by Mr. Mitchell, James Charles was preacher

in charge; but this is certainly a mistake. Charles was preacher in charge the preceding year, and was likely present at the meeting referred to in the story. On Saturday, July 4, at a quarterly meeting for New River Circuit held at Nicewander's Meetinghouse, in Wythe (now Bland) County, Va., Samuel Newberry, Joshua Bruce, John G. Cecil, and Zechariah Mitchell were licensed to preach. Newberry and Bruce always remained in the local ranks. Cecil joined the Ohio Conference in 1813, traveled only two years, and then returned to his home in Montgomery (now Pulaski) County, Va., where he remained a local preacher to the end of his days. Mitchell joined the Baltimore Conference, traveled five years, and located. The four local preachers never lived more than fifty miles apart at any time. Early in 1852 Cecil, observing that the 4th of July would fall on Sunday, wrote to each of the other brethren requesting them to meet him at Nicewander's Meetinghouse on Saturday, the 3d, where they would commence an anniversary celebration of the occasion on which they were jointly commissioned to preach the gospel. The proposal was agreed to, and the meeting was published all around the Wytheville District. A large crowd assembled at the new church, nearly a mile from the old site, and at the appointed hour the "Big Four" were on the ground. The scenes of forty years of trial and triumph crowded upon them and awakened feelings too deep for utterance. How changed was everything! True, the same beautiful heavens bent over them, and the same grand mountains stood around them, faithful sentinels of God; but mutation had placed its stamp on all else. The old log meetinghouse



REV. JOHN G. CECIL.

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where the four had been inducted into the ministry was gone; not a beam of its timbers remained, not one stone was left upon another. A neat frame building had taken its place. The forests had been felled, farms had been opened, and a pleasant little village was near. Christopher Frye had long since gone to his reward. The four local preachers were probably the only persons present who attended the quarterly meeting forty years before. But the children and grandchildren of their contemporaries were present to hear the gracious words that should fall from the lips of the veterans. Around them, too, were their own sons and daughters, and their families, to participate joyfully in the anniversary exercises. Cecil preached on Saturday, and the sermon was a powerful one. His text was Deuteronomy viii. 2: "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no." It is impossible to describe the effect this sermon had on the congregation, and especially upon the three veterans who sat behind the preacher in the pulpit. Cecil had better control over his emotions than any one of his brethren, and was, therefore, better qualified for preaching the sermon than any one of the others. The journeyings of the Israelites in the wilderness, their trials, temptations, and sins, their wonderful preservation by Providence and condign punishment for their acts of disobedience, were graphically described. The mercies of God bestowed upon the wilderness wanderers, and their sorrowings over the graves of their fathers, who fell in the wilderness,

were portrayed in a lifelike manner. The preacher held his audience spellbound. The application was natural, and was forcibly made; and the preacher sat down amidst great religious excitement among the people, who wept, rejoiced, and praised God aloud. After the excitement had somewhat subsided, each of the four gave a brief account of his life for the last forty years, and the assembly dispersed to meet again the following day.

It was arranged that all the four should preach on Sunday. The crowd being too great to get into the church, the seats were carried to a grove near by. Samuel Newberry preached the first sermon from 1 Peter i. 24, 25, "All flesh is grass," etc. He was followed by Joshua Bruce, whose text was 2 Peter iii. 11: "Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness?" When he had concluded, there was an intermission of an hour, with dinner on the ground. After dinner Cecil preached the third sermon of the day, text 2 Corinthians iv. 13: "We having the same spirit of faith, according as it is written, I believed, and therefore have I spoken; we also believe, and therefore speak." The last sermon was preached by Mitchell from Colossians i. 27, 28: "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus." This sermon was followed by profound religious feeling, and the meeting closed amid scenes of great religious excitement. The four

never met again on earth. Newberry, Bruce, and Cecil preceded Mitchell to the land of rest. The above story was related in 1869 by Mr. Mitchell, who was at that time nearly eighty years old. Not a great while after that he ascended and joined his comrades where the saints of all ages congregate.<sup>1</sup>

Zechariah Mitchell was the little boy that went to the yard fence to see John Kobler pass, as related in the sketch of Mr. Kobler. I am well acquainted with the direct and collateral descendants of the four local preachers referred to above, and they are among the best citizens and staunchest Methodists of the country. I visited the widow of Mr. Cecil on her deathbed, about the year 1866, and found her anxious to depart and be with Christ.

Among the local preacher pioneers of the Holston country the Rev. Robert W. Wynn stands prominent. He lived and died in Lee County, Va. I met with him in his old age, before he had become decrepit, and was impressed with his appearance and manner as that of a man of solid intellectual parts, of dignity of deportment and consistent piety. In his prime he was a robust man, with a strong will and singleness of purpose to glorify God. He was the maternal grandfather of the Revs. John C. and William A. Orr, of the Holston Conference. His wife was Polly Crabtree, a daughter of Job Crabtree, a local Methodist preacher of Lee County, Va. Job Crabtree was a son of William Crabtree, a former owner of a farm where Saltville now stands. He was a brother

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<sup>1</sup>Letter of Rev. B. W. S. Bishop published in McFerrin's "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 290-296.



to Mrs. Priscilla Price, of Elk Garden, Russell County, Va., and maternal uncle of the late John W. Price, of Glade Spring, Va. Tradition has brought us the following story of the conversion of Job Crabtree. He was wild and utterly indisposed to religion, but his wife was a pious member of the Methodist Church. A camp meeting having been appointed in the county, she requested him to go and take her to it. He replied that a camp meeting was no place for decent women! But knowing her influence with him, she made preparation for the trip. On the morning when she wished to start she kindly asked him to catch out the horses, which he reluctantly did. As they went toward the camp ground he separated from her for a while to go by a stillhouse to procure a bottle of whisky, which he did. When they reached the ground, he put his bottle into the spring to keep the contents cool, and invited friends to drink with him when preaching was over. He then went to the shed to hear the sermon. While the sermon was in progress he became powerfully convicted of sin. In the meanwhile his companions became impatient, and came to him and touched him gently, saying in a low tone: "Let us go and have a drink." He replied curtly: "I won't do it!" After the sermon he went to the spring and broke the bottle, thus destroying the contents. He then started to the grove to pray; but passing by where a man driving a team with a heavy load up a steep hill was unmercifully whipping one of the horses, he ripped out an oath, cursing the man; but, his conscience smiting him at once, he hastened to the grove. Hiding himself in the lap of a fallen tree, he began to confess his sins to God;

when a faithful old Methodist layman who, by that kind of discernment of spirits which was characteristic of the early Methodists, had discovered that Crabtree was under conviction, and had followed him into his covert, kindly instructed and prayed with him. Crabtree joined the Church without professing regeneration. After he had returned home, one of his old companions determined to test the genuineness of his change. As Crabtree was riding along the road one day this man galloped up to him and said in an apparently sincere tone: "Job Crabtree, I can whip you." With an oath Crabtree said, "You can't do it," and alighted. But his tantalizer just galloped ahead, and looking over his shoulder said: "You are a pretty Christian, swearing and wanting to fight as you do!" The rebuke went home, and Crabtree turned aside into the woods, got upon his knees, and vowed to God that he would not leave the spot till his sins had been forgiven and his heart changed. In a short time the blessing came, and Job Crabtree was a new man. He had sworn his last oath; and now he began a career of piety, in which he served God as faithfully as he ever did the devil. Really his piety was sublime. Religion was his theme, and to do the will of God was his meat and drink. He was a burning and shining light. He seldom parted with a friend without a word of prayer. His good influence in Lee County, Va., and surrounding counties eternity alone will reveal. The Lord blessed Job Crabtree with a pious family, and his son-in-law, Robert W. Wynn, was worthy of him.

Robert Whitley Wynn was born in Tazewell County, Va., March 15, 1789; and died at his home,

in Lee County, Va., December 6, 1873, aged eighty-four years, eight months, and twenty-one days. The Rev. Alexander Doniphan, in an interview with Father Wynn in 1869, gathered substantially the following particulars of his life. In approaching Father Wynn for the first time he felt as, no doubt, did one of the younger members of the school of prophets when ushered into the august presence of Samuel, the venerable judge and seer of Israel. He found him seated in an "old armchair," with all the evidences of physical comfort except the infirmities of age, the saddest of which was the loss of sight. He saluted his visitor with great cordiality. In answer to inquiries Mr. Wynn gave a very interesting account of his conversion. In his twenty-fourth year, while still in the bonds of iniquity, he one day ascended to the summit of one of the high mountains in the county where he lived. While surveying the panorama of mountains and valleys spread out before him, the scenery impressed him as it never had done before. While meditating upon the beauty and grandeur of the scene, the question came to his mind: "Did all these high mountains and verdant vales come by chance?" He saw before him evidences of intelligent design and of infinite goodness; and he was forced to the conclusion that all this was the work of an Almighty Being, the God to whom he owed his life and faithful service. Thus the "still small voice" that came to Moses in the cleft of the rock penetrated the reason and conscience of Mr. Wynn, and he resolved from that moment to seek the Lord as revealed in the brighter and more glorious revelation of himself in the word of his grace. He accordingly commenced reading the Bible and

praying in secret. He also frequented the sanctuary to hear the gospel and to attend upon class meetings—an institution highly prized by the Methodists of that day. At one of these, conducted by his father, he was called on to pray, though really ignorant of the way of access to the throne of grace. He took up the cross and did the best he could. Shortly after this he joined himself to an exhorter who was holding meetings through the country, and accompanied him from place to place. He was often called on to pray in the meetings which he attended, and also to conduct family devotions. One night, being requested to conduct family worship, he replied that he could not because a dense darkness had settled on his mind and he was paralyzed with an oppressive sense of sin and guilt. Being, however, pressed into the task, he read a chapter, and, with the household, fell upon his knees to pray, when suddenly his mental darkness vanished, his sense of guilt was removed, his prayer was changed to praise, and, like the lame man that was healed at the gate of the temple called Beautiful, he found himself walking, leaping, and praising God. This was the 22d of June, 1812. From that time to the date of his interview with Mr. Doniphan he had had the witness within assuring him of his acceptance with God. In a year from that time he became a preacher, and he grew in popularity and usefulness till God said to him: "It's enough; come up higher." He had a tall and graceful person, and his features were of the finest mold. With a heart full of love divine, and a voice of unusual compass and melody, his words could soothe the hearts of the sorrow-stricken with more than musical sweetness; then, fastening his strong

mental vision upon the hideous forms of sin before him, he could pour forth such a torrent of denunciation as to break up the foundations of iniquity and compel the conscience-stricken sinner to fall at the foot of the cross and cry for mercy. Mr. Wynn's educational advantages had been limited; but the deficiency was supplied by diligence in the use of such means of instruction as were within his reach, whilst by his persistent attention to the duties of the closet he acquired and maintained that unction which rendered him powerful in the pulpit. He was a teacher as well as a herald, and few preachers in the bounds of the Holston Conference excelled him in the soundness and clearness of his theological views as presented from the sacred stand. Mr. Wynn never entered the traveling connection; but he had his regular appointments, and he stated to Mr. Doniphan that in forty years he had missed only four appointments. He was a great camp meeting preacher, and often occupied prominent hours at camp meetings. It has been asserted that he was instrumental in converting more souls in the section where he lived than any preacher, local or traveling, who ever labored there. He preached his last sermon in 1863, during the Civil War. After that his blindness shut him up to his own rural home, where, nursed and caressed by a faithful wife and loving children and grandchildren, he waited patiently for his discharge from the Church militant.<sup>1</sup>

William Garrett, brother to the Rev. Lewis Garrett, who has already been noticed, was, while a per-

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<sup>1</sup>Letter of Rev. A. Doniphan written to Dr. Cunyngnam in 1869.

manent citizen of Cocke County, Tenn., brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus through the instrumentality of Methodist preaching. Dr. McFerrin had the pleasure of a personal acquaintance with this good man in the evening of his life, and he found him "meek, agreeable, and wholly consecrated to God." Being a man of superior intellect and superior educational advantages, a man in affluent circumstances, and withal a devoted Christian and untiring laborer in the vineyard of the Lord, as a local preacher he deserves honorable mention among the pioneers who planted and fostered Methodism in East Tennessee.

William Garrett was born in Orange County, N. C., December 10, 1774. When he was quite a boy his father, Lewis Garrett, started with a company of emigrants to Kentucky, but died on the way. The family proceeded, and located at Scott Station. Growing up amid the perils and privations of that wilderness settlement, he acquired and cultivated those sturdy virtues which afterwards made him a man among men. When a young man, he settled in Cocke County, Tenn., and engaged in the practice of law. In this profession he was successful, filling for some time the office of Attorney-General for the judicial circuit within which he lived, and afterwards the office of County Court Clerk for thirty years. He was converted in 1812. At that time he occupied a leading position in his community pecuniarily and socially. His change was radical, and he at once allied himself with the Methodist Church and became an acknowledged leader in all its enterprises. He pitched his tent on five different camp grounds, and aided liberally in entertaining the multitudes that flocked to

them on camp meeting occasions. He projected the old Zion church near Newport, and superintended its erection. This church became one of the leading centers of Methodist operations in that section. Preachers from far and near sought his hospitable mansion for rest and refreshment. The wealth and intelligence of Mr. Garrett had much to do with making his place a comfortable home for preachers, but not so much as the kind and queenly assiduities of his excellent wife. She was a devout, happy, and constant follower of the Lord Jesus. She was long remembered by those who knew her for her songs of praise and shouts of joy.

Mr. Garrett's wife, Betsy Chelly, was a daughter of Col. Thomas Gray, a prominent lawyer from North Carolina. She was of a superior order of intellect, and was well educated for her times. In early life she was gay, but embraced religion about the time her father and husband did, in 1812, and immediately joined the Methodist Church, in which she lived a consistent member to the day of her death, which occurred in July, 1850. She died at the age of sixty-eight years. Many weary Methodist preachers partook of the bounties of her table, at which she presided with womanly dignity and grace, and rested and refreshed themselves under her hospitable roof. She was quiet, modest, kind, and amiable in temper. Industrious and systematic in her household duties, she found time for reading, meditation, and prayer. She exerted a widespread influence for good upon all classes of society. When her husband was absent from home, she did not hesitate to conduct family worship, and her prayers were not hurried and per-

functory, but solemn and earnest. She was gifted in prayer, and often arose from the family altar happy in the love of God and shouting his praises. She dispensed her hospitalities to such men as Asbury, Whatcoat, McKendree, Roberts, George, Lewis Garrett, James Axley, George Ekin, James Cumming, Thomas Stringfield, Elbert F. Sevier, Jesse Cunningham, John Henninger, John Haynie, George Atkin, and Josiah B. Daughtry. This is only a partial list of those who found rest and refreshment in this delightful home. Mrs. Garrett often spoke of John A. Granade's visits to her home, of his deep piety, and of the hours he spent in the woods in meditation and prayer.

Mr. Garrett heard the first Methodist preacher that preached in Newport. The preaching was in the courthouse. Just after the preacher had taken his text, he was interrupted and grossly insulted by a ruffian, who came before him, shook his fist in his face, and cursed him. Mr. Garrett promptly interfered, had the man arrested and brought to punishment, took the preacher home with him after preaching, and gave him the support of his indorsement and friendship.

Mr. Garrett was licensed to preach in 1822, at the age of forty-eight. He never entered the traveling connection, but was unusually industrious and useful as a local preacher up to the day of his death. He was kept out of the ministry many years on account of his connection with slavery, for he was a slaveholder. James Axley, who was for many years presiding elder in districts embracing Newport, was anti-slavery in the administration of discipline; and he



not only refused to license slaveholders to preach, but denied them the privilege of exhorting or even leading in prayer meetings. He denounced slaveholders as no better than thieves and robbers. George Ekin was sent to Nollichucky Circuit in 1822, and his administration was more liberal; indeed, the Church threw off the restraint imposed by his predecessors, and Mr. Garrett was licensed to preach. Really Ekin was himself antislavery, always was; but he was more of a Christian than a politician, and he had something of apostolic breadth and liberality. Mr. Garrett labored as a local preacher for ten years in the counties of Coker, Sevier, Jefferson, Greene, Washington, Blount, Knox, Monroe, and McMinn, and a great portion of the time in the midst of great religious excitement. Private houses were thrown open to him for preaching, and his journal shows that when he was able he preached three or four times on the Sabbath as well as on Saturday night. He was known to have been sent for at night to go eight or ten miles to pray with unconverted persons who were at the point of death. In 1832 he removed to Giles County, Tenn., and settled on Bradshaw's Creek. In 1836 he removed to Nashville. In 1851 he went to the house of his son, Col. William Garrett, in Coosa County, Ala., where he continued to preach till his death, in 1853.

Perhaps no local preacher of his day performed more labor and did more good than he did. He had seals to his ministry wherever he labored. His person and presence were inspiring, his dress was always tasteful and neat, and his manners were easy, simple, and engaging. He had fine conversational powers,

and his conversations were characterized by a high moral tone. His sermons were purely evangelical in matter, and they were couched in a terse, natural style. He was animated without being boisterous. He seldom preached that he did not get happy. He possessed an unusual share of physical and moral courage, and he was bold to denounce sin in all its forms. He reproved and rebuked "with all authority," was jealous of the honor of his divine Master, and would never allow any reflection upon him to pass unnoticed. In his old age he wrote much for the *Christian Advocate*, and left, at his death, many written sermons and essays on religious subjects, besides a diary running through many years of his Christian life.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 239-250.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### FROM 1810 TO 1813 (CONTINUED).—SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE first session of the Tennessee Conference was held at Fountain Head, in Sumner County, Tenn. According to the Minutes it was to begin November 1, 1812; but for some reason it did not begin till a few days later. McAnally says it began on the 9th,<sup>1</sup> while McFerrin says it began on the 12th. Asbury's Journal supports McAnally, while McFerrin says that, while writing, he had "the original journal [of the Conference] before him."<sup>2</sup> Asbury and McKendree were both present; but McKendree seems to have conducted the business of the Conference, and the journal was signed by him. Asbury was decreasing and McKendree was increasing. William B. Elgin was elected secretary. The Conference resolved to meet at 9 o'clock A.M. and adjourn at 12 o'clock, and again to meet at 12:30 and adjourn at 3 o'clock. The short noon intermission of a half hour will strike us convivial people of the present day. There was no regular roll of members; nor is there a specific statement in the journal as to who were present or absent. The Conference also adopted rules of order, controlling the

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<sup>1</sup>"Life of Dr. S. Patton," p. 142.

<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 173

presiding officer as well as the members. The last item is specially worthy of note.

The entire Conference reported a Church membership, white and colored, of 22,699; while the Ohio Conference at its session reported 23,284. These figures show that the partition was a fair division of the membership. The Holston District reported as follows:

	Whites.	Colored.
Holston .....	540	132
Saltville .....	480	102
Nollichucky .....	703	41
French Broad.....	1,263	81
Clinch .....	1,022	110
Powell's Valley.....	800	..
Carter's Valley.....	421	..
Tennessee Valley.....	565	75
	—	—
Total .....	5,794	541

Grand total, 6,335; a gain of 1,976—figures that denote great prosperity.

The reader will be impressed with the large numbers reported from French Broad and Clinch Circuits, and it is proper to note that George Ekin and Josiah Crawford were in charge of the former, while Samuel H. Thompson and Richard Conn had charge of the latter. Honor to whom honor.

At this Conference (1812) the following were admitted on trial: Samuel Brown, John Allen, Claiborne Duvall, John Nixon, John Smith, William King, Thomas Nixon, Zachariah Witten, Mumford Harris, Isaac Conger, Benjamin Malone, William Douthit, Boaz Ady, Jesse Hale, Elisha Lott, James Porter, John Bowman.

The appointments for the district were :

James Axley, presiding elder.  
Abingdon, Baker Wrather.  
Nollichucky, Lewis Anderson.  
French Broad, George Ekin.  
Tennessee Valley, Thomas A. King.  
Clinch, John Henninger, William Douthit.  
Carter's Valley, William King.  
Powell's Valley, Mumford Harris.  
Knoxville, Samuel H. Thompson.  
Holston, Sela Paine.

After the close of the Fountain Head session the bishops made a hasty trip through a portion of the Holston country, and up the French Broad into Buncombe County, N. C. Saturday, November 20, the bishops made a leisurely ride to Winton's. For the hardships of his travels Asbury comforts himself with the reflection that there had been an increase of eight thousand members in the Tennessee Conference. On the 22d they went through the rain to Knoxville, and lodged with Father Wagner, one of Otterbein's men. It will be remembered that Otterbein was a particular friend of Asbury, and through his evangelical zeal became the founder of the Church known as the United Brethren in Christ. The prelates stopped with Mr. Foute in or near Dandridge, and there the senior bishop baptized six of his host's children. They forded the Pigeon near its mouth on their way to James Gililand's. On Sabbath, the 29th, Asbury and McKendree preached, and Henry Boehm exhorted. Asbury found relief for his cold in a few grains of tartar emetic. Speaking of the results of their preaching in the French Broad and Pigeon country, Asbury says: "God hath wrought upon the vilest of the vile in

the forks of the Pigeon and French Broad Rivers, and he will yet do wonders." Wednesday, December 3, finds the bishops at Killian's; Thursday they reach Samuel Edney's. After a service at Father Mills's they scale the mountain for South Carolina.<sup>1</sup>

The second session of the Tennessee Conference began at Rees's Chapel, in Williamson County, Tenn., October 1, 1813, and lasted six days. Bishops Asbury and McKendree were both present, but McKendree occupied the chair throughout the session, except when the name of James McKendree, the Bishop's brother, was announced in an application for elder's orders; then, for a few moments, McKendree vacated the chair, and Asbury presided. When this case was disposed of, McKendree resumed the chair. There were only three standing committees—those on public worship, finance, and publishing interests.

The Holston District reported numbers as follows:

	Whites.	Colored.
Abingdon .....	446	57
Nollichucky .....	810	47
French Broad.....	638	51
Clinch .....	916	103
Tennessee Valley.....	571	88
Carter's Valley.....	368	..
Powell's Valley.....	696	40
Knoxville .....	492	45
Holston .....	612	34
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Total .....	5,549	465
	Grand total, 6,014; a decrease of 321.	

This decrease has been attributed to the disturbed condition of the country; for at that time the war

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<sup>1</sup>"Asbury's Journal," Vol. III., pp. 337, 338.

with England was at its maximum. Many had been pressed into the service; and the excitement necessarily occasioned by a struggle of our young republic with the most puissant civil power on earth was calculated to divert the minds of the people from spiritual things. War is a cruel, brutal thing; and in pursuance of the psychic power of suggestion it degrades and demoralizes. This power of suggestion is one fact that accounts for the viciousness and recklessness of soldiers in actual service, although knowingly exposed to danger and death. "As a man thinketh in his heart, so is he." "Thoughts are things;" and the man who adjusts his whole being to the idea of carnage and bloodshed, pillage and devastation, usually seeks a lower moral and spiritual level. Men who passed through the War between the States can well call to mind the evident lowering of the moral standard among the people, and the religious carelessness and moral recklessness which prevailed to an alarming extent. The same fact is noticeable in connection with all wars. They demoralize the soldier in the army and the citizen at home.

But other causes may have operated to create the decrease. There had been great spiritual prosperity, and the time for the reaction had come. The wave theory applies to the spiritual as well as to the natural world. We not only have the wave theory of sound, of light, of heat, of electricity; but the wave theory of thought and feeling. We have our cold and hot waves in the spiritual world.

The following were admitted into the Conference on trial at this session (1813): John Hartin, John Le Master, Thomas Bailey, Haman Bailey, Hardy Cryer,

William Stribbling, Joshua Butcher, Ivy Walke, Valentine D. Barry, Josiah Patterson, John Daniel, Reuben Claypole, Nicholas Norwood, John Schrader, John Menefee.

The Holston appointments for the coming year were:

James Axley, presiding elder.  
 Abingdon, George Ekin.  
 Nollichucky, Sela Paine, Nicholas Norwood.  
 French Broad, John Hartin.  
 Tennessee Valley, Jesse Cunnyngnam.  
 Clinch, Benjamin Malone, William Stribbling.  
 Carter's Valley, Thomas A. King.  
 Powell's Valley, William King, John Menefee.  
 Knoxville, Richard Richards.  
 Holston, John Travis, William Douthit.  
 Cumberland, John Bowman.

Cumberland was a new circuit with a name that had been used before for what was subsequently called the Tennessee Valley Circuit; here it is applied to new territory—namely, the Walden's Ridge and Cumberland Mountain section lying between East Tennessee and Middle Tennessee and adjacent to Kentucky. I suppose it embraced Sequatchee Valley, as far as it was inhabited by whites, and all that mountainous section where the Tennessee and Holston Conferences have been for a long while maintaining domestic missions. The domain was large, but the people few and poor; and it was an unpromising field. Mr. Bowman, though pious and diligent, seems not to have accomplished much, and we hear no more of Cumberland Circuit for a number of years.

After Conference the bishops passed through Holston into South Carolina. Asbury preached at O'Ha-



ver's. They visited the Bollings, Nelsons, Barnards, and Killians, preaching and praying all along the route.<sup>1</sup>

Elisha Bowman was admitted into the Western Conference in 1801, superannuated in 1808, and made effective again in 1811. He traveled in Ohio, Virginia, Tennessee, Louisiana, and Kentucky. He was appointed to New River Circuit in 1803, and to French Broad in 1804. He was born in Virginia December 25, 1775; and came with his father to Madison County, Ky., when a child. His father being a local preacher, he received religious training, and early made a profession of religion. At the age of sixteen he was licensed to preach, but did not join the Conference till he had reached the age of twenty-six. According to the Minutes he was appointed to Opelousas, in Louisiana, in 1805 and 1806; but Thomas Lasley says that he was appointed to New Orleans.<sup>2</sup>

If Lasley is correct, we can account for Mr. Bowman's appearing in the Minutes as appointed to Opelousas upon the assumption that he had quitted New Orleans and gone to Opelousas before the printing of the Minutes for 1806, and that in the Minutes Opelousas was substituted for New Orleans. Jones, in the "History of Methodism in Mississippi," assumes that he was originally appointed to Opelousas.<sup>3</sup> The question cannot be settled, and it is not important that it should be. But it is evident that Elisha Bowman was the first Methodist preacher that raised the stand-

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<sup>1</sup>"Asbury's Journal," Vol. III., pp. 356, 357.

<sup>2</sup>Letter of Thomas Lasley in the *Western Christian Advocate*, August 7, 1840.

<sup>3</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol. I., p. 146.

ard of the cross in the Crescent City. In a letter to the Rev. William Burke, dated "Opelousas, January 29, 1806," he gives an account of his troubles and labors in New Orleans and the Opelousas country. He was disappointed in finding very few Americans in New Orleans, and the majority of that few might have been called beasts of men. There were a few respectable American families, but they were Episcopalians and had a preacher of their own—Mr. Chase (afterwards Bishop Chase), of Illinois. Mr. Bowman obtained consent of the Governor to use the capitol as a preaching place, but through the influence of the Episcopalians he was locked out. This occurred two successive Sabbaths, when he preached to a few drinking men on the streets. Almost out of money, with no apparent open door for usefulness in the city, he made his way as best he could along the river and through swamps and lakes to Opelousas. Swimming the streams and baptized with showers of rain, he was often dripping with water for hours together, and he had rheumatism in all his joints; but all the while his soul was filled with celestial fire. He writes: "Glory to God and the Lamb! I can say that I never enjoyed such a power and a heaven of love as I have for a few days past. I have not a wish but that the will of God be done in me, through me, and by me." These adventures and this rich religious experience indicate the stuff that Bowman was made of, and he was a fair sample of the Methodist preachers of his day. The culture, polish, and superior pulpit ability of Mr. Bowman would have made him acceptable in the best society; but he was willing to forego all the advantages of the old pastoral charges that he might be

instrumental in opening the way for the successful preaching of the gospel to this rude and ignorant population on the outskirts of civilization. He traveled over much of the country between Vermilion Bay and Catahoula. He preached almost exclusively in private dwellings. He, however, collected only seventeen members. This was no failure; in the circumstances it was a success. The Mississippi is a mighty river, but it originates in a small spring. The beginnings of great movements are often small. The acorn is a small thing, but it gives birth to a giant of the forest. Bowman sowed the seed, and now we have the fruit in a large and influential Church in the Southwest. It is to be regretted that we have no record of the labors of Bowman in the Holston country. This record would doubtless add a page of interesting matter to our story.

Broken down in health, Mr. Bowman studied medicine, practiced it to the end of his life, and became eminent in the profession. In Estill County, Ky., his house became a regular preaching place. He was industrious as a local preacher. He was endowed with a high order of natural gifts, which were well disciplined, and he was an able champion of the doctrines and usages of his Church. The last two years before his death he preached more frequently than usual. He died October 3, 1845.<sup>1</sup>

Jonathan Jackson was admitted into the traveling connection in 1789, and located in 1814. For a quarter of a century he did effective work in the itinerancy.

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. H. N. McTyeire, in "Biographical Sketches of Eminent Itinerant Ministers," pp. 254-260.

His Holston appointments were: 1804 (spring), Swannanoa; 1804 (fall), presiding elder of the Holston District; 1809-12, presiding elder of the Catawba District.

I claim Catawba District as partly Holston ground because the district not only embraced what afterwards became Catawba Circuit, and was for a long time a part of the Holston Conference, but it crossed the Blue Ridge and embraced a considerable part of the section of Western Carolina west of the ridge—a section where Holston Methodism operated for many years.

Jackson seems to have been a man of ability, as well as zeal and piety. His appointments indicate the confidence reposed in him by the Church. He filled some of the most responsible positions in South Carolina, Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee. After his location he abandoned the ministry and became separated from the Church; how or why, we know not. He brought up an excellent family, and some of them were worthy members of the Methodist Church, and comforted their aged father in his declining years. Dr. McFerrin at one time had an interview with him at the home of Mrs. Auld, a daughter. He was then advanced in years, and an intelligent and quiet old gentleman.<sup>1</sup>

A melancholy interest gathers about the name of a man who for years has stood on the walls of Zion, giving the trumpet no uncertain sound, but for some cause has laid that trumpet aside. Jackson's resignation of the ministry and separation from the Church,

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 15, 16.

whether by compulsion or choice, whether from moral aberration, or from change of views as to theology or Church polity, or from indignation at personal treatment by the authorities or by the people—it matters not from what cause—necessarily awaken sad reflections. Strange to say, that facetious writer, Dr. A. M. Chreitzberg, of Charleston, S. C., who has been writing up the Methodist heroes of the past in the *Southern Christian Advocate*, seems to know nothing of this sad chapter in Jackson's history. The following is in substance Dr. Chreitzberg's mention of Mr. Jackson: Jackson was six years on circuits, two on stations, two as supernumerary, sixteen as presiding elder—in all twenty-six years. He located in 1814 with twelve others, among them William Capers, afterwards Bishop. He was stationed in Charleston in 1793, and again in 1806. His record there is that of a son of thunder, dealing much in the terrors of the law, producing in sinners such an awful sense of danger as to cause many of them to rush affrighted from the place of preaching. Here in 1807 Jackson and Owens encountered an attempt similar to the Dougherty tragedy. Two city bucks, having been reprovved on Monday night at Cumberland in a crowded prayer meeting, seized the preachers with the cry: "Pump him! pump him!" In the uproar that ensued Owens escaped. On the next Sabbath, when Jackson was preaching at Bethel, a file of the city guard, in full uniform and armed with muskets, surrounded the church. The captain, sword in hand and in full regimentals, walked in and commanded the congregation to disperse. The command was hardly necessary; the blacks went at once, not standing on the

order of their going, leaping, as they did, from the gallery windows; it may be said to have rained black-birds. But there was no escape; they found themselves prisoners of—what shall we call it, war or peace? Nothing of the kind could occur now, of course.

Jackson was more than once presiding elder of Joseph Travis, who held him in high esteem as one who could bear acquaintanceship. His preaching talents were not brilliant, but he had a genius for organization, a gift which is said to be a *sine qua non* in the Catholic priesthood. Alas that it is not more regarded among the Protestants! No priest reaches the episcopate or cardinalate by his oratory, but only by his success in building up the Church. Jackson's sermons were characterized by orthodoxy; they were scriptural, practical, and dealt in statements of experience. When local he was the same untiring, persevering servant of the Most High. One who knew of his death records that, seeing Jackson's memory failing, he asked him: "Brother Jackson, do you know me?" "No," was the reply. "Do you know your wife?" Again, "No." "Do you know Jesus?" The flame flickered for a moment. "Jesus?" said he; "yes, I have known my Saviour better than forty years."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas Trower was admitted into the Virginia Conference in February, 1807; transferred to the Western Conference late in the same year; located in 1811; was readmitted in 1838; and located finally in 1839. His appointments were: 1807, Brunswick (six months); 1807, Clinch; 1808, Nollichucky; 1809,

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<sup>1</sup>A. M. Chreitzberg, in *Southern Christian Advocate*,

French Broad; 1810, Holston; 1838, Kingston. All his itinerant and local preacher service was rendered in Holston, except the half year on Brunswick Circuit.

Mr. Trower was born in Albemarle County, Va., June 11, 1786. His parents were among the first fruits of Methodism in that State. They trained their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord; and this training led their son early to the cross of the Lord Jesus, where he sought and found redemption, even the forgiveness of sins. He united with the Methodist Church, in which he lived and labored till his Master called him from labor to reward. In his twentieth year he was licensed to preach, and soon afterwards joined the traveling connection. He married and located on the Bridwell farm, at the foot of Eden's Ridge, in Sullivan County, Tenn., where as a local preacher he labored with acceptability and usefulness for a number of years. He then removed to Post Oak Springs, Roane County, where he chiefly spent the remnant of his days. He died and was buried there. He loved the Church and her institutions, and ever took a lively interest in everything that pertained to the gospel. He was ardently attached to the ministry, traveling and local, and he always gave them a hearty welcome to his house. One of the last acts of his life was aiding in the erection of a spacious church some half mile from his residence. This house, which was reared mainly through his influence, was named Soule Chapel. But just as he was anticipating a great deal of happiness in worshipping in the new chapel God said to him: "It is enough; come up higher." He lived in the

Lord, and therefore died in the Lord. The Rev. David Fleming visited him often in his last affliction, and always found him hopeful and happy. When interrogated as to his spiritual prospects, he replied: "All is well; God is with me; my sky is clear."<sup>1</sup>

From a letter to Dr. Cunyningham from Mrs. Edna A. Brown, a daughter of Mr. Trower, written November 9, 1870, I take the following statement of Mr. Trower's death:

Father was a particular friend of the poor—visited them and administered to their wants, both temporal and spiritual. He educated their children, and helped them in sickness and in health. The day he was taken sick he visited a poor family, the mother being sick, with five or six little children dependent on her for bread. She was in great distress about her soul, and after father's death she told me that by his prayers and counsels that day she was led to believe in the Saviour. Father was taken sick January 18, 1849, and died on the 30th of the same month. Never did any one endure affliction with more resignation; he was calm and happy all the time. Brother Thomas Stringfield visited him during his illness, and both became happy and praised God together. When about to bid farewell, Brother Stringfield remarked: "Brother Trower, you are crossing the Jordan of death a little before me. I shall soon follow, and you will greet me on the other shore." Father replied: "Yes; to part no more. Hallelujah! praise the Lord! Bless the Lord, O my soul!" Brother Stringfield said: "I have many friends in heaven; tell them I am on the way to meet them. We have had many happy seasons together, but this is the best. How good the Lord is!" Father replied: "Yes, bless his holy name! I feel his presence; all is well." He spoke in a similar strain every day to those who visited him.

John Brown was admitted into the Western Con-

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<sup>1</sup>Letter of Rev. David Fleming in *Methodist Episcopalian*, February 5, 1849.



ference in 1809; located in 1813; was readmitted in 1818; and died March 23, 1859. His father being a minister of the gospel, he was brought up under religious auspices. He labored mainly in the bounds of the Ohio and Kentucky Conferences, by the former of which he was placed on the roll of superannuates in 1825, and he retained this relation to the day of his death. He was stationed only two years in Holston—in 1809 on Holston Circuit as the colleague of James Axley, and in 1810 on Powell's Valley Circuit.

Father Brown was widely and favorably known. Although his acquirements were gained under great disadvantages, his preaching ability was such as to command respect in any community. During his years of affliction and bodily infirmity he maintained that sweetness of temper and consistency of deportment which won for him the esteem of all who knew him. Just before he fell asleep in Jesus his faithful wife tendered him a little water; but he replied in a cheerful voice: "No, my dear, you may drink here; I will drink over yonder."<sup>1</sup>

Samuel H. Thompson was admitted into the Western Conference in 1809. His first appointment was to White Water, in Ohio. Afterwards he was appointed as follows: 1810, Nollichucky; 1811, Clinch; 1812, Knoxville; 1813, Christian. Three of these circuits lay in Holston. He subsequently labored in Missouri and Illinois. He was a member of the Illinois Conference at the time of his death, which occurred March 9, 1841. His last moments were moments of triumph.

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<sup>1</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. VIII., p. 29.

Dr. McFerrin met him in the General Conference at Baltimore in 1840, and found him to be a man of sweet spirit.

According to the Minutes, Baker Wrather was admitted into the Western Conference in 1810, and located in 1815. He was stationed on Abingdon Circuit in 1812. The Minutes show that he was expelled from the Church by the Tennessee Conference in 1816. Here the Minutes are self-contradictory. The likelihood is that Wrather was expelled as a local preacher, that on an appeal to the Annual Conference from the Quarterly Conference the judgment of the lower court was affirmed, and that the case thus found its way into the records of the Annual Conference. Dr. McFerrin says that he was expelled for selling a slave and sending him South, thus separating man and wife. Of the real merits of the case, we know nothing. The ownership of slaves necessitated traffic in them. The separation of families, and especially of man and wife, was one of the crying evils of domestic slavery. But the marriage of negroes had not at that time been legalized in Tennessee. The negroes themselves had very loose notions of the marital relation, voluntary separation frequently occurred among them, and forsaken women usually found little difficulty in contracting new marriages. For these reasons forced separation among the negroes did not work as great a hardship among them as it would have done among the whites. Besides, a slave often became so worthless, or even dangerous, that his transportation seemed to be a necessity. Again, at that day slaves were practically denied the honor of a public hanging or of a term in the penitentiary. When

one had committed a felony or capital crime, his master usually found it more convenient to send him to the "cotton patch," pocketing his salable value, than to lose his value altogether by either his imprisonment or his death. Mr. Wrather may have been in debt, and his financial obligations may have rendered the sale of the negro necessary. Only those, however, who knew the circumstances under which the sale was made were able to judge of the moral quality of the act. But at the same time it must be admitted that at that early day a preacher who had trafficked in negroes was not likely to be tried by an impartial and unprejudiced court, for, through the tremendous influence of Wesley and the mother country, the American Methodist preachers were generally intensely antislavery. It is fortunate for the whites of the South that, by a strange and mysterious providence, they have been freed from the responsibilities connected with the ownership of slaves, and I am sure that they would not willingly be entangled again in this yoke of bondage. But they are now confronted by a problem almost as perplexing and difficult of solution as that of slavery—namely, the determination of the social status of the negro.

William B. Elgin was admitted into the Western Conference in 1808; and located, in the Tennessee Conference, in 1814. He performed his whole itinerant service in Kentucky, Virginia, and Tennessee. Two years were given to Holston: he was appointed to Clinch Circuit in 1809, and to Tennessee Valley in 1811.

Mr. Elgin's appointments, together with the fact that he was several times elected secretary of his Confer-

ence, indicate that he was a man of considerable ability. He was, indeed, a man of some learning, and stood high as a preacher. In the controversy with the "Reformers," as they were called, he took the side of reform. During the period of his local ministry in the M. E. Church, there was a party in the Church which favored lay representation, opposed the presiding eldership, and objected to the episcopacy as a third order. They advocated the "mutual rights" of preachers and laymen. The question was much discussed both in public and in private. The discussions were sometimes heated and denunciatory. This state of affairs eventually led to a separation from the Church and the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church, a Church decidedly republican in its polity. Mr. Elgin went with the new Church. He was prominent in the matter of its organization, and was several times elected President of his Conference. Dr. McFerrin received the impression that he studied medicine and devoted a part of his time to the practice.<sup>1</sup> Of the later years of Mr. Elgin, little is known.

In some sections the policy of denouncing the "Reformers" in strong terms was adopted, and tended only to enlist sympathy in their behalf; but in Tennessee a moderate and conciliatory policy was adopted. The leading men in the Tennessee Conference were conservative, and checked every tendency to oppression in the administration of discipline anent the issues of the controversy. These wise and moderate measures robbed the cry of persecution of its force. This course was wiser and safer than the policy of pro-

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 150.

scription; for nothing is more deeply rooted in the American mind and conscience than the conviction that every man has a right to sit under his own vine and fig tree, none daring to make him afraid. The result of this policy was that the Methodist Protestant Church did not take deep root or have a vigorous growth in Tennessee; a large number of preachers and people of that communion have united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The adoption on the part of the latter Church of the main principle contended for by the "Reformers," lay representation, has gone far toward furnishing an argument against the separate existence of the Methodist Protestant Church. But it still lives, even in Tennessee, and will, no doubt, continue to live as long as there is dissatisfaction with the offices of presiding elder and bishop as they now exist in the Methodist Episcopal Churches.

Frederic Stier was admitted in 1802, and located in 1825, in the Baltimore Conference. His charges lay in the Baltimore Conference from 1802 to 1808, and mainly in the State of Virginia. He was appointed to Red River Circuit, in the Western Conference, in 1808. His only Holston work was the presiding eldership of the Holston District in 1809-11, three years. The remainder of his itinerant career was spent in the Baltimore Conference, where he filled some of the most important and responsible stations, such as Baltimore City and Fredericktown.

Thomas Hellums was admitted into the Western Conference in 1805, and located in 1813. He traveled in Kentucky, Mississippi, Middle and East Ten-

nessee. He was appointed to Tennessee Valley in 1811, and to Cumberland in 1812.

The parents of Thomas Hellums were pious, and instructed him in religion from his infancy. Under Methodist preaching he was awakened and converted, and soon after his conversion he was licensed to preach. Worn down by the labors and hardships which he had undergone as a traveling preacher, he sought rest in location in 1813. He then engaged in teaching as a means of livelihood, but lack of health compelled him to relinquish this occupation. He then began the practice of law, but, feeling that it interfered with his ministerial influence, he abandoned it. His ministerial labors in the local relation were characterized by the same zeal that he had exhibited in the regular work. Under protracted affliction his mind became a ruin, and he was partially insane the remainder of his life. But while in this state of mental aberration he traveled extensively and preached frequently; yet, strange to say, his sermons gave no indications of his insanity. He analyzed his subjects with force and perspicuity, and delivered his sermons with system and consistency; but after leaving the pulpit signs of his malady would reappear. He feared all who approached him, regarding them as enemies, and sometimes exhibited defensive weapons to deter them from harming him.<sup>1</sup> While traveling in the Territory of Arkansas, he fell in with some acquaintances who induced him to attend a camp meeting. But from the time he reached the camp ground he seemed to be harassed by fear, and could not be persuaded to

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. I., pp. 465, 466.

preach till some hour on Sunday, when he preached one of the most lucid and powerful sermons those present had ever heard. After preaching he showed marked symptoms of lunacy, manifesting great alarm at the approach of friends, and at the same time exhibiting in his hand a large knife. He at length got his horse and rode out into the trackless prairie, upon the border of which the camp ground lay, and has never been heard of since. He rode a very fine horse, and some suppose he was murdered by highwaymen, who were known to infest that region, and who, it is supposed, murdered him to get possession of his property. That his horse and accouterments were never heard of strengthens this supposition. Some months afterwards the skeleton of a man was found in the prairie, but it furnished no clue to the identity of the person it represented.<sup>1</sup>

Samuel Sellers was admitted into the Western Conference in 1805. He traveled in Kentucky till 1809, when he was appointed to Claiborne Circuit, in Mississippi. He was then returned to Kentucky and placed in charge of Barren Circuit. In 1811 he was appointed to Nollichucky Circuit. In 1812 he was made presiding elder of the Mississippi District. The territories of Mississippi and Louisiana were erected into a Conference in 1812 to be known as the Mississippi Conference, its first meeting to be held at Spring Hill, Miss., November 1, 1813. Sellers enjoyed the distinction of having discharged all the duties of bishop, except ordination, in the infant Conference up to 1816,

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. Jonathan Stamper, in "Home Circle," Vol. III., pp. 214, 215.

when he yielded the chair to Bishop R. R. Roberts. This was a period of four years. This Conference was deprived of the visits of a bishop during these years by the dangers incident to the English and Indian wars of 1812-15. Jones thus describes the man:

Mr. Sellers was rather under medium size, neatly put up, handsomely developed, and capable of great labor and endurance; he was of light complexion, and his hair was sandy. In his intercourse with society he was pleasant and sociable, always maintaining the dignity of his holy office. His style of preaching was Wesleyan, and his manner warm and exciting. After passing the middle of his sermon, he extended his voice, apparently to its utmost limit; and his intonations, gestures, and expressions of countenance gave evidence of great earnestness. Especially during the latter half of an animated sermon he had a way of holding one hand at a time on the side of his face so as to cover the ear. Why he did it, the writer does not know. As he recollects several boisterous ministers of the same generation who were addicted to a similar habit, he supposes they were copying after some noted example among their collaborators. Mr. Sellers had a well-balanced and carefully disciplined mind, and made an excellent administrative officer. This we infer from his well-ordered success in engineering the Mississippi Conference through the four years of its minority and isolation during the English and Indian wars of 1812-15, without the presence of a bishop or even the assistance of the aged and experienced in the administration of Annual Conference business.<sup>1</sup>

Human nature is an imitative thing, but slavish imitation is a weakness. Originality is the principal characteristic of superior talent, and the higher order of intellect is not prone to imitation. It has been observed among preachers that those who copy others

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol. I., pp. 260, 261.



usually copy only their faults. It is said that Nathan Bangs, owing to some deformity, always held his head a little to one side; but he was held in such high esteem that his very faults seemed to be virtues, and many young preachers of his day were accustomed to hold their heads to one side, as if they had at some time or another suffered a cervical dislocation. I am somewhat surprised that so wise a man as Mr. Jones could not account for the origin and continuance of the habit, in a certain class of preachers, of holding their hands to their ears while speaking. Scarcely is anything more discouraging to a speaker than a lack of resonance in the hall or place where he is speaking; he feels all the time that he is failing. On the contrary, resonance greatly encourages the speaker, causing him to feel that he is speaking easily and fluently. If the reader will make a speech in a natural manner, and then repeat the same speech with a hand to one of his ears, he will see the difference in the apparent resonance. The closed ear doubles the apparent noise—apparent, however, only to the speaker. The habit of clapping the hands to the ears was once very common among Primitive or Hardshell Baptist preachers, and prevailed to some extent among Methodist preachers. The growth of education and intelligence has, however, pretty well numbered this foolish habit among the things of the past, as well as the equally foolish habit of singing sermons. The ostrich may well be excused for believing that his body is hidden when only his head is concealed in the sand; but preachers were never excusable for believing that they were making a great noise simply because they heard a roaring in their ears.

At one time Samuel Sellers made a visit to the Attakapas country in Louisiana. There lived there a Mrs. Rice, who had the reputation of being a pious woman; but she disliked the Methodists, and especially their habit of shouting when happy in the Lord. But she fell into doubts as to her acceptance with God and readiness to appear at the judgment seat of Christ, and she began to seek earnestly for light. Learning that Mr. Sellers was going to preach near her home, she went to hear him, hoping that she might receive some message from God's Word that would give her the long-sought peace. Under the sermon she got no relief from her heavy burden. But after the sermon the preacher began to sing the song beginning with "What wondrous love is this!" Strange feelings welled up in Mrs. Rice's heart. They were attended with such joy that she repeated to herself: "What wondrous love is this, O my soul?" Mr. Sellers with full heart advanced to the second stanza:

When I was sinking down, sinking down,  
Beneath God's righteous frown,  
Christ laid aside his crown  
For my soul.

There was now no suppressing of the joy that welled up and overflowed her heart, and she said, "Let the Lord do as he will;" and now with a flood of fast-falling tears and her face illumined by a heavenly smile, she gave vent to her feelings in loud and long-continued praises to God. After this she was no longer prejudiced against the Methodists, but became an ardent advocate of a "feeling religion."

Our old Methodist preachers were noted for their gift of song. The hymns they sang were not always

the best of poetry, and their music was not always the most scientific; but their songs had gospel in them, and their music had soul in it. Neither of these things can be affirmed of some of the music we hear in the churches of the present day.<sup>1</sup>

Zachariah Witten was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1812. He was born in Tazewell County, Va., of highly respectable parents, and received a tolerable English education. From childhood he enjoyed the advantage of attending Methodist preaching, and as his father's house was a preacher's home he enjoyed the pious example and precepts of faithful Methodist preachers of that day. He was converted in 1811, at about the age of twenty. Soon after his conversion he began to exercise his gifts in public prayer and exhortation; and his piety, promising talents, holy boldness, and well-tempered zeal pointed him out as a man designed by the Holy Spirit for the ministry. The word of the Lord was fire in his bones. He felt impressed that it was his duty to preach, and his way being open, he was sent by the presiding elder, in 1812, to Powell's Valley Circuit, where he traveled till Conference. He was appointed to Duck River in the fall of 1814; but being sick, he visited his parents and remained with them till March, 1815, when he started to his charge; but consumption had marked him as its victim, and he terminated his short but useful career May 18, 1815. But during this short career he had been instrumental in the awakening and conversion of many immortal souls.

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol. I., pp. 332-334.

His last words were: "I leave this world without trouble or sorrow."

The Witten family has been an important family in Church and State. Thomas Witten removed from Maryland to Tazewell County, Va., in 1772.<sup>1</sup> He had four sons and three daughters. One of his sons, Thomas, married Eleanor Cecil December 25, 1783; and another, James, married Rebecca Cecil at the same time. Dr. Jacob Young, in his autobiography, speaks of visiting a Witten family on Clinch River, in Tazewell County, Va., in the year 1803, when he was on the Clinch Circuit, and of his being much pleased with Mr. Witten and his excellent family. This man was either Thomas or James, more likely Thomas, as he married Eleanor Cecil, and James Quinn, a distinguished traveling preacher, married a daughter of the Witten visited by Dr. Young, and her name was Eleanor.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Bickley's "History of Tazewell County, Va."

<sup>2</sup>Letter of Mrs. Frances Hardin Hess, of New York City, a direct descendant of Thomas Witten, Sr., and great-granddaughter of Col. William Price, of Russell County, Va.

## CHAPTER IX.

FROM 1813 TO 1816.

THE Tennessee Conference met in Kennerly's Chapel, Logan County, Ky., September 29, 1814. Bishops Asbury and McKendree were both present. A camp meeting was conducted in connection with the sessions of the Conference. Asbury in his journal says that "Brother Douglass" was their encampment cook—that of the preachers, I suppose. The bishops were sick, lame, and in poverty. They had intended to visit Mississippi, but the injury that had been received by Bishop McKendree was so great that it was doubtful whether he would be able to attend even the South Carolina Conference; hence they were under necessity of foregoing the Mississippi trip. The labors of the Conference were closed in love and peace. The families were kind to the preachers, but they were much crowded.

The Holston District reported numbers in Society as follows:

	Whites.	Colored.
Abingdon .....	425	59
Nollichucky .....	810	47
French Broad.....	700	38
Tennessee Valley.....	423	9
Clinch .....	811	78
Carter's Valley.....	387	12
Powell's Valley.....	360	6
Knoxville .....	402	40

	Whites.	Colored.
Holston .....	547	37
Lee .....	300	22
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Total .....	5,165	348

Grand total, 5,513; a decrease of 501.

I do not know to what to attribute the continued decrease, except the state of the country in connection with the war with England.

The following were admitted on trial: George McNeely, Nace Overall, Moses Ashworth, Jacob Whitesides, Gabriel Pickering, Roswell Valentine, John C. Harbison, James Nowland, John Scrips, Elijah Gentry, Wiley Ledbetter.

In the list of those admitted on trial we find the name of Moses Ashworth. Really he was admitted in 1805, and located in 1809. At the Conference of 1814 he should have been reported as readmitted; but, strange to say, there was at that time no provision in the minutes for a question of readmission. Readmission was usually informal; and there was no way of discerning the readmission of a located preacher but by finding his name among the appointees to pastoral or other charges, or in the supernumerary list. This very proper question was subsequently inserted among the minute questions. But its absence for a long time has entailed some inconvenience upon the Methodist historian.

Among the names of those admitted, according to the minutes, we find Asa Overall. McFerrin is authority for saying that this was a mistake in the minutes, and the name should have been Nace Overall.

I have taken the liberty of correcting the error in the above list.<sup>1</sup>

The appointments for the Holston District were as follows:

James Axley, presiding elder.  
Abingdon, Sela Paine.  
Nollichucky, Benjamin Malone.  
French Broad, John Henninger.  
Tennessee Valley, John Menefee.  
Clinch, William Hart.  
Carter's Valley, Jesse Cunnyingham.  
Powell's Valley, James Porter.  
Knoxville, James Dixon.  
Holston, George Ekin.  
Lee, Thomas Nixon.

After Conference Bishop Asbury passed through Middle and East Tennessee and Western North Carolina to South Carolina and Georgia. Bishop McKendree was with him, but Asbury seldom mentions him in his journal. He speaks in the highest terms of John W. Bond, his traveling companion, a preacher who was driver, nurse, and pulpit substitute, when substitution became necessary. Bishop McKendree seems to have been disabled by a hurt which he had received, and was probably nearly as feeble as Asbury himself at this time. Bishop Asbury attended a Presbyterian meeting in East Tennessee and preached, and then passed through Dandridge and stopped with William Turnley, where he met with "kind souls." During this trip he was met by Richard Bird, who had come a hundred miles to hasten the bishops to a "camp meeting away on the bleak hills of

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 335.

Haywood." After reaching the camp ground Asbury preached and ordained W. Spann and J. Evans to deacon's orders; also ordained to elder's orders Thomas Bird and Samuel Edney. I follow Asbury's journal at this point. What camp ground was this? It could not have been in Haywood, as he was on the camp ground one day and visited Richard Bird's house the next; for Bird lived in McDowell County. October 25 he preached in the home of Benjamin Bird, father of Richard and Jonathan Bird. The bishops then rode to Rutherford's, where they paid their bills by exhortation and prayer. Rutherford's I take to be the place where Rutherford College was afterwards located.<sup>1</sup>

In the Bishop's journal, in relation to the Conference at Kennerly's Chapel he laments the small increase in the traveling ministry while the local ministry was being augmented by numerous locations. Speaking of the year 1813-14, McAnally says: "Although there was but little increase in the traveling ministry this year, it was quite otherwise among the local preachers. Their numbers had greatly increased. Many had moved into the bounds of the Conference from other sections, and many others had been licensed and set apart for that work."<sup>2</sup>

The itinerant polity of Methodism has rendered the local ministry a necessity in the Methodist Church. Many men are called to preach who are so situated that they cannot conveniently enter the itinerant ranks; many are licensed to preach—and wisely,

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<sup>1</sup>"Asbury's Journal," Vol. III., pp. 368, 369.

<sup>2</sup>McAnally's "Life of S. Patton," p. 146.



too—who, for one cause or another, cannot get admission into the traveling connection; many, after traveling a number of years, find it necessary to ask for the local relation; some men would be unacceptable as traveling preachers who can be useful as local preachers. It is therefore evident that, but for the provision in the Church for a local ministry, many men who feel called to preach, and who can do good as preachers, could not be licensed at all; and that many of our best preachers would, when compelled to desist from traveling, be under the necessity of surrendering their parchments and retiring to the ranks of the laity. In the earlier history of the Church the circuits were so large as to territory, and the preaching places on each circuit so numerous, that Sabbath preaching could be given to only a small proportion of the congregations; and yet it was very important to the spread and permanency of Methodism that our people should be served with Methodist preaching on Sundays, instead of being under the necessity of looking to other denominations for their Sunday spiritual rations. These things rendered a local ministry a prime necessity. To supply Sunday preaching to our people, we needed a local ministry large in numbers and respectable in ability. The fact that the marriage of a traveling preacher in the earlier days of Methodism in this country rendered his location almost necessary had a tendency to deplete the itinerant ranks and to reënforce the local ministry. The multiplication of stations and the ensmallment of circuits as to territory have, in these days, increased the demand for pastors and diminished the demand for local preachers. The increased wealth and intelligence

of the Churches, and the payment of better salaries than were paid in earlier times, have drawn our better talent from the local to the itinerant ranks, and retained them there. These facts have operated to diminish the necessity for a local ministry, and to decrease its ability and popularity; and it is evident that the value and usefulness of the local ministry will continue to dwindle in the ratio of the increase of the number of pastoral charges, the ensmallment of their territory, and the increased pay of the traveling preachers. It will be a great while, however, before these causes will render a local ministry wholly unnecessary; indeed, it is likely that this will never be the case. It is to be feared that legislation has been somewhat invidious as to the local ministry. It is my opinion that local preachers should not be classed with laymen; but that, by granting them adequate representation in the Annual and General Conferences, this branch of the service should be protected, fostered, and dignified. It was evidently not the design of the apostles, in the organization of the primitive Church, that all preachers should have pastoral charges; in other words, that all preachers should be bishops. There was in that Church an evangelistic element, consisting of men free to go anywhere, who supplemented the work of regular pastors and did much to spread and establish Christianity.

The increase of local preachers within the bounds of the Tennessee Conference was not a bad sign of the times. It was surely a blessing to the Holston country; for the prevalence and power of Methodism in the bounds of the Holston Conference are largely due to the number, zeal, activity, and preaching power

of its local preachers. In the pulpit they have not been inferior to the regular clergy in unction and earnestness; in revivals they have always occupied the front line in assaults on the enemy's works; they have been characterized by loyalty to our institutions and by adherence to the doctrines of Wesley and Fletcher. The local ministry has a glorious history, and our legislators should see to it that it has an honored future.

Mention was made in a former chapter of the organization of a society at Zion, in Cocke County, Tenn. The Hon. William Garrett, of Coosa, Ala., a son of the elder William Garrett, originally of Cocke County, gives some interesting reminiscences connected with this place, which I will here utilize. In 1814 a Society which had existed some two years erected a church house near the house of the Rev. William Garrett, then a layman in the Church, about one mile west of Newport,<sup>1</sup> between French Broad and Pigeon Rivers, on land given by Abel Gilliland. This church was named Zion. It was a frame house, and the first meetinghouse built in that style in all that country. The elder William Garrett, who owned a sawmill, prepared the lumber and superintended the erection of the house. The Society consisted mainly of William Garrett and his wife, Betsy Chelly, Col. Thomas Gray, his wife and two daughters, Wesley Harrison and wife, Lewis Anderson and wife, Richard Ellis, his wife and daughters, James Gilliland and wife, Abel Gilliland and wife. These were most excellent people.

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<sup>1</sup>This was the old Newport.

Lewis Anderson, originally from Virginia, was a local preacher. He lived at first in Jonesboro, but removed in 1812 to Newport, where he established a saddle and harness business. Here he labored as a local preacher with acceptability and usefulness. In person he was a little below the ordinary height, was somewhat bulky, had blue eyes, hair rather light, with a pleasant countenance that made a good impression upon those with whom he came in contact. His manner in the pulpit was quiet, his style easy, argumentative, and somewhat forcible. Crowds attended upon his ministry. He was so popular that he almost had a monopoly of the marriage fees of his section.

James Gilliland was leader in the Zion Church. His wife was a sister of James Axley, and an excellent woman. Gilliland had eccentricities, which were not cultivated, but proceeded in part from profound religious convictions and a rich experience. He was a great revival worker. When he went to a camp meeting, he would accept the first invitation to a tent, put his hat away securely, and there stay until he left the meeting. He seldom left the altar as long as there was a seeker of religion there. His expressions of religious enjoyment were sometimes sublime, and were calculated to awe the most obdurate heart. The bowels of his compassion yearned over sinners, and he would break forth in almost heartbroken pleadings for the objects of his solicitude. He was especially at home in the class meeting. His favorite expression when his heart was overflowing with the love of God was: "Brethren, we are not half done with our religion yet."

Abel Gilliland, brother of James, was a remarkable

man. In his youth he was desperately wicked; but after reaching maturity he was powerfully convicted and converted, and engaged in the Christian warfare with an ardor which knew no abatement for twelve years, when the wheels of nature stood still. William Garrett and Mr. Gilliland were near neighbors, and were often together. If they were walking through the woods and came across a tree that had been shivered by a bolt of lightning, Gilliland would shout and praise God, saying: "See what my Master can do!" He was similarly affected on seeing the sun wheel above the horizon on a clear morning. Religion was his theme, but without cant or austerity; for he was cheerful, sociable, and full of life.

In 1821 he removed to Alabama and located on Wolf Creek, in St. Clair County. There was no circuit preaching near him, but by preaching and exhorting he got some of his neighbors into the notion of joining the Church. He then invited Mr. Drake, of the Mississippi Conference, to preach at his house and organize a class; but when the door of the Church was opened none came forward. Mr. Gilliland then went to those who had promised to join, and spoke to them individually; then got them all together and conducted them to the preacher, saying: "You will have to take them as a tanner takes his hides: horns, hoofs, and all together." Once as he was moving his family to camp meeting some one overtook him and told him that stock had broken into his cornfield. Gilliland replied: "I can't stop now; I am bound to go to camp meeting, and I have left my place in the care of the Lord." He drove on, but had not gone far before a neighbor overtook him and informed him that he had

put the stock out and secured the fence. Gilliland, overjoyed with a sense of the good providence of God, shouted, saying: "I knew the Lord would take care of my place till I returned from the meeting." Bishop Roberts used to relate the following anecdote: In passing through the wilderness from the Mississippi Conference to East Tennessee, about the year 1823, he selected Abel Gilliland as his guide. One day they were passing through Wills Valley, threading a narrow bridle way through the forest. The bishop was some thirty yards ahead of his companion, when he heard Gilliland scream at the top of his voice, and, supposing he had been assaulted, turned his horse and rode back. Gilliland continued shouting with his hand to the side of his head, and as soon as the bishop was near enough he inquired earnestly: "Brother Gilliland, what is the matter?" Gilliland replied, at the top of his voice, "My soul is happy, Bishop!" and he continued shouting and praising God for some minutes. The Bishop was taken aback, for the alarm at such a time disconcerted him; for his thoughts were, at the time, of danger from Indians.

Wesley Harrison, prompted by abolition sentiments, emigrated to Ohio in 1817. Indeed, from the same cause there was a large emigration from East Tennessee to the Northwest up to 1822. James Axley traveled extensively in East Tennessee, and took decided ground against allowing slaveholders to take any part in managing the affairs of the Church, especially preaching. Some other preachers agreed with him, though not so extreme or violent. Their course produced much irritation and dissatisfaction; and this state of affairs, together with considerable emigration

to the West, brought the Church in the Holston country to a standstill; it was, indeed, in a measure, paralyzed, and became comparatively powerless for good. The organization of Colonization Societies in the country had a considerable influence, as a safety valve to excitement and irritation, toward preventing a rupture in the Church in Holston. The antislavery feeling culminated in 1820, under the administration of Axley, who was backed in his war on slaveholders by his brother-in-law, Enoch Moore, a local preacher. So far did they go in proscription that they did not allow a slaveholder even to lead in prayer meeting, and thus many good men who were otherwise qualified to be useful were suppressed till this unfortunate régime passed away. But I have anticipated.<sup>1</sup>

While copying from the Hon. William Garrett, it is proper here to say that the elder William Garrett, at one time a citizen of Cocke County, Tenn., and a local preacher, was a brother of the Rev. Lewis Garrett, Sr. William Garrett's sons were Lewis, Grey, and William. The last-mentioned was for a number of years Secretary of State of Alabama. He is the author of the sketch from which the above items are taken. He was a Methodist layman.

The Tennessee Conference met at Bethlehem Meetinghouse, in Wilson County, Tenn., a place about four miles from the town of Lebanon and about twenty-six miles from Nashville, October 20, 1815. Both bishops were present; but owing to the feebleness of Bishop Asbury, the heaviest part of the presidential work, in-

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<sup>1</sup>Hon. William Garrett, in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 488-493.

cluding the stationing of the preachers, devolved on Bishop McKendree. Asbury's journal says:

Friday, 20, we opened our Conference. Saturday, great peace, great order, and a great deal of business done. Sabbath, 21, I ordained deacons, and preached a sermon in which Dr. Coke was remembered. My eyes fail. I will resign the stations to Bishop McKendree; I will take away my feet. It is my fifty-fifth year of ministry, and forty-fifth year of labor in America. My mind enjoys great peace and consolation. My health is better, which may be in part because of my being less deeply interested in the business of the Conferences. But whether health, life or death, good is the will of the Lord. I will trust him—yea, and will praise him; he is the strength of my heart and my portion forever. Glory! glory! glory! Conference was eight days and a half in session—hard labor. Bishop McKendree called upon me to preach at the ordination of elders.<sup>1</sup>

This was Bishop Asbury's last visit to the West. Ere another session of the Conference, this Elijah had ascended in his chariot of fire. At this time the Tennessee Conference consisted of eight districts: Nashville, Cumberland, Green River, Holston, Illinois, Missouri, Mississippi, and Louisiana. The membership in the whole connection was 171,931 whites and 42,304 colored people; total, 214,235. The traveling preachers numbered 695. These figures show that in the whole connection the negro membership was only a little less than one-fifth of the whole. According to the figures there was one traveling preacher to every three hundred and eight members, nearly.

Numbers in Society in the different districts of the Tennessee Conference were reported as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>"Asbury's Journal," Vol. III., pp. 393, 394.



	Whites.	Colored.
Nashville District.....	4,126	472
Cumberland District.....	3,554	230
Green River District.....	2,587	297
Holston District.....	4,981	416
Illinois District.....	1,867	71
Missouri District.....	878	63
Mississippi District.....	1,576	478
Louisiana District.....	130	32
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	19,699	2,059
Grand total, 21,758.		

These figures show that the Holston District led in the number of members, having something less than twenty-five per cent of the entire membership of the Conference.

The charges of the district reported this year :

	Whites.	Colored.
Abingdon .....	354	49
Nollichucky .....	681	42
French Broad.....	564	42
Tennessee Valley.....	493	48
Clinch .....	388	35
Carter's Valley.....	294	19
Powell's Valley.....	381	..
Knoxville .....	473	36
Holston .....	573	62
Lee .....	360	32
Tazewell .....	420	51
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	4,981	416
Grand total, 5,397; a decrease of 116.		

As to this decrease McNally says: "It will be recollected that early in this year peace had been proclaimed between the United States and England; and soon after large tracts of country were opened in the

West and Southwest for occupancy, and to these hundreds of persons emigrated from the bounds of the Holston District, among whom were many Methodists, a fact that may, at least in part, account for the decrease in membership, notwithstanding some extensive revivals were experienced."<sup>1</sup>

There were other causes for the decrease, especially rigid discipline on the slavery question.

At this session of the Tennessee Conference (1815) the following were admitted on trial: Lewis Garrett, John Seaton, John Hutchinson, Nathan Barnes, Daniel McHenry, Thomas Davis, John Bloom, William Stevenson, Benjamin Proctor, Joseph Piggott, Alex Flemming, Josiah Daughtry, Philip Davis, John Smith.

The Lewis Garrett who was admitted at this Conference was a nephew of the elder Lewis Garrett, who was admitted in 1794.

The appointments for the Holston District were as follows:

James Axley, presiding elder.  
 Abingdon, James Porter.  
 Nollichucky, John S. Ford.  
 French Broad, John Bowman.  
 Tennessee Valley, William Hart.  
 Clinch, Ivy Walke.  
 Carter's Valley, Nathan Barnes.  
 Powell's Valley, John Seaton.  
 Knoxville, John Henninger.  
 Holston, John Hutchinson.  
 Lee, Josiah Daughtry.  
 Tazewell, George Ekin.

Bishop Asbury preached at this Conference a memorial sermon of Dr. Coke, and it is due to our read-

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<sup>1</sup>McAnally's "Life of S. Patton," p. 149.

ers that they have a notice of this remarkable man. He was born at Brecon, in South Wales, October 9, 1747. He graduated at Jesus College, Oxford. While at the university he was a Deist, but by reading Dr. Witherspoon's treatise on regeneration he was awakened to a sense of his need of that work. In 1778 his name first appears in the printed minutes of the British Conference. In 1780 he was Wesley's assistant on London Circuit. September 18, 1784, he sailed for the United States for the first time, with Whatcoat and Vasey. He crossed the Atlantic eighteen times. In 1797 the Doctor was president of the English Conference in Leeds. In 1800 he was president of the American General Conference in Baltimore. In 1804 he visited the United States for the last time. In 1805 he was again president of the English Conference in Sheffield. No Methodist of his day, it is doubtful whether any Protestant of his day, contributed more from his own private means for the spread of the gospel. He spent the whole of his patrimony, which was large, on his missions and their chapels. He was married twice, and to ladies of fortune who were like-minded with himself, and their fortunes were used like his own. For forty years he traversed England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, and the United States. He was the founder of the Methodist missions in the West Indies, in Africa, and in Asia, as well as in Ireland, Wales, and England; and he was the official and almost sole director of the missionary work of his denomination during his long public career. Asbury in his journal pronounces him "the greatest man of the last century as a minister of Christ." He was not exceeded by either Whitefield or Wesley in the extent of

his travels and in his untiring devotion to the cause of God. At the age of sixty-seven he conceived the project of introducing Methodism into the great continent of Asia. He presented himself before the British Conference, and against great opposition entreated the Conference with tears to send him as a missionary to India, agreeing to defray his own expenses and those of seven chosen colleagues. The Conference yielded, and on the 30th day of December, 1813, he departed with his little heroic band, consisting of ten persons, including himself and two wives of the missionaries. The zeal of the Lord literally consumed him. All his working hours on the sea were spent in prodigious labors—private prayer, the study of God's Word, letter-writing, translating hymns and tracts into the Portuguese, etc. He was whetting the sword of his spirit to too sharp an edge, and it was rapidly cutting its way through the scabbard of his mortal flesh. His friends admonished him of his danger. They occasionally decoyed him to the deck to see shoals of flying fish, the capture of a shark, the sight of a whale, or the view of an island; for he took delight in such sights, and always thanked his friends for notifying him of an opportunity to see them. On the morning of May 3, 1814, his servant knocked at his cabin door to awake him at the usual time, but heard no response. Opening the door, he beheld the lifeless body of the great divine extended on the floor. "A placid smile was on his face." He probably died of apoplexy before midnight. Coke was a great man, and compared favorably with Wesley, Whitefield, and Asbury. But, like all other men, he had his limitations and weaknesses. His attempt to unite the Methodist and Protestant

Episcopal Churches was worse than a crime; it was a blunder. The Methodist Churches will, as it is, lose their evangelical fire soon enough, and will soon enough, I fear, take the back track toward ritualism and dead forms; but a union of the two Churches at that day would have hastened this decadence. I thank God that Methodism was rescued from being entangled again in the yoke of bondage. Stevens well says that Coke "was profound in nothing except his religious sentiments. A certain capaciousness of soul, really vast, belonged to him; but it never took the character of philosophic generalization. . . . Practical energy was his chief intellectual trait; and if it was sometimes effervescent, it was never evanescent." Coke was buried in the Indian Ocean. Notwithstanding the death of the leader, the mission in India was established, and presents "in our day a state of massive strength and inexpressible utility."<sup>1</sup>

The question of slavery was one which, as it seems, would not down. One of the remarkable facts of early Methodism in this country is that the making of rules seems not to have been wholly relegated to the General Conference, the proper law-making body of the Church; but each Annual Conference exercised, in some cases, the right of making its own rules. Hence the ever-varying action on this subject. The line of demarcation between the powers of the General and Annual Conferences is better defined in our day, and this fact has secured greater stability of law and greater uniformity of administration.

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<sup>1</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. I., pp. 265-268; also Stevens's "History of the M. E. Church," Vol. IV., pp. 503-507.

Slavery was a vexed question. It existed in the Southern States, was authorized by the Constitution of the United States, and was protected and regulated by the laws of the several States. The Federal Union



THOMAS COKE, D.D., LL.D.

could not have been established except as a league between sovereign States, in which they reserved to themselves the right of regulating their own local and internal affairs. The Constitution was a solemn compact recognizing and guaranteeing State sovereignty. Among the rights specifically reserved to the States was that of regulating the institution of domestic slavery. When the Methodist preachers came into

the South, they found the relation of master and slave actually existing. They found in the course of time that the laws of many of the Southern States did not allow the manumission of slaves, with the right, on the part of the manumitted slaves, of enjoying freedom in the States where they were set free. In many cases slaves preferred slavery to emigration. As a rule, the institution was a mild one. The condition of the slave was a great improvement on that of his forefathers in Africa. It was evidently a providential institution. It brought the heathen African into immediate contact with a high civilization and with the best form of Christianity known on earth. It civilized and Christianized him as freedom could not have done. The very rigors of the system tamed and domesticated him, and taught him the arts of civilized industry. It fed him, clothed him, lodged him, gave him the best medical attention the country afforded, built churches for him, and furnished him with intelligent pastoral instruction and oversight—largely at the expense of his master. There were some things that it could not do for him, which, if possible in the circumstances, would have been good for him: it could not give him the advantage of a liberal education; it could not perfectly establish and maintain for him the marital relation, though even this was done in a degree; and it could not utilize in the highest degree, in the formation of his character, the influence of civil penal laws and of public sentiment. These evils were more or less incidental to the institution, and were only to be tolerated in view of its real advantages. These evils were, however, of sufficient importance to convince every intelligent and impartial mind that it was not the

will of God that the institution should be permanent. It had in it the seeds of his own dissolution. Slavery, having civilized and Christianized the negro up to a certain point, could go no farther. Having been an elevating force up to this point, it now became a depressing influence. What had been a provisional good now became an absolute evil. It was always a costly institution to the white race. It deterred immigration, and gave the Northwest the advantage in the increase of population from this source. It made our people an agricultural people, and discouraged manufactures and commerce. Thus we were hewers of wood and drawers of water for our more wealthy and prosperous Northern neighbors. It increased the consumers and diminished the producers. It disposed the Southern white to idleness and extravagance. It brought the two races into too intimate association, and therefore superinduced an unnatural and iniquitous amalgamation. For these reasons the Southern people will never see cause to regret the abolition of African slavery, as one of the incidental results of the War between the States. Freed from the incubus of domestic slavery, the South has shot forward in a wonderful manner in material, social, and intellectual development. The South is growing rapidly in population, in manufactures, and commerce, in education and morals; and southward the star of empire takes its way.

But our ministers would have promoted the spiritual interests of master and slave, and would have advanced the cause of Christianity and Methodism, by relegating the question of slavery to the State, and leaving the problem to be solved as a civil and political one. The attempt to abolish the institution by



ecclesiastical action was a failure. The best men and women of the South owned slaves; to them it was not a sin; and they did not deserve to be denounced, harassed, and expelled from the Church. There never was a purer form of Christianity than that which existed among the Christian slaveholders of the South, especially in the border States; and no class of Christian people have ever done more than they to civilize and Christianize the African race. The Christian master and mistress were usually on good terms with their servants. The attachment was strong and mutual, as was abundantly attested by the fact that while, during the War between the States, the men of the South were away from home and in the army the negroes took tender care of their women and children, and not a case of fiendish violence or abuse in the families by the servants is on record. This is one of the most marvelous facts of history, and it proves the mildness and patriarchal nature of American domestic slavery.

Methodist preachers who had breadth enough to take in the situation in the South did no harm, but men who were narrow and fanatical did much to render Methodism distasteful to the wealthier classes. Public sentiment and the law of Christian expediency gradually drove the Methodist preachers of the South from narrow views and narrow policies, and put them in sympathy with those classes in the country without whose influence no cause can prosper.

In the enforcement of the rule against slavery we find the following action, as taken by the Tennessee Conference in 1812: "Levin Edney, recommended from Nashville Circuit; his character examined and ap-

proved, Learner Blackman being security that he'll set his slave free when practicable." In like manner others promised and gave security that they would liberate their slaves when practicable, but it was seldom found to be practicable. The Church made rules against slaveholding, revised them, changed them, suspended them, repealed them, and reënacted them in one form or another, but slaveholding went on steadily increasing in the Church. About the only effect such legislation and such judicial action had was to keep out of the Church many good families who otherwise would have joined it and made useful members of it. Nothing but the inherent truthfulness of our doctrines, together with the sincerity and earnestness of our preachers, could have enabled the Church in those days to stem the tide of opposition aroused by its unwise rules on the subject of slavery and, for that matter, other subjects as well, enacted and enforced by the preachers.

At the Conference of 1815 the question of slavery came up again. The slavery rule, which recognized slaveholding as *per se* a sin, and therefore to be extirpated at whatever cost, was to the Church in the South a badly fitting garment; and the Conference was an honest but unskillful tailor, who was persevering but constantly perplexed in the futile effort to fit the garment to the wearer.

The following questions were proposed by Thomas L. Douglass for an explanation of the slave rule. Each question was taken up separately and answered as follows:

1. If a person buys or sells in order to keep husbands and

wives, parents or children, together, are they considered thereby to have entered into the slave trade?

The answer was, Yes.

2. If a person buys or sells with a view to keeping families together, or in any case which is obviously a case consistent with justice and mercy, is he to be called to account and arraigned as if guilty of a crime?

The Conference voted, Yes.

3. Are the terms justice and mercy to be considered as applying exclusively to the slave, or are they to be extended to the buyer or seller also?

The answer was, To the slave exclusively.

4. On taking the decision of the Quarterly Conference, in any case, is it proper to take the vote that the person has not acted contrary to the principles of justice and mercy, instead of that he has acted consistently with justice and mercy?

The answer was, The last mode of putting the question is correct.

5. If a member of our Society buys or sells a slave or slaves, is a citation to the Quarterly Meeting Conference the first step that must be taken in order to try the case?

The answer was, Yes.

A motion was made by Thomas L. Douglass, and seconded by Moses Ashworth, that the slave rule, as passed in November, 1812, at the Fountain Head Conference, be considered unconstitutional. Carried. At this point the Tennessee Conference presented the strange procedure of resolving itself into a supreme court and deciding on the constitutionality of a law! We have all along witnessed the remarkable phenomenon of an Annual Conference, a local body, representing only a part of the Church, adopting terms of membership in the M. E. Church; and now we have a law pronounced unconstitutional by the same body that enacted it!

The slave rule that was at this session pronounced

unconstitutional was substantially this: That every preacher having charge of a circuit should, on information received, cite every member who should buy or sell a slave to the ensuing Quarterly Conference; and it was made the duty of said Quarterly Conference to expel such member from the Church if he had bought or sold contrary to justice and mercy. If the person was acquitted, the president of the Quarterly Conference had the right to refer the case for final adjudication to the ensuing Annual Conference. If the member was expelled, he had the right of appeal also to the Annual Conference. This was the rule that was declared unconstitutional in 1816. At this session a committee consisting of Peter Cartwright, John McGee, Thomas L. Douglass, James Dixon, and Claiborne Duvall was appointed to draft a rule relative to buying and selling slaves. The report was presented and adopted, and it was as follows:

Whereas the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has given authority to each Annual Conference to form its own regulations as to buying and selling slaves, also as to the admission of persons to official stations in our Church, this Conference has judged it necessary to express its sentiments on that subject. We most sincerely believe, and declare it as our opinion, that slavery is a moral evil. But as the laws of our country do not admit of emancipation without a special act of the Legislature, in some places, nor admit of a slave so liberated to enjoy freedom, we cannot adopt any rule by which we can compel our members to liberate their slaves; and as the nature of cases in buying or selling is various and complex, we do not think it possible to devise any rule sufficiently specific to meet them. But to go as far as we can, consistently with the laws of our country and the nature of things, to do away with the evil and remove the curse from the Church of God, it is the

resolution of this Conference that the following regulations be adopted:

1. If any member of our Society shall buy or sell a slave or slaves in order to make gain, or to sell to any person who buys to sell again for that purpose, such a member shall be called to an account as the Discipline directs, and expelled from our Church; nevertheless, the above rule does not affect any persons in our Society who shall make it appear that they have bought or sold to keep man and wife, parents and children, together.

2. No person, traveling or local, shall be eligible to the office of deacon in our Church, unless he assures us sentimentally, in person or by letter, that he disapproves of slavery, and declares his willingness and intention to execute, wherever it is practicable, a legal emancipation of such slave or slaves, conformably to the laws of the State in which he lives.

The report was adopted, and ordered to be copied into the stewards' book of each circuit. There, if copied, it lay as a dead letter in most cases, but in too many cases as a disturbing element and as an excuse on the part of certain rigid disciplinarians for harassing men and women, who, if living in the days of Christ and his apostles, would have been recognized as brethren and sisters beloved.

The assumption in the rule just quoted that slavery is a moral evil—that is to say, as I understand it, a sin *per se*—was a broad and unwarrantable assumption, and it led the Conference into the absurd action of making a moral question subordinate to expediency. The moral evil, the sin, was to be tolerated in the Church if the laws of the country demanded it. The Legislature, not God, had the authority to establish the gauge of right. It is evident, however, that the questions propounded in the Conference, and answered

as they were, were intended to show that the rule hitherto in force was too rigorous, and to pave the way for the adoption of a milder measure. The rule adopted at this Conference was quite a modification of the former rule, and one which better suited conditions in the South.

## CHAPTER X.

### FROM 1813 TO 1816 (CONTINUED). SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE Tennessee Conference (1815) chose delegates to the General Conference to meet in Baltimore May 1, 1816, and the choice fell on Peter Cartwright, Samuel Sellers, James Axley, John Henninger, Samuel H. Thompson, James Dixon, James Gwin, and Thomas H. Douglass. James Gwin having notified the Conference that he might not be able to attend, John Johnson was elected as his alternate. The printed journal of the General Conference shows that the following delegates from the Tennessee Conference were present at the opening of the session: Peter Cartwright, Samuel Sellers, James Axley, Jesse Walker, Thomas L. Douglass, and James Smith. The name of James Smith was not on the roll of the Tennessee Conference in 1815, and no such person could have been elected a delegate. It is therefore probable that *Smith* in this case is either a clerical or a typographical error for Gwin; for, as Johnson was not present, it is more than likely that Gwin was in his own seat. The minutes of the Tennessee Conference do not show that Jesse Walker was elected a delegate; and it is therefore likely that he was elected a reserve, though the Tennessee records failed to show the fact. He

probably took the place of one of the absentees—Dixon, Thompson, or Henninger.<sup>1</sup>

At this General Conference the Tennessee Conference was divided, and the Missouri and the Mississippi Conferences were set off. In the fixing of boundary lines and the division of laborers, over fifty preachers remained in the Tennessee Conference, and about thirty were set off to the two new Conferences.

On May 14 the General Conference strengthened the episcopacy then resting upon the shoulders of a single man, William McKendree, by electing to that responsible office Enoch George and Robert Richford Roberts. Of these I shall speak in future chapters.

The Tennessee Conference met at Franklin, Tenn., October 23, 1816, Bishop McKendree presiding. Thomas L. Douglass was elected secretary. The Holston work was divided into two districts, Holston and French Broad.

Numbers in Society were reported as follows:

	Whites.	Colored.
Abingdon .....	450	30
Nollichucky .....	636	35
French Broad.....	485	38
Tennessee Valley.....	590	48
Clinch .....	400	13
Carter's Valley.....	342	21
Powell's Valley.....	433	16
Knoxville .....	438	38
Holston .....	553	39
Lee .....	276	29
Tazewell .....	424	44
	—	—
Total .....	5,027	351
Grand total, 5,378; a decrease of 19.		

<sup>1</sup>"History of Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 399.



The following were admitted on trial: Ebenezer Hearn, Thomas Stringfield, James Fares, Benjamin King, Clinton Tucker, Timothy Carpenter, Benjamin Ogden, William Allison, William Ashley, William Manson, Benjamin Peeples.

The Holston appointments were as follows:

Holston District, Jesse Cunnyngnam, presiding elder.

Abingdon, John Bowman, William Ashley.

Clinch, George Ekin.

Carter's Valley, William Manson.

Holston, Nathan Barnes, John Dew.

Lee, Benjamin Edge.

Tazewell, Isaac Quinn.

French Broad District, John Henninger, presiding elder.

Nollichucky, Josiah Daughtry.

Little River, William Hart, Benjamin Peeples.

Knoxville, Nicholas Norwood.

Powell's Valley, John Hutchinson.

Tennessee Valley, Hugh McPhail, John Seaton.

Bishop Asbury died early in the year. In the General Minutes for 1816 his name appears in the answer to the question, "Who have died this year?" and a handsome memorial notice is given of him. In the preceding pages he has been by far the most conspicuous personage to whom reference has been made. His name occurs again and again. Indeed, so intimately was he associated with Holston Methodism that its history might almost be pronounced the "Life and Times of Asbury."

The great Asbury, however, was only a man; he had human infirmities, physical, intellectual, and moral. Physically he was a lifelong invalid, and many a man in his state of health would have excused him-

self altogether from hard work, and would have sought a sinecure. His mental powers were not prodigious, but well-balanced and symmetrical. He was eminently characterized by common sense, really the most uncommon of all kinds of sense; and his judgment on all subjects of which he was supposed to have any knowledge was usually correct. His knowledge of human nature was great; he had the gift of the "discerning of spirits" in an eminent degree, and he seldom laid his episcopal hands on the wrong man. Yet in this respect he was not infallible; and his devotion to law and order, to system and regularity, to authority and obedience, did, perhaps, render it impossible for him to appreciate at his worth that wonderful man, Lorenzo Dow, who, though not as well-balanced, was scarcely inferior to him in talent, and surely equal to him in faith, zeal, and energy.

No man who follows the history of the good Bishop can fail to be struck with his incorruptible honesty and total unselfishness. That he was somewhat puritanic in his religion will be admitted. He was, as Carlyle said of Rousseau, "a narrow, intense man;" but he was narrow because he was intense. He had an unquestioning faith in the Bible as the word of God; he questioned neither its history nor its theology. It was his *vade mecum*—the man of his counsel. His sermons were eminently scriptural and evangelical. Christ crucified was the distinctive burden of his preaching. If the gospel is true, he was one of the wisest men of the ages; if false, he was one of the most deluded of men, and one of the most happy in his delusion. His faith in God, in Christ, and in the word of God was the chief source of his extraordinary

power as a preacher. He literally preached with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

As a bishop, he may have seemed to some to be arbitrary. Methodist government under Wesley was patriarchal. Having, under God, created Methodism, he claimed the right to govern it; and he did, in a great measure, govern it while he lived; but he did not regard this right as hereditary, and he provided for a distribution of power at his death. Asbury was educated in Wesley's ideas and methods. He was placed at the head of American Methodism when it was weak in numbers and deficient in culture, wealth, and prestige. He could have been an autocrat, but he cheerfully laid down all power which he did not believe was necessary in his hands for the efficiency of his administration and the vigorous prosecution of the work of God by his associates and subordinates. The rules adopted by the Christmas Conference of 1784 were a vast departure, in the direction of true democracy, from the patriarchal régime of Wesley. It can be safely asserted that Asbury only insisted upon his prerogatives that he might the more successfully glorify God and save souls, and not that he might exalt himself and crush his rivals and opponents. Methodism in Asbury's day needed the vigor of a military system; and no military organization, either actual or quasi, ever had a more honest or more capable head.

Francis Asbury was born in Staffordshire, England, August 20, 1745. His parents were people in common life, remarkable for their honesty and industry, and they had all the ordinary comforts of life. From childhood Francis never dared to utter an oath or tell

a lie. His notice in the "General Minutes" says: "The love of truth is not natural, but the habit of telling it he acquired very early." This, to us of the present day, very strange sentiment was evidently based upon the extreme views of total depravity which prevailed in the early days of Methodism. The human race is, no doubt, more or less degenerate, and men come into the world with natures more or less disordered and inclined to sin. But the love of truth is congenital; and children usually tell the truth, without powerful motives to the contrary, and without the corrupting influence of false education and evil example. He abhorred mischief and wickedness, although some of his playmates were the vilest of the vile. He was sometimes ridiculed and called a Methodist. He was converted before the age of fourteen, and now it was easy and pleasant to forsake his evil companions, and he began to pray morning and evening. The fact that his strict life had caused him to be branded with the title "Methodist" led him to inquire of his mother who and where the Methodists were. She gave him a favorable account of them, and he went to Wednesbury to hear them. Says Asbury: "The people appeared very devout, men and women kneeling, saying amen. Now, behold! they were singing hymns. Sweet sound! Why? Strange to tell! the preacher had no prayer book, and yet he prayed wonderfully! What was yet more extraordinary, the man took his text and had no sermon book. Thought I: 'This is wonderful indeed! 'Tis certainly a strange way, but it is the best way.' The preacher talked about confidence, assurance, etc., of which all my flights and hopes fell short." After this Asbury began to hold

meetings at his father's house, and some were converted through his instrumentality. He occasionally met classes and held class meetings. He preached frequently and without license except from above. The people were amazed at his gifts and success as a lay preacher. He was between the ages of twenty-one and twenty-two when he gave himself wholly to the work of the ministry. He landed in Philadelphia October 27, 1771. On Tuesday, November 13, he preached his first sermon in New York. Until 1784 he held his authority from Mr. Wesley. At the Christmas Conference of that year he was unanimously elected and ordained General Superintendent of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He labored in England as a local and traveling preacher about ten years; in America he labored as a traveling preacher over forty-four years, nearly thirty-two of which were spent in the General Superintendency.

His constitution was naturally delicate. For many years he was much afflicted with asthma, and he often suffered from those diseases incident to the sections where he labored—fevers and agues, bilious fevers, etc. The approximate cause of his death was an influenza caught in South Carolina about Christmas in 1815. It resulted in pulmonary consumption. On his way toward Baltimore, where he hoped to be present at the General Conference which was to meet there in May, he reached Richmond, Va., and preached his last sermon in that city Sunday, March 24. He was carried from his carriage to the pulpit and placed on a table. He spoke nearly an hour from Romans ix. 28, with much feeling and effect, pausing at intervals to recover breath. In a few days he reached the house

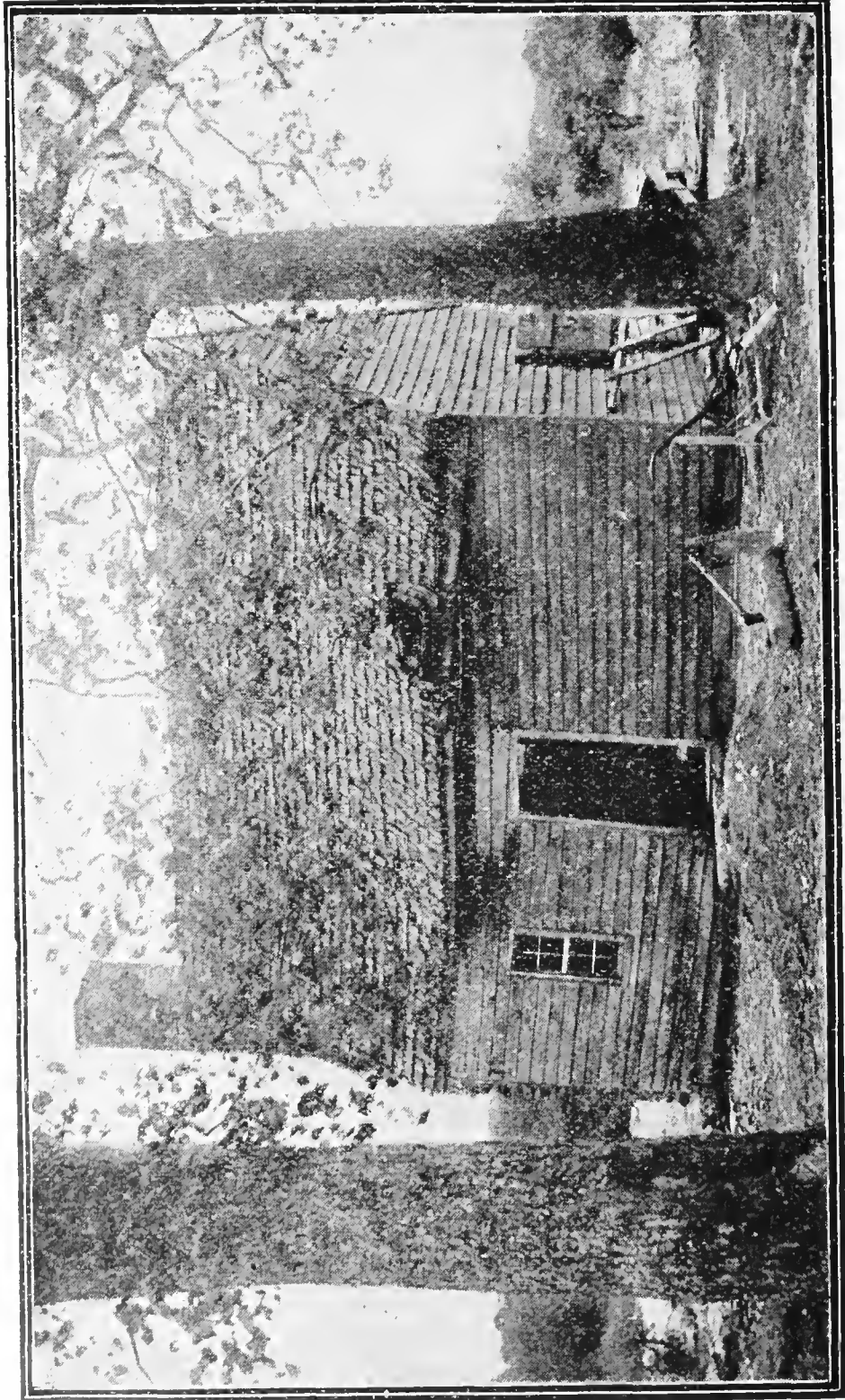
of his old friend, Mr. George Arnold, in Spottsylvania County, some twenty miles from Fredericksburg. Overhearing Brother Bond and the family talking of making a preaching appointment for him, he observed that they needed not to be in a hurry. A remark so unusual gave Brother Bond much uneasiness. After spending a bad night, he desired that the family be called together, and Brother Bond sang, prayed, and expounded the word of God. As his feet went down into the cold Jordan, he summoned all his remaining strength and raised both hands in token of triumph. He died without a struggle March 31, 1816, in the seventy-first year of his age.

The remains of Bishop Asbury were deposited in the family burying ground of Mr. Arnold; but afterwards, by order of the General Conference, they were taken up and transferred to Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Baltimore, where they now rest. The gray granite slab which once served as a covering to his grave has been fitted into the rear wall of the Eutaw Street Church, and it bears his epitaph.<sup>1</sup>

The year 1816 and a few succeeding years were characterized by a great stringency in money matters, and a consequent stagnation in all departments of industry. This stringency brought many hardships and discomforts to the mass of the people, but especially affected the comfort of the preachers. Hard times always superinduce retrenchment in the matter of expenditures; and, like every other judgment, it begins at the house of God. In the mind of the average Methodist, gifts to the Church lie somewhere between

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<sup>1</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. I., pp. 272-274.



THE HOUSE WHERE BISHOP ASBURY DIED (NOW REMOVED).

a debt and a charity; and in the process of retrenchment objects of charity suffer first, then the Church, lastly the creditor. These years of stringency, therefore, entailed great discomforts upon the preachers. They were usually without money, shabbily clad, and subjected to great inconveniences and embarrassments. The Methodists had adopted the voluntary system of the support of the gospel, and the preachers often realized that voluntary support meant involuntary starvation. Unfortunately, Methodist preachers were wont in those days to contrast a system in which they had "souls for their hire" with the mercenary ministry of other denominations—the perpendicular with the horizontal call—until many a narrow and miserly Methodist actually thought that quarterage meant a quarter of a dollar a quarter; and at the close of an unctuous sermon from a wayworn, half-clad prophet of the Lord could sing with sweet emotion and sublime faith: "The Lord will provide, and I hope to die shouting, the Lord will provide." But in those days of business stagnation even the most liberal and enterprising charges found it next to impossible to render their pastors comfortable. The preachers, however, were men of convictions; they believed the gospel they preached; and expediency dwindled to nothing before the awful and yet glorious dispensation of the gospel which had been committed to them.

John Travis was admitted into the Western Conference in 1806, located in 1814, and died November 11, 1852. During the eight years of his connection with the Conference he traveled extensively in Missouri, Mississippi, Tennessee, and Kentucky. He was appointed to Holston Circuit in 1813, and la-



bored in the Holston country only one year. He was born in South Carolina November 3, 1773. In early manhood he emigrated to Crittenden County, Ky. After his conversion, he felt called to preach; and though apprised of the hardships of early frontier itinerancy, he cast in his lot with that self-sacrificing band of faithful ministers who composed the old Western Conference. His first appointment was to Missouri Circuit, the germ of the mighty Methodism that now occupies the great State of Missouri. At the time of his appointment only two years had elapsed since the erection of Missouri into a territorial government. Travis was the first to carry the message of salvation to the people of that Territory. At the time of his entrance upon this work there were only about sixteen thousand persons in the Territory, including the Indians, only a part of whom were civilized. The tide of emigration from Kentucky and North Carolina, however, was setting in, and the population was rapidly increasing. To this scattered population Travis broke the bread of life. At the close of the year he reported two circuits. His location was caused by the failure of his health. He spent the remainder of his life in the practice of medicine. His last illness was brief. As long as he was able to speak, he gave assurance to his friends that the religion which he had so long recommended to others was able to comfort him in his last hours.<sup>1</sup>

Selah Paine was admitted into the Baltimore Conference in 1807, and immediately transferred to the Western Conference. He located in 1815. After la-

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., pp. 102-105.

boring four years in Ohio, Kentucky, and Indiana, he was transferred to the Mississippi District, where he traveled successively Natchez and Wilkinson Circuits, and was then transferred to the Holston District. His Holston appointments were as follows: 1812, Holston; 1813, Nollichucky; 1814, Abingdon. In 1813 he was put in charge of Nollichucky Circuit and on the supernumerary list at the same time; and because of his not being assigned to full work, Nicholas Norwood was associated with him. The Hon. William Garrett recollected Mr. Paine. He located and left the country from the residence of the Rev. William Garrett, in East Tennessee, for Wilkesbarre, Pa., from which place he corresponded with Mr. Garrett, and where he married. He had a fine person, rather bulky, black hair and eyes, a high-toned, determined bearing, dressed well, and rode a fine horse.<sup>1</sup>

Richard Richards was admitted into the Western Conference in 1808, and located in 1814. He labored his first two years in Kentucky. In 1810 he was appointed to Carter's Valley Circuit; he then spent a year in Kentucky and one in Indiana, and returned to Holston, having been appointed in charge of Knoxville Circuit in 1813. This was his last pastoral charge. Richards was a man of strong and well-cultivated mind, and was in his last days popular and useful. But strong drink was his ruin. For many years he was out of the Church. Dr. David R. McAnally was his pastor during the closing months of his life. He had returned to the Church, wrecked in health,

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<sup>1</sup>"History of Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 505, 506.

fortune, and reputation, and with bitter tears of repentance and keen pangs of remorse he sought the restoration of the divine favor, and died casting himself on the mercy of the Friend of sinners.<sup>1</sup>

Richards was, no doubt, a good man when he entered the ministry; but his case suggests a few observations: First, it is a practical demonstration of the possibility and danger of apostasy; the possibility of sin is, at least in this life, essential to free agency and moral accountability, and, therefore, to holiness, which, in its very nature, is always voluntary in a finite creature; the fall of a good man, instead of discrediting the genuineness of the Christian religion, only establishes it, since the possibility of apostasy is an essential part of its creed. Secondly, it illustrates the danger of departing from the regular work of the ministry and engaging in secular pursuits, from the love of money or of worldly ease and grandeur, or from a loss of zeal in the work of saving souls. The shores of time are strewn with the débris of the wrecked fortunes and good names of preachers who have left the work to which they were called by the Holy Ghost and engaged in secular pursuits. The temporal as well as the spiritual welfare of the preacher demands that he stick to his God-appointed work. Thirdly, the case shows the danger of tampering with ardent spirits either as a medicine or as a beverage. A drinking preacher is in more spiritual danger than a drinking layman, because such conduct in him is a greater inconsistency, because the aggravated sin of this greater inconsistency tends to drive him to des-

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<sup>1</sup>McAnally's "Life of S. Patton," p. 145.

peration, and because he has a greater height to fall from. If Paul abstained from wine offered to idols for the good of others, how much more should ministers abstain from strong drink for their own good as well as for the good of others! Fourthly, there is no sound logic or philosophy in losing confidence in the Church and ministry, as a whole, on account of the defection of a few men in them. It is unwise to generalize on an insufficient number of facts. "One swallow does not make a summer;" and "exceptions do not disprove the rule," but rather establish it. Fifthly, when a man falls, he should not surrender to despair. The race fell, and has risen in Christ; the Jews fell, and prophecy tells us that they will rise again; Peter fell, but rose again; if Judas, after returning the money to the chief priests, had returned himself to Christ, he would, doubtless, have been forgiven and saved. The penitential tears of the fallen Richards were jewels in the sight of God and angels, and penitence and faith doubtless brought him again under the broad wings of the cherubim.

Nicholas Talley was admitted into the South Carolina Conference in 1811. He was stationed on Buncombe Circuit in the spring of 1814, and remained on the circuit about six months—long enough to bring him into our history. His stations indicate that he was a considerable preacher; he filled some of the most important ones in South Carolina, Georgia, and North Carolina. He was born near Richmond, Va., May 2, 1791; converted at Burke's Camp Ground, in Green County, Ga., August 5, 1810. He was superannuated in 1865, and sustained that relation to the day of his death, which occurred at his home, in Co-

lumbia, S. C., May 10, 1873. He belonged to the heroic age of Methodism; he set his face as flint against everything that would impair his usefulness as a preacher. In his manner he was self-possessed, dignified, and refined. His preaching was mainly hortatory, and often powerful in its effects. His last entry in his diary was made May 2, 1873, as follows: "My birthday; eighty-two years I have lived on the bounty and goodness of God. I feel grateful and happy to believe all things well." His last uttered words were: "Calm, calm."<sup>1</sup>

Dr. George G. Smith says of Talley: "He was a very useful and solid man. The Church was always built up wherever he went. He lived in Columbia, S. C., for many years, and was much beloved. He was an elegant old gentleman, full of grace and courtesy."<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Nixon was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1812, and expelled from the Church by the Mississippi Conference in 1822, restored in 1832, and located in 1836. He preached in Kentucky, Illinois, Mississippi, Alabama, and Tennessee. In 1814 he was appointed to Lee Circuit in Holston, and at the end of the year he was transferred to Mississippi. In the division of 1816 he fell into the Mississippi Conference. After his expulsion we lose sight of him till 1832. Having been restored at that time, he traveled four years and located.

In regard to the cloud that passed over Mr. Nixon, Dr. Anson West says:

In the Mississippi Conference for 1821 there appeared a new district. It was the Catawba District, and extended from

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<sup>1</sup>Shipp's "Methodism in South Carolina," pp. 641, 642.

<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Georgia and Florida," p. 173.

the head waters of Mulberry Creek, on the south, to the Tennessee River, on the north, and was constituted of the Catawba, Franklin, Marion, and Tuscaloosa Circuits. . . . For this year Thomas Nixon was presiding elder of the new district, and he was also the preacher in charge of the Catawba Circuit. This was the second and last year of Nixon's ministry in Alabama. . . . While on Catawba District and Circuit, Nixon fell under some evil occurrence, in which he was finally, after due process, expelled from the connection.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. West does not name the nature of the charges against Mr. Nixon, and I have no means at hand by which to determine them.

Jones, in "Methodism in Mississippi," says: "He proved to be a valuable acquisition to Mississippi Methodism."<sup>2</sup>

Dr. McFerrin, speaking of Mr. Nixon while living, says: "Mr. Nixon is a fine specimen of human nature. tall, robust, and very active in body and mind, for one of his age. He remains one of the connecting links between the preachers of the present day and the olden times."<sup>3</sup>

John Menefee was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1813, and located, while a member of the Mississippi Conference, in 1820. Menefee entered the Conference from Knoxville Circuit. He belonged to a large and influential East Tennessee family, many of whom emigrated to Texas, and were substantial Methodists. Menefee's social and educational opportunities had been good, and with those natural gifts which have sometimes sprung from good blood,

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Alabama," pp. 139, 140.

<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol. I., p. 394.

<sup>3</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 205.

and from the pure air and grand scenery of East Tennessee, he was a young man of unusual promise. In 1813 he was appointed to Powell's Valley Circuit; in 1814, to Tennessee Valley; in 1815, to Pearl River; in 1816, to Natchez and Claiborne, in Mississippi; in 1818 he was made presiding elder of the Louisiana District, and stationed on Attakapas Circuit; in 1819 he was sent as a missionary to New Orleans. This was his last work. He died of yellow fever in New Orleans October 10, 1824. He was buried in one of the old cemeteries of the city. Not long before his death he was married to a daughter of the Hon. Seth Lewis. Mr. Menefee's widow afterwards married Mr. Thompson, a wealthy merchant of New Orleans, a noble Christian gentleman, while his wife was a model Christian lady.<sup>1</sup>

Jones says:

Our personal recollections of Mr. Menefee are very favorable. He was somewhat over medium size, symmetrically proportioned and well-developed, had a fair complexion and ruddy face, with a countenance beaming with unusual benevolence. In his dress and manners he had the polish of a refined gentleman, and seemed to be better educated than most of his young contemporaries in the ministry. There was nothing eccentric about him; he was neither dogmatical nor boisterous in preaching, but was a remarkably warm-hearted and clear-headed preacher. His voice was very distinct and his manner of address earnest and affectionate. . . . He was one of those brilliant and promising young ministers who are doomed to an early grave.<sup>2</sup>

In a letter dated Camp Hamilton, October 31, 1824, addressed to Rev. William McMahan, Mr. Thomas

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 322, 323.

<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol. I., p. 394.

H. Lewis, brother-in-law to Mr. Menefee, says: "He was a tender parent, an affectionate husband, a good neighbor, a true friend, and a faithful minister. His philanthropy extended to the whole human race, and his benevolence, by far, exceeded his means. He was loved and revered by all who knew him."

Daniel Asbury was admitted into the traveling connection in 1786. He traveled in the Holston country proper only one year, the year that he was on the French Broad Circuit (1788-89); but he was for three years presiding elder of Swannanoa District, embracing territory which subsequently fell into the Holston Conference. He was born in Fairfax County, Va., February 18, 1762. At the age of twelve he became greatly concerned about his spiritual welfare; but as his parents differed in their religious views, his religious education was neglected. He was made a captive by a band of Shawnees in 1778, he being at that time in Kentucky, and was carried north of the Ohio River. The Indians adopted him, and treated him kindly. During the war of the Revolution they carried him to Canada, where he was taken prisoner by the British and treated with great barbarity. He made his escape and reached his father's home in Virginia in 1783. He called as a traveler, and conversed some time with his mother before he made himself known to her. When at length the revelation was made, no pen can describe the overwhelming tenderness of the scene that followed. Although he was, at first, greatly opposed to the Methodists, their faithful and earnest ministrations were the means of bringing him to a sense of his guilt in the sight of God, and finally to a knowledge of sins forgiven. He joined a Meth-



odist Society and resolved to devote himself to the ministry.

In 1790, while on the Lincoln Circuit, in North Carolina, he was wedded to Miss Nancy L. Morris, of whom we have the following anecdote: Her mother had some time previously removed with other Methodists from the bounds of the Brunswick Circuit in Virginia, and they had brought their Methodist evangelical fire with them. Settled in their new home, they were without a preacher till the fall of 1788, when they were visited by a young local preacher from Virginia. Upon request he was permitted to preach in Old White Haven Church. The young man preached with great power, and the widow Morris indulged in a shout on the occasion. The old German ladies pressed their way to Miss Morris, the widow's daughter, and exclaimed in the utmost fright: "Your mother has a fit, indeed she has, and is going to die!" The daughter calmly replied: "My mother is quite addicted to such fits; she will soon recover." It is hardly worth while to remark at this point that one of the essential qualifications of a Methodist preacher's wife in those days was a sufficient knowledge of experimental religion and its power not to be alarmed at the shout of a king in the camp.

Asbury was a man of limited education, but was a man of good parts and a close student of the Bible. His social qualities were fine; he had a talent for anecdote, but did not descend to frivolity.

The bulk of his itinerant life was spent in North and South Carolina, and he died in the South Carolina Conference. About ten years of his ministerial life were spent in the relation of local preacher; he

was superannuated in January, 1825, and on Sunday morning, April 15, of that year he arose apparently more cheerful and vigorous than usual, conversed on various subjects, and noted down a text from which he intended to preach a funeral sermon. In a few moments afterwards he was walking through his yard when suddenly he stopped, looked up to heaven, and with an unearthly smile uttered a few indistinct words, and then fell lifeless to the ground. Dr. Shipp, in the "History of Methodism in South Carolina," from which I have compiled most of these facts, mentions the following remarkable coincidence: "It was on the Sabbath—a fitting time for an old pilgrim to enter into his Father's house above. It is somewhat remarkable that he was born on the Sabbath, was carried off by the Indians on the Sabbath, returned to his father's house on the Sabbath, was converted on the Sabbath, and on the Sabbath went to his eternal rest."<sup>1</sup>

In the books Daniel Asbury is represented as a little dapper, bald-headed man, whose loss of teeth impeded pronunciation, with a face thin and furrowed, but its expression always kindly, with eyes indicative of humor. He had an intellect above the common order, but his opportunities for early culture were limited. He states himself that when he was a boy he "never heard of a grammar book." Yet he was well up in the knowledge of the Bible and its doctrines, with other theological writings, so that his preaching and social intercourse were by no means unacceptable to per-

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<sup>1</sup>Shipp's "History of Methodism in South Carolina," pp. 263-265.

sons of cultivated minds. He preached with so much sterling sense, and with such earnestness and simplicity, that he could not be otherwise than an effective preacher. His early training peculiarly adapted him to the hardships of pioneer itinerant life. He was made captive by the Indians when a boy, carried west, then into Canada, where he became a prisoner to the British. Returning home after five years' absence, he was pretty well prepared, after his conversion, to endure the hardships of an itinerant's life, one of which was the being dragged before a magistrate for preaching the gospel. The count in the indictment was: "Going about the country preaching!" The inquiry of the judge was: "Does he make the people any worse than they were before?" The reply was: "We do not know that he does." The conclusion of his honor was: "If he does not make them worse, the presumption is that he makes them better, and so the case is dismissed." His rough fare in the mountains of Holston was endurable through his Indian experiences. His diet was of the homeliest sort—"often solely cucumbers on a piece of cold bread, with no milk or coffee." He fared better when he could get a piece of fried bacon and corn bread; but examine his bedstead, will you? Not French by any means, but Indian!—namely, clapboards laid on poles, supported by rude forks driven into the earthen floor. Being sixteen years on districts, twelve on circuits, one resting, and ten local, making thirty-nine in all, he is an instance of one cast up by the storms of the itinerancy on the shores of locality, but rescued and doing good service for nearly a quarter of a century afterwards. Asbury's family was on a farm, while he was always

on the wing. By the labor of his wife and children the gaunt wolf was kept from the door. But money pressure never slackened his labors; he kept at them till the infirmities of age compelled retirement. He was superannuated but a month or two before the death warrant became his final discharge from the Church militant. He died at the age of sixty-three.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Rev. A. M. Chreitzberg, in a newspaper article.

## CHAPTER XI.

FROM 1816 TO 1819.—SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE Tennessee Conference met at Franklin, Tenn., October 30, 1817. No bishop being present at the opening of the session, Peter Cartwright was temporarily called to the chair, and after religious services the Conference proceeded to elect a President, when Thomas L. Douglass was elected and took the chair. Before the afternoon session Bishop Roberts appeared and took the chair, and presided to the close of the Conference, which did not adjourn till Saturday, November 8. The question which prolonged the session was the hobby of slavery. A committee was appointed to investigate the question, and their report was presented, discussed, and adopted as follows:

Whereas the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has given authority to each Annual Conference to form its own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves, it is the resolution of this Conference that the following regulations be adopted:

1. If a local elder, deacon, or preacher in our Church shall purchase a slave or slaves, he shall lay his case before the Quarterly-meeting Conference of his circuit as soon as practicable, which Quarterly-meeting Conference shall say how long such slave or slaves shall serve as a remuneration to the purchaser; and on the decision of the Quarterly-meeting Conference, touching the time the slave or slaves shall serve, the purchaser shall, without delay, enter into a written obligation to the Quarterly-meeting Conference to emancipate such

slave or slaves at the expiration of the term of servitude, if the law of the State will admit; and such obligation shall be entered on the journals of the Quarterly-meeting Conference. But should the laws of the State continue rigidly to oppose the emancipation of slaves, so that their freedom, as above contemplated, should prove impracticable, during the term and at the end of the slave's or slaves' servitude, as determined by the Quarterly-meeting Conference, he, the said elder, deacon, or preacher, shall, at the end of the time of servitude, again lay his case before the Quarterly-meeting Conference, which Quarterly-meeting Conference shall determine it according to the then existing slave rule of the Annual Conference to which he belongs; and should the said elder, deacon, or preacher be dissatisfied with the decision of the Quarterly-meeting Conference, he shall be allowed an appeal to the ensuing Annual Conference provided he then signifies his intention of so appealing.

2. If a private member in our Society buy a slave or slaves, the preacher who has charge of the circuit shall summon a committee, of which he shall be president, of at least three disinterested male members from the class of which he or she is a member; and if a committee cannot be selected from the class to which the slave-purchaser belongs, in such case the preacher may make up the committee from a neighboring class or classes, which committee shall determine the length of time such slave or slaves shall serve as a compensation to the purchaser, and immediately on the determination of the committee, touching the slave's or slaves' time of servitude, he or she, the purchaser, shall bind himself or herself in a written obligation to the Church to have the emancipation of such slave or slaves, at the expiration of the given time, recorded as soon as practicable, if the laws of the State in which he or she lives will admit of emancipation; and such obligation shall be filed among the papers of the Quarterly-meeting Conference of the circuit in which he or she lives. But should the law of the State in which the purchaser lives render it impracticable to emancipate said slave or slaves during the time of servitude fixed by the committee for said slave or slaves, the preacher having charge of the circuit or station

shall call a second committee at the end of the time of servitude, who shall determine the case according to the then existing slave rule of the Annual Conference to which he or she belongs; and if he or she feel himself or herself aggrieved, he or she shall be allowed an appeal to the ensuing Quarterly-meeting Conference of his or her circuit. In all cases relative either to preacher or private members, the colored or bond-children born of slaves purchased, after their purchase and during the time of their bondage, male and female, shall be free at the age of twenty-five, if the law admit of emancipation; and if not, the case of those born of purchased slaves in bondage to said elder, deacon, or preacher shall be cognizable by the Quarterly-meeting Conference, and in the case of those born of purchased slaves in bondage to private members shall be cognizable by a committee of the above-mentioned kind, which Quarterly-meeting Conference and committee shall decide in such cases as the then existing slave rule shall or may direct; provided, nevertheless, the above rules be not so construed as to oblige an elder, deacon, preacher, or private member to give security for the good behavior or maintenance of the slave or slaves emancipated, should the court require it. If an elder, deacon, preacher, or private member among us shall sell a slave or slaves into perpetual bondage, he shall thereby forfeit membership in our Church. Therefore, in case an elder, deacon, or preacher sell a slave or slaves, he shall first submit the case to the Quarterly-meeting Conference of which he is a member, and said Quarterly-meeting Conference shall say for what term of years he shall sell his slave or slaves, which term being fixed, the seller shall immediately record his, her, or their emancipation in the County Court; and a private member selling a slave or slaves shall first acquaint the preacher having charge of the circuit with his design, who shall summon a committee of the above-mentioned kind, of which he, the said preacher, shall be president. Said committee shall say for what term of years he, she, or they shall sell his, her, or their slave or slaves, and the seller shall be required immediately to record the emancipation of such slave or slaves in the County Court. An elder, deacon,

preacher, or private member among us refusing to comply with the above rules shall be dealt with as in other cases of immorality and expelled. Lastly,

*Resolved*, That all rules and regulations heretofore made in the Tennessee Annual Conference be, and the same are hereby, repealed. The above rule shall be enforced from and after the first day of January, 1818.

It is observable that the repeal of all previous rules on slavery was a confession of their failure; that the rule now adopted, as well as that adopted at the last session, considered the principles of justice and mercy not only as applicable to the slave but also as applicable to the master; that the provisos practically nullified much of the ordinance; and that if the rule had been enacted without these provisos and rigidly enforced it would have torn the Church to shreds in the Tennessee Conference. It was impossible for preachers and members in the bounds of the Conference to liberate their slaves under such conditions as to allow them to enjoy their freedom in the States where they were liberated. The clause, however, making it an immorality to sell a slave into perpetual bondage was not hampered by a proviso, and furnished ground for an occasional indictment and expulsion. Local preachers and members were occasionally expelled from the Church. Many thus expelled never returned to its bosom, and a deep-seated resentment among their friends resulted in a settled alienation from it. The rule, however, aroused the abolition element of the Church, excited a moral influence against the institution of slavery, and at the same time rendered comparatively immune the large and growing body of slaveholders then in the Church.



The above rule has been introduced in full into these pages because it was a law under which the Church operated in Holston and that more or less affected the peace and prosperity of the Church in our bounds. It drew to us the poorer classes of the people, and drove from us into the Episcopal, Presbyterian, and other Churches large connections of wealthy and influential people.

We cannot doubt the honesty of the preachers who took this action; but they were taking trouble where Christ and his apostles took none; they were not only amending their own rules, but they were amending the New Testament; they were attempting to control the uncontrollable. The fact that the General Conference allowed each Annual Conference to adopt its own regulations on the question of slavery showed that slaveholding was no longer to be treated as a sin *per se*, but as a question of expediency. For moral law is not local and sporadic: whatever is sinful is essentially sinful, and a sin is a sin everywhere and under all conditions. These resolutions as much as say that if the civil laws allowed emancipation slavery was a moral wrong, but that if they did not allow it slavery was innocent; in other words, that the Christian's first allegiance is to the law of the land, and his second to the law of God. Such were the absurdities involved in the attempt to adjust civil questions by ecclesiastical legislation.

At this session the Secretary of the Conference was required to answer on a charge of having violated the slave rule. The following is the entry in the minutes:

The character of Hardy M. Cryer was taken into consideration. The last Conference required him to promise to endeavor immediately to emancipate his negroes and to make report to this Conference. He made his report—that he had made endeavors and could not succeed in the attempt—and the Conference voted that they were satisfied with his report. Brother Cryer also stated to the Conference that since the last Conference he had bought a negro boy, and an inquiry was made whether the purchase of said boy was a violation of that article in our Discipline, page 184. The opinion of the Chair was that it was not a violation of that rule. His moral character passed in examination, and he was elected to the office of elder.

This acquittal was under the rule adopted in 1815; it shows the inoperativeness of that rule, and the one now adopted proved afterwards to be equally inoperative. The continued agitation of the “vexed question” in the Quarterly, Annual, and General Conferences of the Church had a blighting influence upon Methodism, and finally was the occasion of the disruption of the body—a fact that has been sorely regretted by thousands of ministers and members, North and South.

In the present agitated state of the Church we need not be surprised at the small accession to the itinerant ranks made at this session. Only five men were admitted: Thomas Stanley, George Taylor, James Witten, John Dever, and Jesse Green.

During the year there had been a blessed revival influence throughout the Conference, and a considerable ingathering of members. The net increase, however, was not great, owing to causes just mentioned and to emigration to the West.

Holston reported numbers in Society as follows:

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

	Whites.	Colored.
Abingdon .....	259	37
Clinch .....	345	39
Carter's Valley.....	281	20
Holston .....	552	43
Lee .....	264	16
Tazewell .....	323	36
Ashe .....	100	..
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	2,124	191

## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

Nollichucky .....	747	46
Little River.....	592	58
Knox .....	550	55
Powell's Valley.....	432	30
Tennessee Valley.....	490	42
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	2,811	231
Total for districts.....	4,935	422

Grand total, 5,357; a decrease of 21.

The appointments for Holston were as follows:

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

Jesse Cunyningham, presiding elder.  
 Abingdon, George Ekin.  
 Clinch, Edward Ashley.  
 Carter's Valley, William S. Manson.  
 Holston, Thomas D. Porter.  
 Lee, James Witten.  
 Tazewell, James Porter.  
 Ashe, Jesse Green.

## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

John Henninger, presiding elder.  
 Nollichucky, Nathan Barnes.  
 Little River, Nicholas Norwood.  
 Knoxville, Josiah Daughtry.  
 Powell's Valley, Benjamin Edge.  
 Tennessee Valley, Thomas Stringfield.

Stone Dam Camp Ground was established in the fall of 1818, while Nathan Barnes was in charge of Nollichucky Circuit. In the spring of 1818 Mrs. Milly Thomasson and six of her children joined the Methodist Episcopal Church by letter at the Stone Dam Meetinghouse, some half dozen miles east of Greeneville. Alexander Westmoreland, an unlettered man, her son-in-law, was soon appointed class leader. John Thomasson, from whom these facts have been learned, was a member of the class. John Delaney, Thomas Stanfield and wife, and Mary and Rebecca Delaney constituted the entire membership till the Thomassons joined it. Mrs. Thomasson built a tent on the new camp ground and camped there four years. Between 1818 and 1821 Stone Dam Society increased from four persons to fifty. Among the converts were Nathaniel Stanfield, Joseph Johnson, and Barton Johnson. Wiley Jones, a man of deep piety, was an exhorter in that Society. Washington Henshaw professed religion, and a new class was organized near his home, and he was appointed class leader. He was full of religion, and soon made an appointment for class meeting. He wrote and memorized his first prayer, and felt assured that he could pray finely; but at his first meeting he gave out his hymn and was joined in singing by a crowded house. He then knelt and attempted to repeat his prayer, but every word of it had escaped him. He remained in silence on his knees several minutes, and at last said: "Lord, have mercy on us. Amen." Then he arose and said: "Brother Thomasson, I will never learn another prayer by

heart." Mr. Henshaw was a model Christian, and as a useful layman he had few equals.<sup>1</sup>

Stone Dam Camp Ground is a place famous in the annals of Holston Methodism. Rev. John H. Brunner, D.D., in a letter written for this work, says:

My father was a tent owner at old Stone Dam Camp Ground, in Greene County, Tenn. When a boy I concluded one morning to count the number of camps that were occupied. The number was seventy-five that year, exclusive of the cook sheds, which were as numerous as the tents. At a fair estimate there were, on an average, a dozen lodgers to the tent—that is, about one thousand persons were tented on the ground. When the signal was given for morning prayers in the tents, what singing resounded through the encampment! At times these morning devotions were a consolidated service under the arbor, or shed, a service led by some one appointed for the occasion.

After breakfast, the trumpet again called the people to the arbor for preaching. Two or three sermons were heard before the dinner hour. Sometimes there would be a sermon in the afternoon. In the evening there were services in the groves—the men worshipping in one grove, the women in another. Prayer, exhortation, and singing were in order then, and much counsel to the "mourners" and the new converts. One year three hundred converts were reported at old Stone Dam. Thousands of people were there. "At candle-lighting" the crowds would gather about the arbor. This hour and the "eleven o'clock service" were regarded as the most important on the programme for the day, or the twenty-four hours.

More cordial singing and more impassioned preaching were never heard than on these occasions. The best in the land were there; the best in the store was brought out; the best that could be done was done with a will. It would be impossible to impart to one unacquainted with old-time camp meeting scenes a correct idea thereof. I despair of doing so.

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<sup>1</sup>John Thomasson, in *Holston Methodist*, April 20, 1872.

As soon would I attempt to portray what I saw on the 13th of November, 1833, when the great meteoric shower filled the heavens with what looked like falling stars. Such things must be witnessed to be understood!

The Tennessee Conference met in Nashville, Tenn., October 1, 1818. Bishops McKendree and George were both present. The Conference was opened by Bishop McKendree, and the journal was signed by him. Charles Holiday was elected Secretary. This was the first time the then village of Nashville had the honor of entertaining the Conference. The village has grown into an important city, numbering near one hundred thousand inhabitants, and embodying a great deal of wealth for a town of that size, embracing a large number of churches, public schools, and colleges. Indeed, as a religious and educational center it occupies a conspicuous position in the South, and is sending forth its light into all parts of the American Union. Vanderbilt University is located there, the fruit of a munificent endowment by Cornelius Vanderbilt, a New York millionaire. It is under the auspices of the M. E. Church, South; and upon the erection of the main building, in 1874, it at once took rank among the best institutions of learning in America. Nashville is also the seat of the Publishing House of the M. E. Church, South, a plant which handles a considerable amount of capital, and is doing a prodigious work in the printing and circulation of books and periodicals.

The Conference was quite harmonious. The "vexed question" was not as vexatious as usual. The question was up again, but was disposed of in the following resolution: "*Resolved*, That we receive the

printed rule on slavery in the form of Discipline as full and sufficient on that subject." That rule, as I understand it, was among the General Rules, and prohibited the buying or selling of men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them. It seems to have been originally leveled against the slave trade proper, or the enslavement of free men, women, and children, and could not have been legitimately interpreted as condemning the ownership of slaves, or traffic in them. It was interpreted by the M. E. Church, South, as an ordinance against the slave trade only, and not against slavery itself; and as the laws of the United States had made the slave trade piracy, and as the rule in our Discipline was liable to be misconstrued, it was eliminated from the General Rules.

Up to this date (1818) the Tennessee Conference had taken no steps for the organization of Sunday schools. But at this session the following plan for the catechetical instruction of children was adopted:

1. It shall be the duty of each assistant preacher in charge to appoint a suitable person in each class of his charge to keep a record of the names of the children baptized in that neighborhood.

2. Each assistant preacher shall appoint a suitable person or persons, in each class in his circuit or station, to meet and catechise the children of his neighborhood who have been baptized by us, or any others put under our care, at least once a month.

3. Each assistant preacher shall meet and catechise the children baptized by us, with any others put under our care, as often as may be practicable in his circuit or station.

The modern reader may need to be informed as to what is meant by the term "assistant preacher" in the above plan. Wesley was accustomed to name all the

traveling preachers associated with him as assistants. Hence every traveling preacher in Europe and America was an assistant. Here, however, the assistant is so called to distinguish him from the presiding elder as well as from the helper. Every man in charge of a circuit or station was an assistant.

Holston reported numbers in Society as follows:

#### HOLSTON DISTRICT.

	Whites.	Colored.
Abingdon .....	297	54
Clinch .....	344	36
Carter's Valley.....	320	34
Holston .....	494	53
Lee .....	261	90
Tazewell .....	336	41
Ashe .....	150	4
	—	—
Total .....	2,202	312

#### FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

Nollichucky .....	822	45
Little River.....	594	46
Knoxville .....	507	53
Powell's Valley.....	314	5
Sequatchee .....	273	..
Tennessee Valley.....	226	..
	—	—
Total .....	2,736	149
Total for districts.....	4,938	461

Grand total, 5,399; an increase of 42.

The depletion by emigration and other causes had not only been arrested, but there was a slight tendency upward.

The following were admitted into the Conference: George Brown, John Kesterson, Joshua Butcher,



John Brooks, Samuel Harwell, Obadiah Freeman  
 Samuel D. Sanson, Ansel Richardson, Robert Paine  
 Hartwell H. Brown, Sterling C. Brown, George  
 Locke, Thomas Madden, Robert Hooper, Isaac E  
 Holt, Elisha Simmons, David Adams, Abraham Still  
 Lewis S. Marshall.

The preachers appointed to Holston were:

#### HOLSTON DISTRICT.

Jesse Cunnyngham, presiding elder.  
 Abingdon, to be supplied.  
 Clinch, Jesse Green.  
 Carter's Valley, Obadiah Freeman.  
 Holston, George Ekin.  
 Lee, John Dever.  
 Tazewell, David Adams.  
 Ashe, Clinton Tucker.

#### FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

James Axley, presiding elder.  
 Nollichucky, William Manson.  
 Little River, George Locke.  
 Knoxville, George Atkin.  
 Powell's Valley, Nicholas Norwood.  
 Sequatchee, James Porter.  
 Tennessee Valley, James Witten.

The Tennessee Conference met in Nashville October 1, 1819. Bishops McKendree and George were both present, and they presided alternately; but the journal was signed by Bishop George. Charles Holiday was elected Secretary, and William Adams, assistant.

At this session the slavery question caused a considerable disturbance of the harmony of the Conference. The issue between the radicals and the conservatives

was sharply joined. Gilbert D. Taylor, recommended by the Quarterly Conference of Shoal Circuit for admission as a traveling preacher, was not admitted in consequence of his being a slaveholder. All conceded that it was not practicable at that time for him to emancipate his slaves; and, after considerable debate, the presiding elder was authorized to employ him, on his giving assurance that he would emancipate his slaves "when practicable." Peter Burum was refused admission for the same reason. Dudley Hargrove, of the Tuscaloosa Circuit, and others (local preachers), applicants for deacon's orders, were rejected for the same reason.

In the debate and action on these cases the anti-slavery party triumphed by a majority of five. The minority was sorely disappointed, and prepared and presented the following protest:

Be it remembered that, whereas the Tennessee Conference, held in Nashville October 1, 1819, have taken a course in their decision relative to the admission of preachers on trial in the traveling connection, and in the election of local preachers to ordination, which goes to fix the principle that no man even in those States where the law does not admit of emancipation shall be admitted on trial, or ordained to the office of deacon or elder, if it is understood that he is an owner of a slave or slaves (that this course is taken is not to be denied, and it is avowedly designed to fix the principle already mentioned; several cases might be mentioned, but it is deemed unnecessary to instance any except the case of Dr. Gilbert D. Taylor, proposed for admission, and Dudley Hargrove, recommended for ordination)—we deprecate the course taken as oppressively severe in itself and ruinous in its consequences; and we disapprove of the principle as contrary to, and in violation of, the order and discipline of our Church. We, therefore, do most solemnly and in the fear of

God, as members of this Conference, enter our protest against the proceedings of the Conference as it relates to the above-mentioned course and principle.

Nashville, October 7, 1819. Signed by Thomas L. Douglass, Thomas D. Porter, William McMahan, Benjamin Malone, Ebenezer Hearn, Lewis Garrett, Barnabas McHenry, William Allgood, William C. Stribling, Timothy Carpenter, Thomas Stringfield, Benjamin Edge, Joshua Boucher, William Hart, John Johnson, Henry B. Bascom.<sup>1</sup>

Bascom was the writer of the protest.

Dudley Hargrove, who was at this Conference denied ordination because he was a slaveholder, was grandfather of Bishop Robert K. Hargrove; and it is an interesting coincidence that the grandson was elected and ordained Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the same city in which the grandfather had been denied ordination to deacon's orders sixty-two years before.

We have seen how the sessions of the Annual Conference were disturbed by the slavery question; but as a matter of course the disturbance extended to the Societies, where many of the preachers attempted to carry out the decrees of the General and Annual Conferences.

I have before me the minutes of certain Quarterly Conferences of the French Broad Circuit for the years 1809-11. I here note the action taken in some of these Conferences under the slavery rule: "Richard Raghill cited to trial before Q. M. Conference for selling negroes; the Conference condemn him and accordingly expel him. John Casteel cited to trial before Q. M. Conference for buying negroes; the Conference con-

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<sup>1</sup>Henkle's "Life of Bascom," pp. 114-119.

demn him and accordingly expel him. Robert Warren cited to trial before Q. M. Conference for selling negroes; the Conference condemn him and accordingly expel him."

These expulsions took place at a Quarterly Conference held at Whittenbarger's. At a quarterly meeting held at Shiloh this action was taken: "The case of William Epperson came before the Conference for selling two colored people for life. The Conference consider him as acting from speculative motives and accordingly expel him." At Middle Settlements the following action was taken: "On promising to emancipate his slaves when the law will permit, George Reynolds was licensed to exhort. Decius Browder required to appear and answer at the next Conference for buying a negro; dismissed for future hearing. Simon Eldridge to appear at next Conference and answer for buying a negro; dismissed as not coming under the present rule." At Macedonia the following action was taken: "James Colter being charged before the Conference of having sold a negro man agreeable to his own choice and bought a negro woman and child, the subject being discussed before the Conference, and the sale taken was determined by the Conference to be a case of speculation, from which judgment he, the said James Colter, appealed to the Annual Conference. The case of Stephen Henry, having bought a negro boy twelve years old, for which he gave two hundred and fifty dollars, was submitted by himself to the Conference to determine how long he shall serve to repay the price of his purchase with the interest arising thereon; the Conference determined that he should serve sixteen years; also

at the expiration of which time the said Henry shall liberate him, if the laws of the State will admit of it, or forfeit his standing in the Methodist Church; provided, however, that if said boy shall lose time by sickness he shall make it up after the expiration of the time of his servitude. The case of Foster Freeman for selling negroes came before the Conference; from testimony it appeared that he was ignorant of the existing rule on that subject in this Conference, in consequence of which the Conference thought him excusable, and retained him as a member of our Church."

At several other places on the circuit similar action was taken. The above is copied as a specimen of what was taking place throughout Holston District, and possibly throughout the Western Conference, at that time. The above protest shows that by 1819 a reaction had begun to set in. The perfunctory and barbarous manner in which good men were arraigned and ejected from the Church of their choice for buying and selling slaves, when dealing in slave property was an essential concomitant of slave ownership, and when it is a well-known principle of political economy that marketableness is essential to commercial value, shows the existence of an intense antislavery feeling in the Church at that time, rigorous ideas of discipline, and a harshness toward the white man that contrasted sharply with the tenderness indulged toward the black man. But our forefathers were honest, and they were terribly in earnest.

The numbers in Society reported from Holston were as follows:

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

	Whites.	Colored.
Abingdon .....	277	46
Clinch .....	332	18
Carter's Valley.....	294	30
Holston .....	487	64
Lee .....	371	23
Tazewell .....	331	38
Ashe .....	125	..
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	2,217	219

## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

Nollichucky .....	773	63
Little River.....	577	57
Knoxville .....	507	53
Powell's Valley.....	337	16
Sequatchee .....	228	8
Tennessee Valley.....	356	38
	<hr/>	<hr/>
Total .....	2,778	235
Total for districts.....	4,995	454

Grand total, 5,449; a gain of 50.

The Conference year 1818-19 was one of great prosperity throughout the connection, and the Tennessee Conference largely shared in this prosperity. The net increase in the connection was 15,957, and the Tennessee Conference reported this year (1819) a membership of 23,164 against 20,676 in 1818, a gain of 2,488.

Fourteen men were admitted on trial, as follows: William Peter, Elijah Kirkman, John Bradfield, Meredith Reneau, Jacob Whitworth, Richard W. Morris, Ellison Taylor, Moses Smith, Martin Flint, Samuel Patton, William Gunn, Josiah Browder, Thomas W. Norwood, Chelsea Cole. The following were read-

mitted: John Bowman, Nathan Allgood, John Watson, David Gardner, and Thomas Stillwell.

The appointments for Holston were as follows:

HOLSTON DISTRICT.

Jesse Cunnygham, presiding elder.  
 Lee, John Kesterson.  
 Clinch, David Adams.  
 Tazewell, Abraham Still.  
 Abingdon, James Porter.  
 Ashe, Obadiah Freeman.  
 Holston, John Bowman, Josiah Browder.  
 Carter's Valley, George Ekin.

FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

James Axley, presiding elder.  
 Nollichucky, William Manson.  
 Powell's Valley, George Locke.  
 Tennessee Valley, Benjamin Edge, Elisha Simmons.  
 Sequatchee Valley, Samuel Patton.  
 Little River, John Bradfield.  
 Knox, Robert Hooper.  
 Knoxville, James Dixon.  
 Nicholas Norwood has no station this year.

The delegates elected to the General Conference were: Marcus Lindsey, Jesse Cunnygham, Charles Holliday, Peter Cartwright, James Axley, William Adams, and Andrew Monroe.

John S. Ford was admitted into the South Carolina Conference in 1809; received into full connection in the Western Conference in 1811; ordained deacon in the Tennessee Conference in 1815; ordained elder and located in the South Carolina Conference in 1818. The minutes of the Tennessee Conference also show that he was received into full connection in 1815. This double reception can be accounted for by the

fact that he was only elected deacon but not ordained in 1811 in the South Carolina Conference; and when he was ordained in the Tennessee Conference, his previous reception being forgotten or ignored, he was formally received again; else the note of his reception at one of the times was a clerical error. He did all his work as a traveling preacher in the South Carolina, Western, and Tennessee Conferences. He was appointed to the Nollichucky Circuit in 1815, and to the Black Mountain Circuit in 1818, touching the Holston field at two points. Mr. Ford was one of the men that planted Methodism in Mississippi and Louisiana, enduring great hardships. Jones says: "Mr. Ford was all through his ministerial career, of about sixty years, noted for the uniformity and fervor of his piety, zeal, well-balanced judgment, and abundant labors and usefulness in the cause to which his long life was devoted."<sup>1</sup>

Thomas D. Porter was admitted into the Western Conference in 1811, and located in 1822. In 1817 he was appointed to Holston Circuit. He was placed in charge of the Tennessee District in 1818, and continued on that work three years; after a year of superannuation he located. In 1814 William McMahan was appointed to Shelby Circuit, and Porter to Jefferson; but in compliance with the wishes of the people the two circuits were united. That was a year of great peace and prosperity on the dual charge; several camp meetings were held, and many souls were born into the kingdom. Dr. McMahan speaks of Porter as "a most excellent man, young, handsome,

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol I., p. 237.



modest, talented, pious, and exceedingly zealous and useful."<sup>1</sup>

Allen Turner was admitted into the South Carolina Conference in 1811. He traveled in that Conference till the Georgia Conference was set off, and he became a member of that. His appointments indicate that he was a man of only moderate ability, although he reached the presiding eldership, having been presiding elder of the Oconee District, South Carolina Conference, for two years. He was superannuated, in the Georgia Conference, in 1833, and was still on that roll as late as 1844—which is as far as I have traced him. He comes within the purview of our history by having been appointed to the upper French Circuit in 1818. While on that circuit he seems to have had friends and admirers. In Asheville, N. C., there now resides a distinguished lawyer, who was a member of the Confederate Congress, and who is a namesake of Allen Turner—to wit, the Hon. Allen Turner Davidson.<sup>2</sup>

Dr. Smith, the historian of Georgia and Florida Methodism, says:

Allen Turner's name appears as junior preacher on the Washington Circuit. It stood upon the minutes for forty years after this. He was an unlettered boy, but one whose very heart depths had been stirred by his religious conflicts, and who had found a rich peace in a simple faith. He was a man of very marked peculiarities, strong in his convictions of what was right, and bold in asserting them. He dressed in the style of the older Methodists, never allowed himself the luxury of a laugh, and appeared to be a man of great

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<sup>1</sup>Memphis *Christian Advocate*, May 10, 1860.

<sup>2</sup>Deceased since this was written.

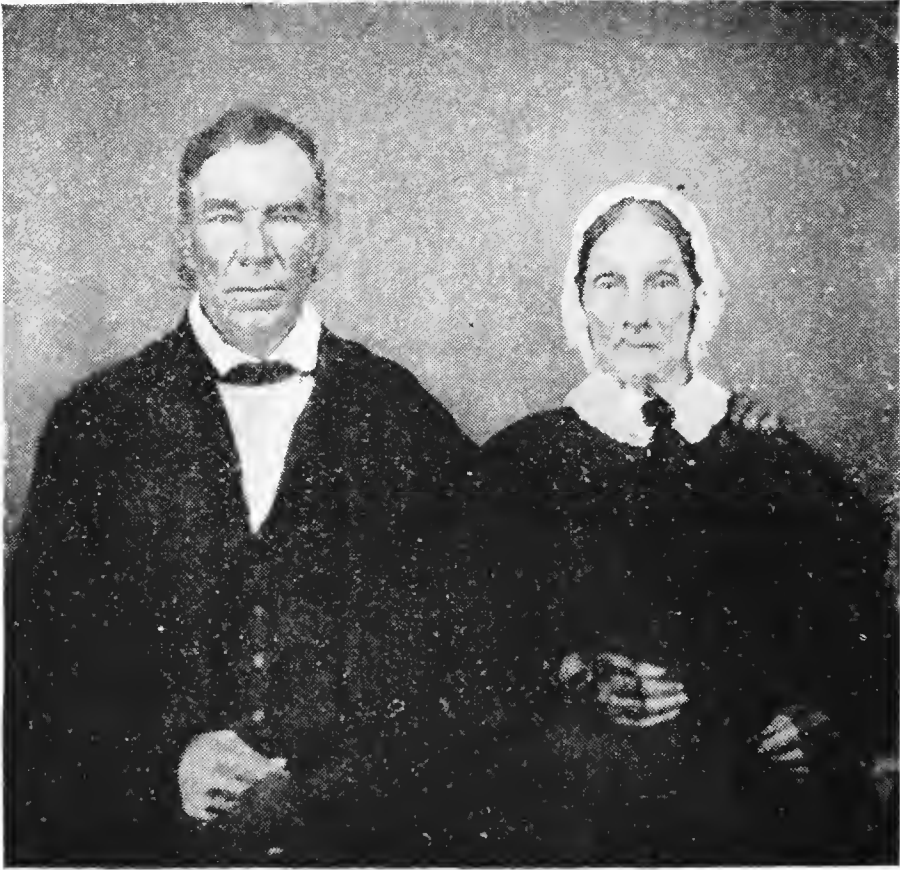
austerity; but was really a man of exquisite gentleness. He was afraid of no man, and fought fearlessly when his principles were attacked. Judge Longstreet, who was his great friend, wrote some articles in favor of instrumental music in churches. Uncle Allen assailed him right gallantly, and made a brave tilt, even though he failed to unhorse his antagonist. Did a preacher wear a beard, or shave on Sunday, he might expect an attack from this *ensor omnium*. He did much hard work, and did it cheerfully. . . . He was wonderfully gifted in prayer, and was a man of mighty faith. He was as well known and as highly respected as any man of his time, "for e'en his failings leaned to virtue's side."<sup>1</sup>

Zechariah Mitchell was admitted into the Baltimore Conference in 1813, and located in 1818. His charges were confined to that Conference. He was appointed to New River Circuit, in the Greenbrier District, in 1816, a circuit which had been and now is connected with the Holston work, though the name originally applied to the circuit has been discontinued. In 1817 he was sent to Walker's Creek Circuit, in Giles County, Va.

Zechariah Mitchell was a son of Samuel Mitchell and Lucinda Cecil, and on the maternal side grandson of Samuel W. Cecil, who came from England about A.D. 1745, and in 1760 settled in what is now Pulaski County, Va. Zechariah Mitchell was born December 18, 1791, and licensed to preach at Nicewander's Meetinghouse, now in Bland County, Va., July 4, 1812, and shortly afterwards employed to travel New River Circuit as helper with the Rev. John Charles, Christopher Frye presiding elder. He was married to Elizabeth Newland, Smythe County, Va., May 13, 1817; and,

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Georgia and Florida," pp. 171, 172.



REV. ZECHARIAH MITCHELL AND HIS WIFE, ELIZABETH.

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as was both the custom and necessity of that day, he located afterwards, and settled on the head waters of Cripple Creek, near the famous Asbury Camp Ground. He had ten children, among whom was John B., a classmate at Emory and Henry College of Prof. James A. Davis and the Rev. Joseph H. Price. John Mitchell and Joseph Price, while students, laid a deep and cunning scheme for building up their society, the Callopean, which was at that time languishing, which scheme, innocently on their part, led to the withdrawal of the entire Hermesian Society from the college. Without any intention on their part of creating such disastrous results, the scheme created a misunderstanding between President Collins and the Hermesian Society; and neither Collins nor the society knew the real cause of the explosion. John B. was a long-headed boy, with the instinct of statesmanship, which he inherited from a brainy ancestry.

Zechariah Mitchell reared his family in the fear of God. As local preacher and practicing physician he built up an enviable reputation in his own and adjoining counties. He was always loyal to his pastor, and filled regular Sunday appointments until after he had passed his three score and ten. He sold his farm on Cripple Creek in 1867, and he and his wife returned to Pulaski County, and made their home with their son-in-law, Mr. John G. Cecil. In the seventy-eighth year of his age, accompanied by the Rev. B. W. S. Bishop and Thomas K. Cecil, he returned to Bland County, and near the spot where he had been licensed to preach, fifty-seven years before, he, to use his own language, preached his own funeral sermon and that of Newberry, Bruce, and Cecil, his old comrades, who

had gone to their reward, leaving him here alone. January 18, 1872, he "fell on sleep" in great peace, and his body was laid to rest in the Cecil Cemetery by the side of the sleeping dust of his old comrade and kinsman, the Rev. John G. Cecil. February 28, 1878, his faithful wife followed him.

Brother Mitchell, while living, related to his grandson, the Rev. Thomas M. Cecil, the following anecdote. I give it in his own language:

One of my preaching places was a log house in the midst of a clearing. The house was occupied by the father, mother, and some eight or ten lusty boys and girls. After a hard day's ride through the wilderness, I reached this house one afternoon about four o'clock. Seeing that the family was poor, I took a rifle, went into the woods, and killed a half dozen squirrels, which I dressed preparatory for the evening meal. In due time supper was announced, and the smoking dish of squirrels whetted an appetite already ravenous from the loss of dinner. The father, mother, and myself were seated at the table on board stools, while the children stood around as interested spectators. I closed my eyes reverently and said grace. When I opened my eyes I found that the greedy children had snatched the last piece of squirrel, leaving me nothing but the sop. But I profited by this sad experience. On my next round, when I came to this place, I furnished squirrel as before; but when I went to say grace I held a piece in the dish with my fork, which I thus saved, but the children snatched the other pieces.

I knew Father Mitchell in his old age, for he had a long and useful career as a local preacher. He resided in Wythe County, and was a farmer as well as physician. He preached very extensively on Sundays near his own home and at distant points. Being evangelical and emotional in his style, he was frequently called upon to preach funeral sermons, and it was

said that he preached more funeral sermons than any preacher, traveling or local, in his section. He was tall and portly, and rather rawboned. He had the mouth of an orator and a fluent utterance. He was a fine conversationalist. He did not possess the severity and sternness of some of the pioneers; but had sunshine in his heart and face, looked on the bright side of things, spoke cheerfully and charitably of others, and in his tongue was the law of kindness. With a limited education himself, he was fully alive to the importance of school training, and gave his children the best school and college advantages within his power.

Mr. Mitchell has already been noticed in an anecdote in connection with the Rev. John Kobler, and in a notice of "the big four" in a previous chapter. He passed away many years since, but his memory lingers in the New River country as a sweet perfume.

Benjamin Edge was admitted into the Western Conference in 1804, and died a member of the Virginia Conference in 1836. He labored in Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, and Tennessee.

His Holston appointments were: 1817, Powell's Valley; 1819, Tennessee Valley; in 1818-19 he was the traveling companion of Bishop McKendree. He was transferred to the Virginia Conference in 1821, and spent the remainder of his days in that Conference. Dr. William A. Smith remembered him as a good and very eccentric man. He died in Norfolk very soon after the close of the Conference of 1836. Dr. Smith was then preacher in charge of the Church in Norfolk. He gave Brother Edge good quarters, but was too busy to give him personal attention, and was

probably absent from the city when he died. The family with which he stayed were greatly interested in him, and were both edified and comforted by the last hours of that truly good man, though unknown to fame.<sup>1</sup>

Speaking of the year 1809, Jones says: "Of the preachers who labored in Mississippi this year we know but little in connection with their ministry while here. We have learned, however, that Thomas Hel-lums and Anthony Houston were highly esteemed and that Jedidiah McMinn had a fine personal appearance, and was looked upon as a promising young man. Benjamin Edge, however, on some accounts made the most lasting impression. He was somewhat eccentric and very earnest in his work, and such was his zeal and power in the pulpit that one compared him to a strong man knocking down green cornstalks with a handspike."<sup>2</sup>

Isaac Quinn was admitted into the Western Conference in 1806, and located, in the Tennessee Conference, in 1817. He labored in Ohio, Mississippi, Alabama, Tennessee, and Virginia. His Holston circuits were: 1808, Clinch; 1816, Tazewell (Va.) Jones, speaking of him, says: "Isaac Quinn had traveled three years before his appointment to Mississippi and was a young man of more than ordinary promise."<sup>3</sup>

McAnally tells a good story of Mr. Quinn. It relates to the year in which he was on Tazewell Circuit

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<sup>1</sup>Letter of Dr. Smith to Dr. Redford, dated St. Louis, Mo. March 21, 1868.

<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol. I., p. 207.

<sup>3</sup>"Methodism in Mississippi," Vol. I., p. 210.

He had a preaching place on Bluestone. He had an appointment on a hot summer day. Most of the people had come on foot, and, being tired, were disposed to be drowsy during the delivery of the sermon, which that day chanced to be lacking in animation. Quietly one after another dropped asleep, till all except the preacher and one woman were oblivious to all terrestrial things. Quinn, casting his eyes around and taking in the situation, pronounced the benediction, took up his hat and saddlebags, and left. The woman pitiously inquired: "Brother Quinn, a'n't you gwine to leave another app'intment?" "No," said Quinn, turning his head and speaking over his shoulder; "God never called me to preach to people I can't keep awake." Before the people were sufficiently awake to take in the state of affairs, Quinn had mounted his horse and gone. At length a pious brother exclaimed: "The preacher is gone and the Spirit is gone; let us pray!" They were mortified and humbled, and continued for some time singing and praying. They then went home deeply grieved and penitent, but not until they had appointed another prayer meeting. Prayer meetings were kept up; the religious interest increased from meeting to meeting, and finally resulted in a gracious revival."<sup>1</sup>

Benjamin Peeples was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1816, and located in 1822. His only Holston charge was Little River Circuit, to which he was appointed in 1816. When he first desisted from traveling, he located in Middle Tennessee. After laboring in the local ranks for a season, he returned to

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<sup>1</sup>"Life of the Rev. William Patton," pp. 29, 30.



the itinerant work ; but again located for lack of health and studied and entered upon the practice of medicine His excellent wife, who for forty years pitched her tent at Manley's Camp Ground, lived a beautiful life of Christian perfection. She reared her three brothers for the ministry, and gave three sons to this holy calling.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>McFerrin's "History of Methodism in Tennessee," Vol II., pp. 458, 459.

## CHAPTER XII.

FROM 1819 TO 1822.—SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE General Conference of 1820 was held in the Eutaw Street Church, in Baltimore, beginning May 1. The question of an elective presiding eldership came up again at that session. Up to that date the presiding elders had been, as they are now, the appointees of the bishop. They represented the bishop, and were his agents and vicegerents. They were appointed and removed from office at his will. But there had been a growing sentiment in favor of a greater distribution of power and a more democratic polity. The sought-for change in relation to the appointment of the presiding elders had hitherto been argued on the ground of right; it was now argued on the ground of expediency. It was argued that the sentiment of the Church demanded it, and that if this concession were not made there was danger of division. The debate was able and ardent, and lasted for two days, and the liberals prevailed. The resolutions adopted gave the bishop authority to nominate three times the number of presiding elders needed, out of which nominations the Conference was to elect.

Before the settlement of this question the Rev. Joshua Soule was elected bishop. While the presiding elder question pended he took no part in the discussion. But after the adoption of the resolutions he addressed a note to the bishops stating that he be-

lieved the resolutions adopted were in violation of the constitution. This note brought the bishops together in council. Bishops Roberts and McKendree agreed with Mr. Soule, and Bishop George was silent; and the college resolved to ordain him, although he had signified that, as bishop, he would be constrained to disregard the new law. But the matter was laid before the Conference, and some who had voted for the resolutions became convinced that the Conference had exceeded its bounds. But the bishop elect, having received information that a large proportion of the delegates who had opposed his election had resolved to remonstrate against his ordination, offered his resignation. The Conference then suspended the operation of the resolution for four years. The firmness of Mr. Soule deprived the Church of four years of his services as bishop, but it broke the spirit of reform along that line. Four years afterwards the General Conference receded from its ground, and Mr. Soule was elected again and ordained.

Among the advocates in the General Conference of an elective presiding eldership were Garrettson, Cooper, Bangs, Hedding, Pickering, Emory, and Waugh; among those who opposed it were Collins, Capers, Andrew, Roszel, Reed, and Soule. Of these thirteen men, six subsequently became bishops; and to show the popularity of the reform movement, Hedding, one of the leading liberals, was, together with Mr. Soule, elected and ordained bishop at the next General Conference; and Emory and Waugh, also liberals, became bishops later.

Up to the General Conference of 1820 the Ohio and Tennessee Conferences each included parts of Ken-

tucky. All that part of the State lying north and east of the Kentucky River was embraced in the Kentucky District, and belonged to the Ohio Conference; while the Green River, Salt River, and Cumberland Districts were included in the Tennessee Conference. The General Conference at this session set off the Kentucky Conference, making it include the Kentucky, Salt River, Green River, and Cumberland Districts, Greenbrier and Monroe Circuits, in Virginia, the Kanawha and Middle Island Circuits of the Ohio Conference, and a small strip of Tennessee embraced in Green River and Cumberland Districts.

The Tennessee Conference was made to include the Nashville, French Broad, and Holston Districts, together with the New River Circuit, hitherto belonging to the Baltimore Conference, and the part of the Tennessee District which lay north of the Tennessee River. That part of North Alabama which lay south of the Tennessee River, long in the Tennessee Conference, was thrown into the Mississippi Conference. The Tennessee Conference therefore included Southwestern Virginia and the whole of Tennessee, except the small portion set off to the Kentucky Conference.

The Tennessee Conference met this year (1820) in Hopkinsville, Ky., October 4. The preachers who expected to compose the Kentucky Conference met with them. No bishop being present, Marcus Lindsey was elected chairman. He presided with dignity, and gave satisfaction.

Some of the preachers who were to be set off to the new Conference wished to organize separately, but a resolution allowing them to do so was overruled by the President. The Conference fixed by ballot the

place of holding the next session of the Tennessee Conference, and the President fixed the place of holding the Kentucky Conference.

The numbers in Society reported from Holston were as follows:

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

	Whites.	Colored.
Lee .....	327	21
Clinch .....	426	38
Tazewell .....	390	37
Abingdon .....	317	42
Ashe .....	135	..
Holston .....	495	68
Carter's Valley.....	526	98
	—	—
Total .....	2,616	304

## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

Nollichucky .....	800	59
Powell's Valley.....	492	30
Tennessee Valley.....	377	54
Sequatchee Valley.....	370	7
Little River.....	606	74
Knox .....	500	16
Knoxville .....	48	20
Hiwassee .....	106	..
Paint Rock.....	134	..
	—	—
Total .....	3,433	260
Total for districts.....	6,049	564

Grand total, 6,613; a gain of 164.

The net increase in the bounds of the Conference had been 11,395, more than half the net increase in the entire connection. There had been throughout the Conference a deep and widespread revival of religion. The revival wave had been felt in Holston; but the

richer and cheaper lands in the West held out powerful inducements to the settlers among the hills of the Holston country, causing them to remove in that direction, thus diminishing the net increase here and increasing it there.

The appointments for Holston were as follows:

FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

James Axley, presiding elder.  
 Nollichucky, James Cumming.  
 Powell's Valley, Jesse Green.  
 Tennessee Valley, Obadiah Freeman, Robert Hopper.  
 Sequatchee Valley, John Kesterson, John Paulsaul.  
 Little River, Abram Still, Wiley B. Peck.  
 Knox, David Adams, Jesse Cunnyingham, Sup.  
 Knoxville and Greeneville, James Dixon.  
 Hiwassee, Thomas Payne.

HOLSTON DISTRICT.

John Tevis, presiding elder.  
 Lee, James Witten.  
 Clinch, Samuel Patton.  
 Tazewell, John Bradfield. .  
 New River, to be supplied.  
 Ashe, John Bowman.  
 Abingdon, Ansel Richardson.  
 Holston, William S. Manson, William P. Kendrick.  
 Carter's Valley, George Ekin.

Missionaries to that part of Jackson's Purchase embraced in the States of Kentucky and Tennessee, Hezekiah Holland and Lewis Garrett.

Thirty-one preachers were admitted into the Conference, whose names are as follows: Milton Jameson, William Young, Edward Stevenson, John Evans, William Martin, David Gray, Esau Simmons, Allen B. Dillard, W. M. McReynolds, J. W. McReynolds,

Blotchey C. Wood, Luke C. Allen, John Denham, Joseph B. Wynn, Joseph Williams, Elias Tidwell, Henry Gregg, William P. Kendrick, James Cumming, Thomas Payne, John Paulsaul, Wiley B. Peck, Benjamin M. Drake, Aquila Sampson, Alson J. Waters, A. J. Crawford, B. P. Seawell, William B. Carpenter, Jacob Sullivan, Samuel Hyneman, Isaac Reynolds.

At this session of the Conference a committee was appointed to take the subject of missions into consideration and report. The report, which was adopted, directed the President to send two missionaries to Jackson's Purchase, recommended the organization of a missionary society auxiliary to the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church in New York, and enjoined upon the presiding elders and preachers in charge the duty of taking up collections for the support of the missionaries of the Conference. This action of the Conference was its first step toward the organization of a missionary society. At the same session steps were taken looking to the establishment of a Conference Seminary of Learning. A committee was appointed to confer with the trustees of Bethel Academy, at Nicholasville, Jessamine County, Ky., with reference to the establishment of such seminary, with power to adopt means and raise money for such an institution. This was the first step of the Conference toward establishing an institution of learning.

In the spring of 1902 I visited friends in the little town of Wilmore, Ky., during the commencement exercises of Asbury College, an institution conducted under the auspices of people who believe in the second blessing theory of sanctification. The president of the college, the Rev. J. W. Hughes, gave me a

pleasant ride to the old site of Bethel Academy, which was the outcome of the above Conference action. This school was probably the first educational project of the Methodist Church in the Southwest. A man by the name of Jones gave a hundred acres of land on the banks of the Kentucky River for the school. The Methodists put up a three-story brick building about eighty feet long and forty feet wide, and a school was kept in the building for a number of years. Some Annual Conferences were held in this building. The site was selected in the country and in the woods, about five miles southwest of what is now Wilmore, a few hundred yards from the river, and only a short distance from the High Bridge Camp Ground, where in recent years camp meetings have been held on a large and worldly scale. The river is narrow and deep, and its bed is an almost continuous canyon, bounded by high, perpendicular walls of limestone, and furnishing at many points scenery both grand and picturesque. By means of locks and dams steamboats pass this point, running far up toward the mountains.

At this then sequestered spot the building was erected that the school might be removed, as far as possible, from the corruptions of town life. The early Methodists made many blunders in the location of schools and churches. It was not unusual to see a meetinghouse perched on a hill in the suburbs of a town, where the loud preaching, loud singing, and shouting could not disturb the quiet of the non-churchgoing people of the community. But experience has taught the Methodists the folly of hiding out schools and meetinghouses, has brought them to see that such buildings should be convenient to the



people, and that a central and popular location is just as important for a school or a church as for a hotel or a commercial establishment. It is not strange that this school, being too far away from the people, did not prosper. With the mournful interest of an antiquarian I viewed the ruins, saw many of the limestone slabs that were in the foundation and many of the brick that were in the walls. The Wilmore School, dubbed "Asbury College," has been a success, and may be considered the true successor to Bethel Academy.

In 1820 a camp ground was established on Clear Creek, Cocke County, Tenn. The principal tenters were Jacob Easterly, Jacob Faubion, William Garrett, Thomas Gray, Samuel Harned, James Gilliland, Abel Gilliland, Henry Potter, Jesse Reeve, Moses Faubion, James Holland, John Holland, Reuben Allen, Baldwin Harle, George Parrott, Thomas Fowler.

As the administrative officials had little to do in erecting the camp ground, the elder did not attend the first camp meeting, and but few of the preachers were there. Human nature will crop out even in religious matters. But the Lord provided a preacher of ability. The Rev. John Haynie, a local preacher and merchant, living at that time in Knoxville, attended the meeting, and was the principal preacher of the occasion. He preached every day at eleven o'clock. A vast concourse of people attended, and good order was preserved. Haynie was a well-read, clear-headed, practical preacher. He seldom perpetrated what preachers call "a failure." He was a man of deep piety, and an able and effective expounder of the Word of God. He was tall and spare, with black hair and black eyes. He had no affectation; his manner in the pulpit was

easy and graceful, his voice clear and musical, and strong enough to be heard at the outskirts of the large audiences that listened to his sermons. His preaching on that occasion produced a profound and lasting impression for good.

This camp ground continued for many years to be the center from which radiated holy influences to various parts of the country, until it gave place to one a few miles up the same creek in the vicinity of Parrottsville.<sup>1</sup>

In 1859 Mrs. Jane T. H. Cross visited Texas. In a letter of hers published in the *New Orleans Christian Advocate* she thus speaks of "Father Haynie:"

One person, particularly, attracted my attention. It was an old gentleman who was assisted into the room during the prayer meeting. He sat with his crutches beside him, leaning back against one side of the fireplace. His frame was tremulous, as if his feet had already been slipped into the chill waters of the Jordan, but his complexion wore the clear hue of youth, and his eyes shone with the light, whether of early manhood or that eternal youth to which he approaches, I know not. In the interval between the prayer meeting and preaching some one, to my joy, offered to introduce me to him. "Father Haynie," they said; and while he kindly expressed his pleasure at meeting me, I felt as if I could have fallen at his feet. There he sat, the laborer in the rough parts of the vineyard, the workman who had not shunned toil, nor hardship, nor danger. "I have worn out my constitution," he said, "and I would wear out fifty more, if I had them, in the same cause." I felt the warm tears coming up into my eyes as he said this. So near home! his tottering feet almost upon the threshold of our Father's house! How could one but envy him? Not far from him

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<sup>1</sup>Hon. W. Garrett, in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 495, 496.

sat his gentle, patient-looking little wife. I saw her refuse a comfortable seat, and her manner of doing it impressed me with the opinion that she had not fretted much over the little disagreeabilities of life, but had learned, in whatever situation she was, therewith to be content. The old gentleman made one remark which still lingers about my heart in serious moments. He said: "Methodism is spreading, and I thank my God for it. We are becoming a more cultivated and better taught people, and that is well. Let us embrace science and knowledge and accomplishments, but let us ever bear with them a spirit of deep piety." Yes, let the stream widen, but at the same time let it grow deeper and deeper. May this aspiration of a heart in which heaven and earth already meet and mingle be fulfilled! I had the privilege of partaking of the Lord's Supper with this Father Haynie and his wife; may we again partake of it in a place still more beautiful!

John Haynie was born in April, 1786—where, I know not. His wife was born in August of the same year. He united with the Methodist Episcopal Church at Wagoner's, near Knoxville, in August, 1809; and although Mrs. Haynie was not with him at the meeting, he requested the preachers to put her name down too, as she always went with him in all his undertakings. When informed of what he had done, she fully indorsed the act. She afterwards experienced a sense of forgiveness while her husband was holding family prayers. In the fall of the year a church was built in Mr. Haynie's neighborhood, four miles east of Knoxville, and was named Macedonia. In 1816 or 1817 he removed to Knoxville. His leading object in moving to the town was to labor for the establishment of Methodism in the place. He at once began preparations for building a house of worship. He requested a Mr. Nelson, a member of his Church,

who was intimate with the White family, to apply to the father of the Hon. Hugh Lawson White for a lot on which to build. Mr. Nelson met the old gentleman in his son's office, and broached the subject. The conversation attracted the attention of the younger White, who immediately asked Mr. Nelson this question: "Does Johnny want a lot to build a Methodist church on in Knoxville?" He was told that he did. "Well," said Judge White, "tell Johnny to have a certain very eligible tract surveyed, and designate which lot he wants, and I will make him a deed to it." The lot was selected and the deed made, although, for lack of a sufficient number of members in town, some of the trustees were selected from a distance of twelve or fifteen miles in the country. As Judge White gave the lot and contributed liberally toward the erection of the house, it was named White's Chapel. It was in this church, named for him, that Judge White received the reproof for the use of tobacco during divine service from the Rev. James Axley, which is mentioned in a subsequent chapter. Mr. Haynie was present and heard the reproof.

In 1825 Mr. Haynie removed to Tusculumbia, Ala., and in the fall of 1838 to Texas. Here the scarcity of ministers prompted him to give himself wholly to the itinerant work. The Texas Mission was then in the Mississippi Conference. He was admitted into that Conference in 1839. When the Texas Conference was organized, in 1840, Mr. Haynie was enrolled as a member on trial. He was three times during the existence of the republic elected chaplain to Congress, and was chaplain to the Convention that formed the State Constitution. The last appointment that was



FATHER HAYNIE.

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given him was given him by Bishop Soule in 1845. He was present at the Conference held in La Grange in 1859. Unable to stand, from his armchair he addressed the Conference in a few words, full of pathos and piety. Cheerful in hope and strong in faith, he gave his brethren his final farewell. Father Haynie died in August, 1860, in his seventy-fifth year.<sup>1</sup>

In the same year in which Clear Creek Camp Ground was established (1820), Sulphur Spring Camp Ground, a few miles south of what is now Morristown, Tenn., was established. The old settlers have passed away, but their descendants kept up meetings there until a short time after the Civil War.

The camp meeting system has been practically abandoned in this country, and this and other camp grounds have fallen into disuse. This place, when used for meetings, was accessible to a large district of country, and attracted the attention of persons at a distance; and it had a very large patronage. The shelter for preaching was spacious, with wings all around to be lowered at night or in rainy weather and hoisted in the day. It was covered with shingles. The campus was conveniently large, and surrounded by two rows of tents, mostly framed and weather-boarded, and some of these with two stories. Besides these stationary tents or houses, there were scores of cloth tents scattered around outside. As might be expected in these conditions, the assemblies were very large. In the days of the greatest popularity of this camp ground, in order to accommodate

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<sup>1</sup>A letter of "H. S. T.," of Ruttersville, Tex., dated March 13, 1860, and published in the *Nashville Christian Advocate*.

and reach the large numbers that attended, there was usually preaching at three or four different places on Sundays at eleven o'clock A.M. The ablest ministers were brought together here, and dispensed the word of life with much success. The good order observed on such occasions was remarkable.<sup>1</sup>

Since Sulphur Spring Camp Ground has been mentioned, it may not be improper to introduce here a notice of the camp ground, the camp meetings held at it, and some of the men connected with its history, from the pen of that veteran Methodist preacher, the Rev. William C. Graves, written for the *Methodist Advocate* about the year 1887. Graves at the time was a preacher of the M. E. Church, and he wrote from a Northern Methodist standpoint:

Who has not heard of Sulphur Spring Camp Ground? But there are many camp grounds of that name. The one about which I write is in East Tennessee, in Jefferson County, about fourteen miles northeast of Dandridge and four miles south of Morristown. Here a camp ground was built by the Methodists about seventy years ago. It became then, and continued for quite a long series of years, a kind of Methodist center for a large scope of country around. The first generation of Methodists in this region had mostly passed away—those that became such between the years 1783 and 1815. A few, however, still lingered and aided in building up the camp ground. I will mention several persons, the most of whom belonged to the second generation of Methodists in this region; some few, however, may be classed with the first generation, and many of them had personal knowledge of those who had heard Bishop Asbury preach, and of those associated with him in his day. I give the names of

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<sup>1</sup>W. Garrett, in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 496, 497.

those concerned in building up the camp ground, and the names of those who took their places in later years. Among the oldest, I mention the name of Solomon Wyatt, a local preacher. I saw him at a camp meeting in Parrottsville fifty years ago. His son, Lorenzo Dow Wyatt, also a local preacher, lived in that vicinity. The old brother was then far advanced in years, and probably did not live long after that. He lived a few miles east of the camp ground.

Francis Daniel lived on Holston River, at the mouth of Young's Creek, just above Mayes's Ford, some ten miles northwest of the camp ground. He was one of the first settlers in that region, and was a Methodist and his house a preaching place as early as 1795. Sherrod Mayes and Benjamin McCarty were his associates in Church matters. His house was used as the place of worship for the Methodists during his lifetime. After his death his son Joseph occupied the old homestead, and preaching was kept up there as long as he lived, and even longer, for I was present at circuit preaching there as late as 1848, and Joseph Daniel had then been dead some time. His associates in Church matters were Benjamin Ivy, Dudley Mayes, John Howell, and others. The preaching was changed to Benjamin Ivy's. After his death his children and others built a log church, the first Methodist church ever erected in that neighborhood. Mention has been made of an old brother by the name of Felkner, who used to worship with the first generation of Methodists at Daniel's. He lived east of the camp ground. Several Felknors still live in that region, and are Presbyterians.

James Sparks was an early local preacher, but I have learned but little concerning him. James Landrum was a local preacher, and lived near the mouth of Lick Creek at the time the camp ground was built. He afterwards settled two miles west of Morristown, and aided in building the first Methodist church in that neighborhood. It was built at a point so easy of access from every direction that Rev. David Flemming gave it the name of Economy. Brother Landrum was among the first to find a grave in the graveyard at Economy. George Weaver, son-in-law of Brother Landrum, was an early camper. I had personal knowledge



of Brother Weaver and of most of Brother Landrum's children. The last to die was Sister Perryman, at the age of eighty-three.

John Bewley, a local preacher, was among the campers. His father, Anthony Bewley, was not a Methodist, but his six sons were all Methodists, and one of his grandsons told me just a few days ago that they were all Methodist preachers except one, and that was his father, Jacob Bewley. John had died before I began to visit this region. Jacob I knew well. He was a camper. Anthony, his brother, I knew and heard preach fifty years ago. He lived and died near Warrensburg. His son, Granade, was a local preacher. He died years ago, near Russellville. His widow and children still live thereabouts. Anthony's son, Calvin, was a traveling preacher, and died while on the New Market Circuit, in 1848. John Bewley's son, Anthony, was a traveling preacher, and was hanged in Texas because he was an abolitionist before the war. I heard him preach in 1834. Jacob's son, Philip M., became a preacher since the war, and died a year or two ago. Some of the Bewleys moved West. I know but little about these.

Daniel Lyle, James Sharp, James Tillett, and Levi Saterfield were local preachers, and probably all camped. Daniel Lyle occupied his camp as late as 1848, for I was there and saw him in feeble old age. I hear of a local preacher by the name of Jacks, and one by the name of McAmis, that were among them at an early day.

Martin Stubblefield, Elijah Sims, John Miller, Richard Thompson, and Paul Potter were exhorters. Henry Countz and William Chaney married daughters of Martin Stubblefield. These two women still live in extreme old age. Wesley and Moses, sons of John Miller, were exhorters. James and William, sons of Richard Thompson, were local preachers.

I wish I could say all I want to say about each of the following, who were connected with the camp meeting movement sooner or later: Isaac Rogers, George Rogers, Robert Rogers, Benjamin Doughty, Baldwin Harle, Philip Moses, Jesse Moore, Robert McClanahan, Charles Harrison, Barnet Smith,

William Manson, Sr., William Manson, Jr., Alexander Rogers, John Burch, Ellis Riggs, Job Garrison, John Walker, Solomon Cox, Willis Grantham, and Dr. Josiah Rhoton, a local preacher, and others too numerous to mention. In 1856 I was a pastor on the charge. There were that year about fifty families encamped on the ground. The encampment went down during the war; there has been no camp meeting there since.<sup>1</sup> The Methodists never had a church house in the neighborhood until since the war; they now have a good Church called Watkins Chapel, in which our recent District Conference was held. We have a good society there, and it is the only Methodist organization in the immediate neighborhood. Witt's Foundry is hard by, and is growing up into a flourishing little town.

It may be proper for me here to make a remark in relation to the lynching of Anthony Bewley, alluded to in the above extract. He was lynched by a mob in Texas about the beginning of the War between the States, when the antagonism between the Northern abolitionists and Southern slaveholders was at fever heat. Bewley was charged with seditious talks to negroes. I know little of the merits of this unfortunate affair. Brownlow, who in the Knoxville *Whig* was at that time opposing secession with all his might, published an account of the lynching of Bewley, and said in his paper that the Texas mob had served him right. I am, however, of opinion that, although the provocation was great, it was wholly unjustifiable and inexcusable.

The Tennessee Conference met at Norvell's Camp Ground, in Bedford County, Tenn., November 7, 1821. The camp ground was more properly called Salem,

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<sup>1</sup>The author attended a camp meeting at that place two or three years after the Civil War, but there were not over a half dozen campers.

and was situated near the town of Bellbuckle. Two bishops were present, McKendree and Roberts. Thirty-one preachers responded to the first roll call. Bishop McKendree opened the Conference with the usual religious services and a few appropriate remarks. Bishop Roberts then took the chair, when Thomas L. Douglass was elected Secretary, and the Conference proceeded to business. Philip Bruce, a superannuated member of the Virginia Conference, was present, and was made chairman of the committee "to examine graduates." This was stretching the principle of connectionalism considerably.

During the year two preachers had swapped circuits, one of them paying "boot." The man who paid the "boot" was publicly reprimanded. Why the man who received the "boot" was not reprimanded, the records do not show. A local preacher applied for deacon's orders; "but," says the record, "because he gives the people whisky at corn-shuckings, he is not elected." This incident serves to remind the reader of the fact that from the beginning the Methodist Church has always been a temperance society, its Discipline has always prohibited drinking usages, and in the midst of a lax public sentiment and lax civil legislation in regard to the temperance question the sentiment of the Methodist Church in relation to the use of strong drink was nearly or quite as pure and elevated a hundred years ago as it is now. With a Cavalier maternity she was as rigid in her ideas of morality as the Roundheads themselves; she was a strange compound of Episcopal ecclesiasticism and Puritanic discipline.

Holston reported numbers in Society as follows:

## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

	Whites.	Colored.
Nollichucky .....	846	65
Powell's Valley.....	424	27
Tennessee Valley.....	417	81
Sequatchee Valley.....	428	9
Little River.....	593	84
Knox .....	416	42
Knoxville and Greenville.....	39	24
Hiwassee .....	187	..
	—	—
Total .....	3,360	332

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

Lee .....	394	23
Clinch .....	465	39
Tazewell .....	420	70
New River.....	835	107
Ashe .....	163	3
Holston .....	760	60
Abingdon .....	368	30
Carter's Valley.....	661	143
	—	—
Total .....	4,066	475
Total for districts.....	7,426	807

Grand total, 8,233; a net increase of 1,620, a gain of a little less than twenty-four and a half per cent.

The membership in Holston had barely held its own for a number of years. The cause had seemed to be trembling in the balances; but during the year just past the scales had turned, and a revival influence had swept over the two Holston Districts. At the last Conference twenty-two preachers were assigned to Holston; this year, twenty-nine.

Twenty-six recruits were taken into the Tennessee Conference, whose names are as follows: Rufus Ledbetter, Jonas Belodte, John Seay, Jacob Hearn, Thom-

as A. Young, German Baker, Finch Scruggs, James G. H. Speer, Abraham Overall, Nathanael R. Garrett, Absalom Harris, John Raines, John Kelley, John Rice, Robert Boyd, Benjamin T. Siddon, Richard Neely, Francis R. Cheasham, John Patton, Nathan L. Norrell, James Edmiston, William Patton, Thomas J. Brown, George Horne, David B. Cumming, Peter Burum.

This large influx of preachers into the Conference, with its recently abridged territory, was an indication of the great prosperity which the Church was now realizing in its bounds.

The Holston appointments were as follows:

#### FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

John Dever, presiding elder.

Nollichucky, George Ekin, Absalom Harris; James Axley, Sup.

Powell's Valley, Richard W. Morris.

Tennessee Valley, Lewis W. Marshall, John Rice.

Sequatchee Valley, John Craig, John Bradfield.

Little River, David Adams, James Cumming.

Knox, Samuel Harwell, John Kelley; J. Cunnyingham, Sup.  
Hiwassee, James Witten.

#### HOLSTON DISTRICT.

John Tevis, presiding elder.

Lee, John Paulsaul, David B. Cumming.

Clinch, Abraham Still.

Tazewell, Ansel Richardson.

Ashe, John Kesterson.

New River, Jesse Green, William P. Kendrick, William Patton.

Abingdon, George W. Morris.

Holston, William S. Manson, George Horn.

Carter's Valley, John Bowman, Thomas J. Brown.

The Tennessee Conference met at Ebenezer Church, in Greene County, Tenn., October 16, 1822. Bishop George presided. Thirty-eight members answered roll call at the opening of the session. This was a good attendance, if we consider the distance some of the preachers had to travel on horseback to reach the seat of the Conference. Some came from near the present site of Memphis, Tenn., and others from New River, in Virginia.

Ebenezer was the name of the chapel in the Earnest neighborhood. Being one of the first chapels erected in Tennessee, having been the seat of several Conferences, and being a place often visited by Bishop Asbury, it was historic ground, rich in thrilling associations.

Although this was a country place, the Conference was remarkable for the large number of people who attended the sessions and took part in the religious exercises of the occasion. They came from great distances on all sides, saw the preachers, heard their sermons, and went away with a better opinion of Methodism and of Methodist preachers than when they came. The Earnest and other families of the neighborhood were of course put to their best to entertain the multitudes that came from a distance; but they had the means and the liberality which made them equal to the emergency. It is true that Conferences had been held there before; but it was when the country was sparsely settled, when Methodism was little known, and when the meeting of a few preachers in Conference attracted but little attention.<sup>1</sup>

Holston reported numbers in Society as follows:

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<sup>1</sup>McAnally, in "Life of S. Patton," p. 161.

## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

	Whites.	Colored.
Nollichucky .....	1,202	133
Powell's Valley.....	513	45
Tennessee Valley.....	538	103
Sequatchee Valley.....	360	14
Little River.....	730	114
Knox .....	776	78
Hiwassee .....	484	21
	—	—
Total .....	4,603	508

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

Lee .....	502	39
Clinch .....	600	32
Tazewell .....	455	55
Ashe .....	233	13
New River.....	862	116
Abingdon .....	552	92
Holston .....	1,059	96
Carter's Valley.....	646	133
	—	—
Total .....	4,909	576
Total for districts.....	9,512	1,084

Grand total, 10,596; a net increase of 2,363, a gain of more than twenty-eight and a half per cent.

The gain in two years was 3,983, or a gain of more than sixty per cent. This was a large increase for two districts, when we bear in mind that the country was sparsely settled at that day in comparison with the present, and that the fertile West was still drawing our people away. The prosperity throughout the two districts seems to have been general. It was a season of revival power in Holston, the depth, intensity, and beneficial influence of which cannot be measured by the figures indicating the increase in membership.

The preachers were so many skillful, enterprising officers, seconded by a brave and self-sacrificing official laity, and supported by the rank and file of the Church; and the onsets of their brave little army upon the works and ranks of the world, the flesh, and the devil were irresistible.

As might have been expected in this state of affairs, a large number of preachers knocked at the door of the Conference for admission, and the names of those admitted, thirty-nine in number, are as follows: Willie Ledbetter, Josiah Smith, John H. Holland, William Johnson, Francis Owen, Benjamin S. Clardy, Joseph Carle, Lorenzo D. Overall, Felix Parker, Lewellen Jones, Ephraim Jones, John Cannon, James D. Harris, William Conn, Isaac W. Sullivan, William Mullins, Abner Bowen, Coleman Harwell, Jr., James W. Allen, James Y. Crawford, John W. Witten, William Cumming, Isaac Lewis, William Hammet, Arthur W. McClure, Edward T. Peery, Ashley B. Rozzell, Richard F. Garrett, Nicholas T. Scales, John W. Camp, Thomas H. Cannon, Thomas J. Neely, Thomas Smith, Greenberry Garrett, Ambrose F. Driskill, Barton Brown, Josiah Rhoton, John White, John Kerr.

Of these, ten were immediately transferred to the Virginia Conference—viz.: Joseph Carle, Lewellen Jones, Ephraim Jones, Felix Parker, William Hammet, John Cannon, John D. Harris,<sup>1</sup> Thomas H. Cannon, John Kerr, and J. W. Witten.

The pastoral assignments to Holston were:

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<sup>1</sup>As Mr. Harris appears as remaining on trial in the Tennessee Conference the next year, it is likely that his transfer was revoked.



## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

John Dever, presiding elder.

Tennessee Valley, Samuel Harwell, Josiah R. Smith.

Sequatchee Valley, Thomas J. Brown, William Cumming.

Hiwassee, J. B. Wynn, J. Y. Crawford, T. Smith.

Little River, James Cumming, Barton Brown, Jesse Cunnyngham.

Knox, R. W. Morris, J. G. Speer.

Powell's Valley, George Horn, William Johnson.

Nollichucky, George Ekin, J. Rice, D. B. Cumming.

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

John Tevis, presiding elder.

Lee, G. W. Morris, Josiah Rhoton.

Clinch, John Paulsaul.

Tazewell, William Patton.

New River, Jesse Green, J. Bowman, A. McClure.

Ashe, John Bradfield.

Abingdon, William P. Kendrick.

Holston, Abraham Still, David Adams.

Carter's Valley, William S. Manson, Isaac Lewis.

The reports of the numbers in Society at the Conference of 1822 indicated, as we have seen, great prosperity on the charges during the year. I am sorry that I have not material in hand to enable me to mention the work in each circuit in some detail; but Mr. W. Garrett, in "Methodism in Tennessee," furnishes an opportunity to mention particularly the success of Ekin and Harris on Nollichucky. The deleterious influence of the slavery discussion was then well-nigh past. Ekin, by his skill and prudence in the administration of discipline, by his earnest preaching, and by his active, kind, pastoral intercourse with the people, was successful in putting a quietus on the agitation, and bringing the Church fully up to the line

of active Christian duty. The Nollichucky Circuit at that time included the southern part of Greene and most of Jefferson, Cocke, and Sevier Counties. Revival symptoms were exhibited in the early part of the year. The attendance upon preaching, class, and prayer meetings was good; the preachers were always at their posts and ready to conduct the exercises; and the year was one of great power and prosperity, greater than had been for ten years. Camp grounds and camp meetings were added, and the pleasure of the Lord prospered in our Zion.

The camp meeting for that year, at Clear Creek, was held in September. George Ekin was in charge, assisted by Absalom Harris and a corps of local preachers. On Thursday night Ekin preached on "Lord, let it alone this year," etc. If the text was appropriate, so was the sermon. The altar exercises of that night were the foreshadowing of what followed. God manifested himself in a powerful manner in the conviction and conversion of souls. This meeting resulted in two hundred and thirty conversions and accessions to the Church.

Every part of the circuit partook of this outpouring of the Spirit. The camp meetings at Sulphur Spring and Stone Dam were a success. The old Societies in the circuit "swarmed," so to speak, and new ones were organized. Churches were built by some of these Societies, but others worshiped in private houses. It was common in those days to preach and organize Societies in private dwellings. Many such Societies became wealthy enough, in the process of years, to build neat and commodious chapels. Methodism had now become fully established and powerfully in-

trenched at several points south of the French Broad River. For years her operations had been confined to the other side of the river by the hostile character of the Cherokees. But danger arising from this cause had given way; and the sacramental hosts crossed over, with singing and shouting, and planted the standard of the gospel not only along the river but in the valleys and in the coves of the Smoky and Chilhowee Mountains. The revival of 1822 not only largely increased the membership of the Church, but brought out a large corps of exhorters and local preachers. From one learn all. Similar success attended the labors of the preachers in the other circuits of the district.

About this time camp grounds were established at Pine Chapel, in Jefferson County, Middle Creek, in Sevier County, and Middle Settlements, in Blount County. The "Local Preacher Conferences," as they were called, usually met at the last-named camp ground.

George Locke was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1818; located, in the Ohio Conference, in 1821; was readmitted in 1822; transferred to Illinois Conference in 1825; and died in 1834.

He was born in Cannonstown, Pa., June 8, 1797. His parents were David and Nancy Locke. His grandfather and great-grandfather were both clergymen in the Church of England, and his father was educated for the Presbyterian ministry, but declining to enter this profession, he engaged in teaching. George's mother was a lady of superior endowments, and a pious member of the Presbyterian Church. The family removed to Kentucky in 1798. Without the

advantage of an early education, he was in childhood and youth remarkable for his industry and studiousness. In his seventeenth year, while a gracious revival was going on in Shelbyville under the ministry of Edward Talbot, a local preacher, he was converted to God. Marcus Lindsey was at that time presiding elder on Salt River District, and he wished to employ young Locke on the Danville and Madison Circuit; but as he had been bound as an apprentice to a saddler, it was necessary to secure the consent of his employer, who, however, though a man of the world, cheerfully released his apprentice. He was appointed to Little River Circuit in 1818, and to Powell's Valley in 1819. After this he exercised his itinerant ministry in Kentucky, Ohio, Illinois, and Indiana. Charles Holliday being elected by the General Conference in 1828 as Agent of the Cincinnati Book Concern, Mr. Locke took his place as presiding elder of the Wabash District. In the winter of 1831-32, one of the severest winters known in the West, he was returning home after an absence of several weeks. The Wabash being blockaded with ice, he and another traveler waited at the house of the ferryman three or four days; but impatient of longer delay, they determined to break a channel in the ice. When within a rod or two of the shore, Mr. Locke, through an unfortunate movement, fell into the river, and was scarcely rescued from a watery grave; but once out of the water he continued the work till the shore was reached. He then mounted his horse and rode ten miles to the next house, but when he reached it he was frozen to the saddle and speechless. He was lifted from his horse and kindly cared for; but the foolish and unnecessary

exposure gave his system a shock from which it never recovered. He lived, however, some two years longer. Mr. Locke was a student to the last, even applying himself to his work in his last illness. He not only studied theology, but acquired some knowledge of Greek and Latin and the higher mathematics. He died of consumption. His last words were: "Glory! glory! glory!"<sup>1</sup>

Thomas L. Wynn was admitted into the South Carolina Conference in 1818, and died October 9, 1830. He was a son of Lemuel and Elizabeth Wynn, and was born in Abbeville, S. C., June 27, 1788. He was converted at the age of fourteen, but through the influence of thoughtless companions he lost his first love. In 1815 he was restored to the joy of pardoned sin, and in 1817 was licensed to preach. In 1820 he was appointed to Black Mountain Circuit, embracing Buncombe and other counties in Western Carolina. Having been appointed, during his ministerial career, to Savannah, Wilmington, Georgetown, Camden, and Charleston, which were stations proper, it is evident that he was no ordinary man. Indeed, he possessed extraordinary abilities as a preacher. From childhood he was studious and thoughtful; and although his early opportunities for acquiring knowledge were limited, his subsequent habits were such as to render him respectable in his literary and theological attainments. He was a fine illustration of what a Methodist preacher can do to improve his mind, if he will only be studious.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sprague's "Annals," pp. 610, 611.

<sup>2</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. II., pp. 116, 117.

Wiley B. Peck was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1820, and located in 1826, in the Mississippi Conference. His only Holston work was Little River Circuit, to which he was assigned in 1820. He traveled in other portions of the Tennessee Conference, and in 1825 was transferred to the Missouri Conference. He was connected with a large and respectable family in East Tennessee. He was a brother of Judge Jacob Peck, of Mossy Creek, now Jefferson City, Tenn. His early advantages as to education and social privileges were better than those of most Methodist preachers of that day. For some reason he became dissatisfied with the Methodist Church, united with the Protestant Episcopal Church, and removed North. The Pecks were, and are, a high-toned, honorable people, and not wanting in the sensitiveness as to their rights which usually characterizes people of that kind. It is likely that with a bishop in the driver's seat he chafed in itinerant harness. His going to the Episcopal Church was the exercise of a right; and if he was happier and more useful in his new relations, the change should not be set down to his discredit. I knew the Honorable Jacob Peck personally. He was for some years one of the Supreme Judges of the State of Tennessee, was a decided Methodist and a devoted friend of education. He was for some time the leading trustee of Holston Seminary, at New Market, Tenn. He liberally aided in building Elizabeth Chapel, at Mossy Creek, Tenn., carrying up one corner of the church, which was a log structure, with ax in hand, and his family attended that church while they lived. Judge Peck was a man of erudition, an excellent judge of law, and his law pa-

pers were terse, vigorous, and sententious. He was portly in form, solemn in manner, and dignified in deportment. His brother, Looney Peck, was for long years a class leader and exhorter in the Mossy Creek Church, when these offices meant something. He was a plain man, devoted to business and not to literature. His public prayers were characterized by an unusual fervor. He died at an advanced age, and left behind the sweet perfume of an untarnished reputation. Dr. John F. Rhoton, a practicing physician, married a daughter of Judge Peck and reared an excellent family. He was a brother of Dr. Benjamin Rhoton, of Kentucky, and of the Rev. Josiah Rhoton, of the Holston Conference. No truer or more loving man ever lived. Looney Peck and Dr. Rhoton were truly pillars of the Mossy Creek Church. The same can be said of Samuel Odell, a plain farmer of Mossy Creek; but a man of deep piety, sterling integrity, and a supporter of the cause of Christ by a liberal use of his means.

Absalom Harris was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1821, appointed to Nollichucky Circuit, and discontinued at the end of the year. So far as we know, he served but one year as an itinerant; but his extraordinary zeal and usefulness that year entitle him to historic mention. He was under the prudent leadership of George Ekin. Mr. Harris was originally from North Carolina. He went West a thoughtless youth, but was convicted and converted. He immediately entered the ministry under the influence of a powerful conviction of duty and a burning zeal for the salvation of souls. Having only recently embraced religion, he was not posted in the technical-

ities of theology; neither did he resort to the tactics of a skillful general in feints, marches, countermarches, and flank movements, but with sword in hand he charged upon the ranks of the enemy. There was no time, in his estimation, for circumlocution, when precious souls were posting the road to perdition. It is related that during the Civil War General Bragg was showing Gen. Sterling Price his redoubts, and asked him if he had ever built any; Price replied that he had not, but that he had taken many of them. Harris seems to have fought after the tactics of the Missouri hero. He was deeply pious, humble, and much addicted to prayer and religious conversation. With a strong physical frame capable of much endurance, a strong voice, distinct enunciation, and good delivery, and untiring efforts to make full proof of his ministry, he was truly a "son of thunder" in his day. Endowed with unusual physical and moral courage, he denounced the sins and follies of the day without fear or excessive care in the choice of words, and he magnified the saving power of grace, especially as exhibited in his case, in appeals powerful and almost irresistible. During the year his horse died, but he continued to meet his appointments on foot. At the Conference held at Ebenezer, Greene County, Tenn., he was discontinued at his own request, and returned to his father's. Why he located is not known; but it is possible that, like Granade, he overworked himself, and found it necessary to the prolongation of life to seek the greater quiet of the local relation. He was probably an illustration of the adage: "The fiercer the storm, the sooner it is over." The quarter-horse does his best at the beginning of the race, but



the horse that starts on a four-mile heat needs to husband his strength in the beginning and to reserve his *chef-d'œuvre* for the last mile. The regular and systematic movement of the planet is better and safer than the flash of the meteor, or the parabolic sweep of the comet. Mr. Harris was for many years a local preacher in Georgia.<sup>1</sup>

Jesse Richardson joined the traveling connection in 1788. The principal part of his service was rendered in North and South Carolina and Georgia. His first itinerant work was done on New River Circuit, and he was twice appointed to Buncombe Circuit (in 1808 and 1812), besides being presiding elder for four years of Catawba District, South Carolina Conference, which embraced the upper French Broad and Black Mountain section of North Carolina. Dr. Shipp tells the following anecdote of Mr. Richardson, which I will repeat in his words:

He was a good preacher and well fitted for frontier service and very successful in winning souls for Christ. While traveling the Lincoln Circuit he filled on one occasion his appointment for preaching on an exceedingly cold day, and afterwards rode through snow, which had fallen to the depth of eight inches, till about sunset in order to reach on his way to the next appointment the only house where he could hope to find shelter before the darkness of night should overtake him. When he arrived at the place, he hailed the proprietor and politely asked the privilege of spending the night with him. "No, you cannot stay," he responded promptly and gruffly. "You are one of these lazy Methodist preachers going about everywhere through the country who ought to be engaged in honest work." Mr. Richardson maintained

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<sup>1</sup>Hon. W. Garrett, in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 500, 501.

his self-possession, and did not wholly despair of final accommodation, notwithstanding this rude and insulting rejection at the first. He thought the man must have some natural feelings of sympathy for the suffering, which patient management and tact might evoke. His case, moreover, was one of most pressing necessity. He therefore after a little renewed his request, setting forth at the same time such considerations as he thought must move the hardest heart, and concluding with an offer to reward him liberally for all the trouble and expense that might be incurred by allowing him to pass the night under his roof. "No," again responded the unfeeling man in ruffian tones, "you shall not pass the threshold of my house this night;" and quickly entering, he slammed the door in the face of the man of God shivering in the cold. As the next house was twelve miles distant, and a high mountain intervened over which no open road conducted, but only a narrow path, now hidden by the snow which was beginning to fall afresh, Mr. Richardson had no alternative left him but to stay or freeze to death by the way. He therefore deliberately dismounted, tied his horse to a stake, and sat down on the doorsill of the house. At length he began to sing one of the songs of Zion. The proprietor listened in profound silence, his savage nature began to grow tame, his heart softened, and he showed a disposition to engage in conversation. "You seem to be quite merry," said he; "and you must be very cold, too. Would you not like to have a little fire?" "Thank you," said the preacher. "It is of all things what I most want just now, for I am indeed very cold." The fire was brought; the yard contained a bountiful supply of wood, and soon there was a conflagration that made Boreas fairly tremble on his throne. This brought out the man of the house. "What are you doing out there," said he, "burning up all my wood? Put out that fire and come into the house." The preacher took him at his word, extinguished the fire, and entered. "And now," said he, "my horse has had nothing to eat since early this morning. If you will let me put him in the stable and feed him, you shall be well paid for it." With this request he obstinately refused to comply, withholding food from man and beast, as he also

forbade the offering of prayer for the family before retiring. They slept in their beds, and the preacher, wrapped in his overcoat, lay down to rest as best he could before the fire. The next morning at early dawn, hungry and cold, he threaded the uncertain pathway over the mountain to seek refreshment at the twelve-mile house.

On another occasion Mr. Richardson lost his horse. The spirited animal, from feeling a resentment at the supposed neglect of his owner in leaving him bound to a stake all night without food in a snowstorm, or from some other motive quite satisfactory to himself, made his escape from the stable and ran away. Mr. Richardson, going in search of him, passed by where two men were clearing land. Being wearied by his journey, he sat down on a log to rest and to make inquiry of the men concerning the route the horse might have taken. One of them abused him with great bitterness of speech, threatened to kill him, and with clinched fists struck him with such violence as to cause him to fall from his seat, and he was perhaps saved from death only by the intervention of the other man. Having found his horse, it was necessary for him the next day to pass by the house of the man who had assaulted him with such violence. The man's wife hailed him and requested him to stop and come in. He told her that her husband had abused him the day before and threatened to take his life, and he did not therefore deem it safe to comply with the request. She said: "My husband is at home, and says you must come in; he is anxious to see you. There is no cause for fear." Thus assured, he went in, and found the man in the deepest mental distress and the tears streaming from his eyes. He begged the preacher most importunately to pray for him. Said he: "I feel that I am a miserable and lost sinner." After some words of instruction and encouragement, they kneeled down in prayer, and their united petitions ascended to Heaven. The man was most earnestly engaged, and after a while was powerfully converted. He sprang to his feet and threw his arms around Richardson with such violence (being a man of uncommon size and strength) that he came well-nigh finishing in love the work which the day before he had begun in wrath.

He exchanged a noble horse with Richardson, and, taking another, went with him to eight appointments before returning home.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Richardson was for many years a local preacher, but while local he gave a third of his time to the ministry, laboring with his own hands for the support of his family. Also for many years he was either a supernumerary or a superannuate. In 1823 he removed to Georgia, and in 1830 was transferred to the Georgia Conference in the superannuate relation. He died in June, 1837. He said on his deathbed: "I have the best truth of the Bible to die on, the divinity of Christ. I have faith in this; all is consoling to me beyond the tomb."

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in South Carolina," pp. 268-271.

## CHAPTER XIII.

### THE REV. JAMES AXLEY AND HIS TIMES.

JAMES AXLEY was a rough ashler. A theological writer once said that when the Lord called a man to preach he did not need a call from the Church, and that when the Church called a man to preach he did not need a call from the Lord. This I do not believe. A call from the Lord is essential, and from the Church important. A parallel statement might be made to this effect: A man of genius needs no education, and an educated man needs no genius. Neither is this true. The desire for education and the capacity for it are an evidence of genius, or rather of talent. No amount of genius will qualify a man for great achievements, without at least a degree of education. But a man of genius learns rapidly, and with very limited educational opportunities he may achieve success. This was the case with Axley. He was a child of nature; but his mental and physical endowments were such that very limited reading, except in the Bible, and limited opportunities to learn, when he was young, by association with men and women of the best cultivation, sufficed to qualify him for wonderful success as an itinerant and local preacher, and especially for great force in addressing popular audiences. As he was a man of meager literary attainments and defective social culture, so also his intellect was not of the highest order. As a preacher, he

was neither a Richard Watson nor a John Wesley; but with a stalwart frame, a musical and powerful voice, a ready utterance, a gift for the command of language, an intense conviction of the truth of the gospel, an utter abhorrence of sin, an emotional nature capable of great depth and intensity of feeling, of inexhaustible humor and pathos, and withal, with the bravery of Julius Cæsar, he obtained great eminence among the pioneer preachers of the West. His eccentricities attracted attention and drew large audiences; but they were the least of his elements of usefulness; they were only the outcroppings of a marked individuality, perfectly natural. He made great mistakes, I think; but his very mistakes were overruled by God to the furtherance of the gospel. I am disposed to believe that he in a large measure filled the niche for which nature and the Holy Ghost designed him.

James Axley was admitted into the Western Conference in 1804, and located in 1822. His charges were: 1804, Red River, in Cumberland District, as colleague of Miles Harper; 1805, Hockhocking, Ohio District; 1806, French Broad; 1807, Opelousas, in Louisiana; 1808, Powell's Valley; 1809, Holston; 1810, Elk; 1811, presiding elder of Wabash District; in 1812 he was appointed presiding elder of Holston District, and remained in charge of it four years; he was two years in charge of Green River District, and three years presiding elder of the French Broad District (1818-1821).

Mr. Axley was a native of Cumberland County, Va. He was the oldest son of James and Lemuanna Axley. He had two brothers and two sisters. His

brothers were Pleasant and Robert, the former of whom once joined the Conference, traveled a year or two, and then served the Church many years as a local preacher. The family removed to Kentucky in one of the last years of the eighteenth century, and settled near what is now the town of Salem. James and Pleasant were converted at a meeting held by John Page and Jesse Walker about the year 1802. After the conversion of the Axleys the people of the community resolved to build a church. It was built of skelped logs. It was remarkable, or would be in this day, for not containing a single nail. The cracks were chinked and daubed. The puncheon floor was fastened down with wooden pins, and the door was made of light split slabs pinned together. There was no pulpit and no ceiling; the boards of the roof were laid on "ribs," and held there by weight poles. James and Pleasant Axley dedicated it by holding a two days' meeting in it, and it was christened "Union;" but this classical title soon gave way to the Anglo-Saxon "Brushy." On one occasion James Axley preached there, and during the sermon a large lump of clay fell out of the wall above him and dropped squarely upon the top of his head. After meeting, several friends went with him to his stopping place. One of these affected to be very humble, and said he had grown lukewarm, and indeed quite cold. He declared at last that he had become so insensible that he "couldn't feel anything." Axley, who thought he was assuming a little extra humility, dryly remarked: "It's a pity you were not where I was to-day. If you had been, you would have felt something." The Rev. Adam C. Johnson, M.D., says: "My first acquaintance

with James Axley was formed by accidentally meeting with him at times when he was visiting his friends, and he and Pleasant came up to camp meetings in our vicinity. He was then, I suppose, about thirty-five years of age, large, somewhat tall, slightly fleshy; and he had a large, open, serious, handsome face. He was a man of great gravity of manners, every word and movement being slow, deliberate, and full of dignity."

Mrs. Johnson, mother of Dr. Adam C. Johnson and the wife of the Rev. John Johnson, gives the following recollections of Mr. Axley:

When Mr. Johnson was sent to Livingston Circuit, in 1816, Axley was again our elder. At our first meeting I extended my hand and asked if he had forgotten me. "No," said he with a half-comic, half-reproachful air; "but you went and married off." And I should scarcely have understood the reproach, but Sister Wilcox had told me that Axley once thought about me; "he told Mr. Wilcox so." In those days to think about a girl was as far as a preacher ventured unless his mind was made up to marry her. There was no mock courtship merely to become acquainted with a girl and form a judgment of her.

We scarcely saw any company at all, except at long intervals some preacher on his way to quarterly meeting. Of these, perhaps none came oftener than our elder, Brother Axley, and certainly none could be more welcome than he. Always social, kind, and religious, it was always a pleasure to be in his company. On one occasion when he came I had no help but an idle and careless girl, whose principal business was smoking dried leaves in a cob pipe. We had a pleasant evening in Axley's company. In the night, however, I was attacked with what is commonly known as "weed in the breast," and next morning was very sick. I arose and prepared breakfast, my whole frame burning with fever; and O how painful was my head! Our supplies were scanty



enough, and I sent the girl to milk, that I might sooner have breakfast ready and have the milk for the table. After a long stay, she came, swinging an empty bucket and laughing immoderately at the cow's having kicked over all the milk. Still, I did the best I could and tried to be cheerful. Brother Axley, who was a man of tender sympathies, seeing that I was unwell, inquired what ailed me; and on my telling him, he said, "Well, Sister Johnson, your time is too hard." Then, turning to Mr. Johnson, he added earnestly: "Brother Johnson, your wife's time here is too hard. It is too hard! If I were you, I would not go off and leave her. I'd stay with her when she is sick, anyhow." Mr. Johnson looked exceedingly sad, so I tried to look as cheerful as possible, and told him to go on and trust in Providence, as, no doubt, I'd soon be well again. Still, as he bade me good-by and started away his voice trembled and I saw tears running freely down his face, and Brother Axley could not—he never could—resist the contagion of sorrow.

I was very subject to what we called sick headache, the paroxysms greatly affecting my mind, my vision, and, in fact, my whole system. One whole day I had suffered from an attack, and Mr. Johnson and Brother Axley came in at evening—Axley, of course, on his way to quarterly meeting. I told them how I had been suffering, and remarked that even then my voice sounded strange to me, as if it were not I that was speaking, and everything I saw seemed to be at an immense distance from me. Axley seemed to pay no attention to this remark, and after an early supper I went to bed. Of course, as we had but one room in the house, our guest was to occupy it with us, a temporary partition being supplied by hanging up a sheet between the beds. Mr. Axley and Mr. Johnson sat up long, conversing by the fire. Mr. Johnson told Mr. Axley that he had to preach the funeral sermon of old Brother Trooney, and was requested to take the text, "Thy sun shall no more go down," etc. He asked Axley for some thoughts upon it. Axley accordingly began, and I thought I never in my life heard such a strain as he poured forth in his own solemn, slow, and measured cadences for about half an hour. He and Mr. Johnson and myself

all "got happy" as he dwelt upon the blessed release from pain and sorrow. "Then," said he, turning to me as I lay—"then, Sister Johnson, we won't see things away off after we taste the leaves of that tree that's for the healing of the nations, and our voices won't seem strange to us unless it's from the way they ring with the music of glory."

Axley had a trait of which I do not remember to have seen any notice taken by those writing about him—a fondness for hunting. When he went home to visit his friends, most of his time was spent in pursuit of the deer and other wild game with which the forests of Livingston County then abounded. He was a successful hunter, and at times he had so little use for the flesh of his victims that he gave the carcass to any of the neighbors whose cabin stood near where the game chanced to fall.

His fondness for the chase was once the means of bringing him into imminent danger. Roaming through the barrens on foot, he discovered about sixty yards from him the shoulders of a splendid buck just visible through the tall grass. He drew up and fired, shooting away his very last ball. The deer, instead of falling, started, raised his head, and began to sniff the air to discover his foe. Axley saw blood begin to flow the moment he fired; but when he saw that the animal was still on his legs, he instantly dropped, and lay as close and still as possible on the ground. In a few seconds here came the enraged buck at full speed directly toward him; but, greatly to the relief of the prostrate man, he bounded squarely over his body as if it had been a log, and was soon beyond the reach of eye or ear in the distance. The now disarmed huntsman did not follow, though he expressed himself satisfied that he should have found venison by doing so.

In indirect reproofs Axley was inimitable. I heard him preach on the prodigal son, and he gave a history of him from infancy. It seems to me that there could not be a single sin, error, mistake, or folly in the management of children which he did not expose in his sketch of that wayward youth. He said not a word about family government, but I am sure that there was not a parent in the house who

did not feel that he was fearfully pommeling him. or her. All was so natural that everybody laughed, though everybody was hurt. Then everybody cried over the poor fellow's misfortunes, and it really seemed as if the house could not contain the shouts they raised over his welcome when he returned to his father's house.<sup>1</sup>

In this connection it may not be out of place to mention the incident of Axley's courtship, which took place after he had traveled a number of years. He was accustomed to make every important interest a subject of prayer. He opened his mind to his intended by letter inclosed in another letter to her brother, with whom she resided. He wrote to the brother that if he had any objections to the correspondence with his sister he wished him to burn the letter addressed to her, assuring him that that would end the matter. The letter, however, was delivered to her. It contained a proposal of marriage and a notice that he would be there on a given day to receive her answer. On the day appointed he came and obtained an interview with her. At his suggestion they kneeled together and prayed for divine direction. After prayer he wished to know whether she consented to the proposed union. She asked for time for reflection; but he insisted on an immediate response, and the result was marriage.<sup>2</sup>

The following is the substance of a letter from the Rev. N. H. Lee, D.D., written to Dr. Cunningham March 22, 1876. The account was received from James Rutter, Esq., about thirty years previous to the date of the letter. Mr. Rutter was then an old

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<sup>1</sup>Newspaper article of Rev. Adam C. Johnson.

<sup>2</sup>Finley's "Sketches of Western Methodism," pp. 236, 237.

man, at least seventy years of age. He represented the father of James Axley as a very strange man in his habits and manner of life. He was greatly devoted to hunting wild game and searching for minerals; he spent the greater part of his time in this way, remaining at home with his family but little; when away from home he lived in a cave the greater part of the time. The family was very poor, obscure, illiterate, and uncultivated in the extreme, but of good moral character. Axley, having no cultivation, intellectual or social, was, when he began to preach, very unpromising as a preacher. It was with much hesitancy that he was recommended by the class to which he belonged to be licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference; and in the Quarterly Conference there was considerable opposition to his licensure, and in the Annual Conference to his admission into the traveling connection. He was, at one time, attending a meeting at which was present Rev. Finis Ewing, one of the founders of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church. He had tried to preach during the meeting, and had exercised his gifts in exhortation and prayer. His lack of culture was so glaring that he made a very unfavorable impression upon Mr. Ewing as to the probabilities of his success as a preacher. Mr. Ewing deemed it his duty to tell him frankly what he thought of his prospects. He accordingly took him to one side and said to him that, while he had the utmost confidence in the purity of his motives and in his piety, he felt it to be his duty to tell him that it was his settled opinion that he never could make a preacher, and that he ought not any longer to try. Axley listened to Mr. Ewing without the slightest evi-

dence of embarrassment, and replied as follows: "It may be, Brother Ewing, as you say, that I will never make a preacher; but I am fully persuaded that, if I am faithful to God, I will make a *first-rate exhorter*." This story is characteristic of Mr. Axley. He was called of God to preach; he felt it, he knew it, and nothing ever deterred him from obeying the call. Though rough in his exterior, he was a man of a kind heart and refinement of feeling. He was generally counted a much more pious man than his contemporary and companion in labor for many years, Peter Cartwright.

An unpublished letter to Dr. Cunyningham from the Rev. Joseph P. Sneed gives some important items in regard to Axley. He says that James Axley built, partly with his own hands, the first Methodist meetinghouse west of the Mississippi. It was about five miles from Harrisonburg, La. He cut pine logs, peeled and hauled them; then persuaded the men of the community to assist him in raising the house. This was in 1808. Mr. Sneed visited the place in 1833 or 1834, and saw the remains of the old log house.

Axley cherished an inveterate hatred to slavery, and often preached against it. While on the Opelousas Circuit, in Louisiana, his tirades against slavery brought on him not only the censure of the Church, but of the community, the most of whom were slaveholders. He took the extreme ground that no slaveholder could be saved in heaven, or was a proper person for admission into the Church. His views presented from the pulpit made him so unpopular that he found it difficult to obtain food or shelter. But he

continued inexorable till relieved of his charge by the presiding elder, who found him in rags and well-nigh famished with hunger.<sup>1</sup>

He had a sermon which he preached occasionally, and which he called his "Sermon on the Abominations." The abominations were Masonry, slavery, whisky, tobacco, and the fashions. His text was: "Let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit," etc. He generally reserved this sermon for some great popular occasion. On one occasion, while he was preaching on this subject and denouncing Freemasonry as a secret order, a gentleman in the audience was so offended that he arose to leave the congregation, when Axley remarked: "That man has, no doubt, had the branding iron slapped to him." While he was denouncing the slaveholder another man arose to depart, when the preacher said: "Pomp's task is about out, and he is going home to give him a new one." While he was excoriating the whisky makers another man arose to leave, when the speaker remarked: "It's about doubling time, and he is afraid his liquor will burn." While he was denouncing the drinker another man started, when the preacher hastened the retreat by saying: "Let him go, poor fellow! he is as dry as a powder horn; he wants to wet his whistle." He said that he always pitied drunkards, who were the injured party. It may be interjected here that Axley often shed tears when speaking of the helpless, ruined condition of the drunkard. On this occasion he had no hard words for the poor victim of the drink habit. He next turned to the subject of

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., p. 421.

tobacco, and was especially severe on smokers. Smoking at that day was principally confined to women. An old lady arose to leave, when the rude orator observed: "If you will stop that old woman and examine her garments, you will find a dozen holes burned in her dress." The old lady sauced back, saying, "I wish to God I had my pipe," slapping her empty pocket with her hand, "I would smoke this minute, just for spite!"

On one occasion, while holding a class meeting, Mr. Axley, instead of asking a German brother who was present and who was an extensive tobacco raiser how he was getting along in the divine life, asked him how he came on worming tobacco. The German, nothing nonplused, replied: "Ah, killen de vorm on der backer, very well; ve has kilt many more as dem all." Mr. Axley then said: "You are the meanest people in the world. It's all *tobacco, tobacco*, and you do not raise corn enough to feed my horse when I come to see you." The German, somewhat excited, retorted: "Brother Axley, if you vill not deach your horse to eat derbacker, dot is not our fault. Deach him dis, and den give him blenty." "Never," said the indignant preacher, "if Bob [the name of his horse] were to chew tobacco, I would never speak to him again."

At another time, while holding a class meeting, he found a distiller among the members. Instead of catechising him as to his religious condition and prospects, he inquired of him particularly as to the process of making whisky, the price of the corn he bought, what he charged for his whisky, the number of hands he employed, the value of the slops as a hog feed, the quality of the article he manufactured, etc., and wound

up by pronouncing the business a lucrative one; but not a word was uttered in regard to religion.

Mr. Axley would not lodge with a man that made whisky, if he knew it. After going home with a brother who was a distiller one day, he got the scent of whisky before he dismounted, remarked, "I smell hell," and turned aside to stop with another brother.

Mr. Axley was as much opposed to the fashions as he was to slavery and whisky. He advocated neatness and cleanliness; but abominated ribbons, rings, ruffles, and new fashions. He said that if God had intended for women to wear earrings he would have made them with holes in their ears. On one occasion he said that he had understood that some women wore finger rings for rheumatism in their wrists, and he wondered if they wore rings on their toes for rheumatism in their ankles!

He was an extremist on new fashions. He was once placed at the door to admit persons to love feast. No rings, ribbons, ruffles, or roaches entered that love feast that day. By and by, however, a lady came to the door with her hands inclosed in a muff. Axley had never seen one before, and was unable to decide whether or not it was contraband; but giving the lady the benefit of a doubt, he said kindly: "Go in, sister, cat skin and all."

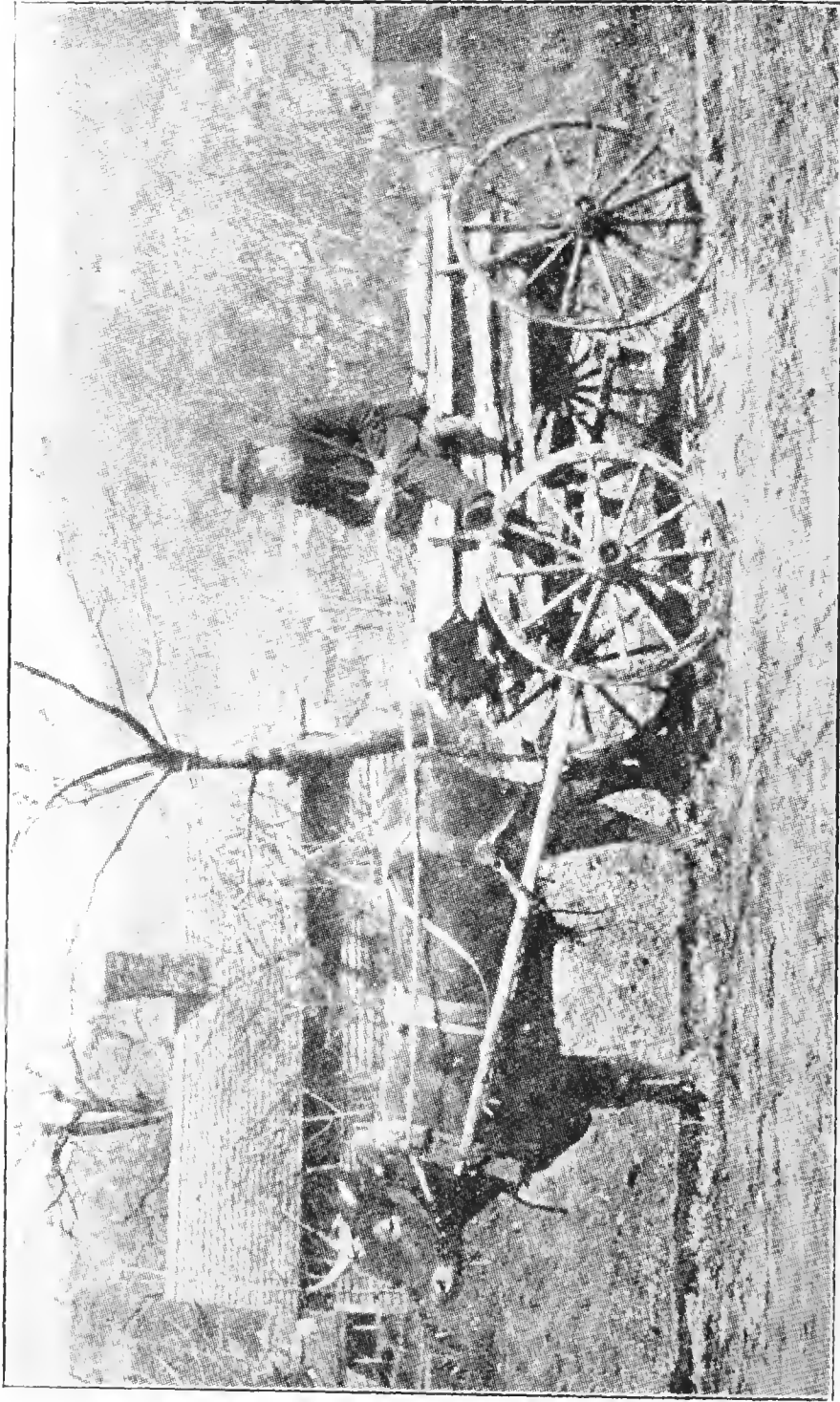
Even as early as Axley's day the children of well-to-do Methodists began to follow the fashions as to dress. This fact, united to pride and indifference to religion, led some of the Methodist and other young people to sit upright or merely to bow their heads during divine service, while the more religious element were upon their knees in prayer. This gave



great offense to Mr. Axley. At a certain camp meeting, wishing to bring all the people to their knees, he said: "Let us pray. Let all the Christians kneel, and all the hypocrites squat!" By squatting he meant merely bowing. Of course many who would have bowed knelt rather than seem to fall into the category of hypocrites.

We now come to an anecdote which makes Axley appear ridiculous; but as it was somewhat an index to certain features of his character, candor requires that it be given. One year Mr. Axley, while presiding elder, had under him Benjamin Edge, an eccentric bachelor. When at Conference the question was asked, "Is there anything against Brother Edge?" the presiding elder took everybody by surprise by answering, "Yes," for Edge was a man of irreproachable morals, and he and Axley were known to be devoted friends. "What is it?" said the Bishop. Mr. Axley, pointing to Edge, who sat near him, said: "Unless you can make Brother Edge quit riding in a gig he had as well locate. He has not visited a single member of the Church on his circuit this year that does not live on the big road. He is the poorest hand to drive a gig I ever saw. Brother McKendree, when Brother Edge came upon his circuit, he concluded all at once, that he must have a gig; and he was too poor to buy one, and nobody would give him one, and he determined to make him one himself, and he went at it. Brother Winton gave him a pair of hubs; I never did find out where he got the tires. Brother Brumley, a wagon maker, gave him the wood, old Sister Black gave him an armchair, which he fixed up for a seat, and Brother Armbrister gave him a

side of leather ; so he fitted his wheels, made his shafts, stuck his old armchair on them somehow, and then went to work to make him a set of harness ; and I do reckon he is the poorest hand at harness-making you ever saw, especially as to the bridle. He did not know how to work in leather. But after a while he got all ready, put old Ball into his gig, and away he went. But if a brother should ask him to go and see him, the question was, 'Where do you live?' and if the brother did not live on the big road, he would not go a step. And that's not all. Pride, you know, Brother McKendree, is apt to get a fall ; and so it was with him [pointing to Brother Edge]. Some-time ago he was going by old Sister Babbit's. She is a widow and has several old girls about the house, and they are very kind to preachers. He stopped before the door and was so proud of his gig that he would not get out, and the old woman and the girls came out to talk with him, and at length brought out a basket of apples and set them in the gig so that he might be eating apples while he was talking ; and old as he is, he loves to talk with women. Thinking that Ball might be hungry, the women brought a bundle of fodder ; but he could not chew it with the bit in his mouth, so they took off the bridle and slipped it over his head, away down to the collar. And there he was eating apples and cracking jokes with the women, and Ball chewing the fodder, when all at once Ball took a most violent scare, and away he went. They all hallooed 'Whoa!' but Ball would not heed them, and there was no use in pulling at the lines, for the bridle was not within four feet of his mouth. Ball had not gone far before the basket of apples turned



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over, and scared him, if possible, worse than ever. In the next place his old hat flew off and sailed like a buzzard; and I am told that no old horse in all East Tennessee was ever known to run faster in harness than old Ball did. He at last struck a stump, and the old man got one of the heaviest falls any man ever got, and broke his leg; he is lame now." Here Axley paused for a moment, and said: "Brother McKendree, I don't know what to do. I am afraid the old man is getting proud." He then took his seat and wept like a child.

One would have thought that the object of Mr. Axley was to get the laugh on his friend; but the strangest part of the matter was that he was perfectly sincere, while the Conference was convulsed with laughter. Bascom had raised a window, and run himself out of it as far as he could; others had got down between the benches; while Thomas Stringfield, who was doorkeeper, was flat down on the floor. As soon as order could be resumed, Edge's character was passed without a dissenting vote.

Axley was a fearless man. At a camp meeting he had occasion to reprove some young men who were misbehaving, and they determined to give him a whipping at their first opportunity. One of the number asked Mr. Axley to take a walk with him. After they had gotten a short distance from the camp ground the offended young men began to gather around him, and informed him that their object was to give him a whipping. "Well, now," said the preacher, "let's talk about that a little. I am an old man and alone; you are all young, and there are about a dozen of you. Suppose you do whip me? That will be no credit

to you. For a dozen young men to whip one old man will be thought to be a cowardly act, and so it will be; and then it will do me no good, for after you whip me I shall do just as I have done. And that's not all: I have a great many friends, and they will take up the quarrel, and sooner or later every one of you will get a whipping. Again, though you may be able to whip me (there are so many of you), yet I am very strong, and I will almost kill some of you, for I can strike like a mule kicking. Now, we had better make it up. Boys, I will tell you what I will do: I will promise never to reprove you again as long as you behave yourselves. Now, isn't that fair?" They said it was, and Axley and the boys were reconciled, and came back apparently good friends.<sup>1</sup>

The Holston Conference met in Madisonville, Tenn., in 1837. Axley, then a local preacher, attended. Bishop Morris, who held the Conference, was anxious to meet with the man of whom he had heard so much. He thus describes an interview with him: When walking toward his lodgings he saw a man coming to meet him, and was informed that it was Brother Axley. He describes him as about five feet eight inches high, not corpulent, but very broad and compactly built, formed for strength; his step was firm, his face square, complexion dark, eyebrows heavy, appearance rugged; dressed in the costume of the fathers, with straight-breasted coat, and broad-brimmed hat projecting over a sedate countenance.

As the Bishop neared the veteran he held out his

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<sup>1</sup>Communication from Dr. A. L. P. Green, in "Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., pp. 421-432.

right hand, and the following salutations were exchanged: "How are you, Brother Axley?"

"Who are you?"

"My name is Thomas A. Morris."

Surveying the Bishop from head to foot, Axley replied: "Upon my word, I think they were hard up for bishop timber when they made a bishop of you."

"That is just what I thought myself, Brother Axley."

"Why, you look too young for a bishop."

"As to that, I am old enough to know more and do better."

The two then walked to their lodging place, for they had been quartered at the same place. Axley, not accustomed to the use of the pen, had kept his records in his tenacious memory, and narrated many of the events of his life with an uncommon precision as to names and dates; and the Bishop claimed that he was never better entertained with the conversation of a fellow-sojourner in one week in his life.

Mr. Axley was accustomed to preach a temperance sermon in East Tennessee, where in his day distilling was very common. His text was: "Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works." (2 Tim. iv. 14.)

The following is an abstract of the discourse:

"Paul was a traveling preacher, and a bishop, I presume, or at least a presiding elder, for he traveled extensively; and he had much to do, not only in the government of the Societies, but also in sending the preachers here and there and yonder. He was zealous, laborious, and would not build on another man's foundation, but formed new Societies where

Christ had not been named, so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, he had fully preached the gospel of Christ. One new place that he visited was very wicked; Sabbath-breaking, dancing, drinking, quarreling, fighting, swearing, etc., abounded; but the word of the Lord took effect, there was a great stir among the people, and many precious souls were saved. Among the subjects of that work there was a certain noted character, Alexander by name and a still maker by trade; also Hymeneus, who was his partner in the business. Paul organized a new society, and appointed Brother Alexander class leader. There was a great reformation in the community. The people left off drinking, swearing, fighting, horse-racing, dancing, and all their wicked practices. The stills were worked up into bells and stew kettles, and thus applied to useful purposes. The settlement was orderly, the meetings were prosperous, and things went well among the people for some time. But one year they had a pleasant spring; there was no late frost, and the peach crop hit. I do suppose, brethren, that such a crop of peaches was never known before. The old folks, children, and pigs ate all they could eat, and the sisters dried all they could dry, and yet the limbs of the trees were laden with fruit. One Sunday, when the brethren met for worship, they gathered in groups in the meetinghouse yard, and got to talking about their worldly affairs, as you know people sometimes do; and it is a very bad practice; and one said to another: 'Brother, how is the peach crop with you this year?' 'O,' replied he, 'you never saw the like; the peaches are rotting on the ground under the trees. I don't know what to do with them.' 'How

would it do,' said one, 'to distill them? The peaches will go to waste, but the brandy will keep; and it is very useful in certain cases, if not used to excess.' 'I should like to know,' said a thoughtful brother, 'how you are going to make brandy without stills?' 'There will be no trouble about that,' replied one, 'for our class leader, Brother Alexander, is a good still maker, and Brother Hymeneus is another; and rather than see the fruit go to waste, I am sure they would be willing to resume their old trade and manufacture a few stills for us.'

"The next thing heard on the subject was a hammering in the class leader's shop; and soon stills were smoking in every brother's orchard, and the liquid poison was flowing freely. When one called on another, the bottle was brought out with the remark: 'I wish you to taste my new brandy; it is pretty good.' The guest, after tasting once, was urged to repeat the investigation, when, smacking his lips, he replied: 'Well, it is tolerably good; but I wish you would come over and sample mine. I think it is a little better than yours.' So they tasted and tasted till many of them got about half drunk, and I don't know but three-quarters.

"Then the very devil was raised among them, the society was in an uproar, and Paul was sent for to come and settle the difficulty. At first it was difficult to find sober, disinterested members enough to try the guilty parties; but at last he got his committee organized, and the first one arraigned was Alexander, who pleaded 'Not guilty.' He declared that he had not tasted, bought, sold, or distilled a drop of brandy. 'But,' said Paul, 'you made the stills, or there would



have been no brandy made, and no one would have been intoxicated. So he was expelled first, then Hymeneus, and finally the Church was relieved of all still makers, distillers, dramsellers, and dram drinkers, and peace was once more restored. Paul says, referring to the same cases of discipline: 'Holding faith, and a good conscience; which some having put away concerning faith have made shipwreck: of whom is Hymeneus and Alexander; whom I have delivered unto Satan, that they may learn not to blaspheme.' Of course they flew off the handle and joined the schismatics."<sup>1</sup>

The Rev. Peter Cartwright, a personal friend of Mr. Axley, to whom "a fellow-feeling" made him "wondrous kind," speaks kindly of him. He relates an anecdote of him illustrative of his simplicity and humility. When Mr. Axley was on the Hockhocking Circuit, he visited his friend Cartwright in Chillicothe at the residence of Governor Tiffin. The Governor and his amiable wife were delighted with Mr. Axley. They were called from the parlor to supper, and among other viands they had fried chicken, tea, and coffee. Mrs. Tiffin asked Mr. Axley if he would have chicken. He answered in the affirmative, saying that he was fond of it. She gave him an unjointed leg, which he took in his fingers and gnawed the flesh from it; then turning round, whistled for the lapdog and threw the bone to it. The Governor was excited to laughter, but suppressed it. Mrs. Tiffin frowned and shook her head at Mr. Cartwright, as much as to

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<sup>1</sup>Sketch of Axley by Bishop Morris in Findley's "Sketches of Western Methodism," beginning on p. 231.

say: "Do not laugh." When Mrs. Tiffin asked Axley if he would have tea or coffee, he requested a glass of milk, saying: "They have nearly scalded my stomach with tea and coffee." The Governor was under the necessity of suppressing his risibles again, while Mrs. Tiffin quieted Cartwright with a frown and a shake of her head. When the preachers retired to their bedroom, Cartwright said: "Brother Axley, you are the most uncouth creature I ever saw. Will you never learn manners?" "What have I done?" said Axley. "Done?" said Cartwright, and then repeated to him his rude conduct and words at the table. Axley burst into tears and said: "Why didn't you tell me better? I didn't know any better."<sup>1</sup>

This anecdote serves to show the disadvantages under which Mr. Axley labored, owing to his lack of early culture and of good society. Here was the awkwardness and rudeness of the backwoodsman united with unaffected Christian humility and the finest feelings. It is, however, due to the memory of this remarkable man to say that this was his second year in the ministry and that his superior talents brought him after this in contact with good society; that he was a close observer, learned rapidly, and forgot nothing; and that he acquired sufficient polish to make him an agreeable visitor to the best families in the land.

The following anecdote has been repeated again and again, but it is too good to go out of print. Judge Hugh Lawson White, who relates it, was a learned and able jurist and a distinguished statesman,

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<sup>1</sup>"Autobiography of Peter Cartwright," pp. 93-95.

and for many years a prominent member of the United States Senate from the State of Tennessee. On a certain day a number of lawyers and literary men were together in the town of Knoxville, Tenn., and the conversation turned on preachers and preaching. One and another had expressed his opinion of this and that pulpit orator, when at length Judge White said:

Well, gentlemen, on this subject each man is of course entitled to his own opinion; but I must confess that Father Axley brought me to a sense of my evil deeds—at least, a portion of them—more effectually than any preacher I ever heard. I went up one evening to the Methodist Church. A sermon was preached by a clergyman with whom I was not acquainted, but Father Axley was in the pulpit. At the close of the sermon he arose and said to the congregation: “I am not going to detain you by delivering an exhortation; I have arisen merely to administer a rebuke for improper conduct which I have observed here to-night.” This, of course, waked up the assembly, and the stillness was profound while Axley stood and looked for several seconds over the congregation. Then, stretching out his large, long arm, and pointing with his finger steadily in a certain direction, he said: “Now, I calculate that those two young men who were talking in that corner of the house while the brother was preaching think that I am going to talk about them. Well, it is true it looks very bad when well-dressed young men, who you would suppose from their appearance belong to some respectable family, come to the house of God and, instead of reverencing the majesty of Him that dwelleth therein or attending to the message of his everlasting love, get together in one corner of the house”—his finger all the time pointing as steadily and straightly as the aim of a rifleman—“and there during the whole solemn service keep talking, tittering, laughing, and giggling, thus annoying the minister, disturbing the congregation, and sinning against God. I’m sorry for the young men. I’m sorry for their parents. I’m sorry they have done so to-night. I hope they will never

do so again. But that's not the thing I was going to talk about. It is another matter, so important that I thought it would be wrong to suffer the congregation to depart without administering a suitable rebuke. Now," said he, stretching out his huge arm and pointing in another direction, "perhaps that man who was asleep on the bench out there while the brother was preaching thinks that I am going to talk about him. Well, I must confess it looks very bad for a man to come into a worshipping assembly and, instead of taking a seat like others and listening to the blessed gospel, carelessly stretch himself out on a bench and go to sleep. It is not only a proof of great insensibility with regard to the obligations which we owe to our Creator and Redeemer, but it shows a want of gentle breeding. It shows that the poor man has been so unfortunate in his bringing up as not to have been taught good manners. He doesn't know what is polite and respectful in a worshipping assembly among whom he comes to mingle. I'm sorry for the poor man. I'm sorry for the family to which he belongs. I'm sorry that he did not know better. I hope he will never do so again. But this is not what I was going to talk about." Thus Father Axley went on for some time "boxing the compass," hitting a number of persons and things that he was not going to talk about, and hitting *hard*, till the attention and curiosity of the audience was raised to the highest pitch, when finally he remarked: "The thing of which I was going to talk was *chewing tobacco*. Now, I do hope that when any gentleman comes to church who can't keep from using tobacco during the hours of worship he will just take his hat and use it for a spit box. You all know we are Methodists. You all know that it is our custom to kneel when we pray. Now, any gentleman may see in a moment how exceedingly inconvenient it must be for a well-dressed Methodist lady to be compelled to kneel down in a puddle of tobacco spittle."

Now, at this time I had in my mouth an uncommonly large quid of tobacco. Axley's singular manner and train of remark strongly arrested my attention. While he was stirring to the right and left, hitting those things that he was not going to talk about, my curiosity was busy to find out what

he could be aiming at. I was chewing and spitting my large quid with uncommon rapidity and looking up at the preacher to catch every word and every gesture. When at last he pounced upon the tobacco, behold! there I had a great puddle of ambeer. I quietly slipped the quid out of my mouth and dashed it as far as I could under the seats, resolved never again to be found chewing tobacco in a Methodist Church.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. McAnally gives the following personal description of Mr. Axley:

In height he was nearly six feet, with a heavy muscular frame, large bones, and but little surplus flesh; his chest broad and full, features strongly marked, large mouth and nose, heavy, projecting, shaggy eyebrows, high and well-turned forehead, dark gray eyes, remarkably keen, head large, hair worn very short and smoothed down before. His dress was plain, and for many of the last years of his life made of homespun material. His coat was cut in the regular old style, and always contained much more than what was ordinarily regarded as *quantum sufficit* of cloth. . . . His vest, or rather waistcoat, was long, cropped off before, with deep pockets, and made to button close up to the chin; ordinary pants, with a low-crowned, broad-brimmed hat and coarse, strong shoes, completed his outward adornments. Gloves, neckerchiefs, and such like appendages were generally dispensed with; nor was it often, if at all, that he was seen with a cane even in his old age. He stood quite erect, and walked with a firm, heavy, and rather quick step. The entire expression of his countenance, together with all his motions, was indicative of great firmness, not to say obstinacy.

In the pulpit he stood erect and nearly still, gesticulated very little, only occasionally turning from side to side that he might see all his auditors. If the weather was warm, it was very common with him, after opening the service with singing and prayer, deliberately to take off his coat, hang it in the pulpit, hold his Bible in one hand, thrust the other

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<sup>1</sup>Findley's "Sketches of Western Methodism," pp. 243-245.

deep down into his capacious vest pocket, and thus proceed with his sermon. Few men, perhaps, ever had a finer voice, and never yet have I met with one who could control it better. So completely was it under his command that the *manner* in which something was said often affected the hearer more than the thing itself. He was a natural orator after the best models—those which nature forms.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. McAnally speaks of a notable sermon preached on Sunday by Axley at a camp meeting at Cedar Springs, about two miles from Athens, Tenn., in the autumn of 1833. He brought out his great sermon on the abominations. The congregation was very large. There were seats enough under the shed to seat comfortably over two thousand people. From a thousand to fifteen hundred people were standing around or seated on chairs or temporary seats. When he began, every idler about the ground, together with the better-disposed people, gathered as closely around the place of worship as possible. As he progressed, they pressed nearer. In the rear of the congregation many arose and stood on the seats. Others farther away climbed the posts of the shed and seated themselves on the stays and girders, while beyond them many had climbed the high fence that inclosed the encampment, a line of which ran near by, and a few, Zaccheuslike, climbed into the trees and rested among the branches. It was interesting to witness the alternations of feeling expressed in the countenances of the hearers—smiling, weeping, irrepressible laughter, then groans, sobs, and cries all over the encampment. Calmly and dispassionately he talked. Every eye was fixed upon his statuelike appearance, every ear was

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. McAnally, in "Home Circle," Vol. III.

attuned to his words. He spoke deliberately and plainly. Now elevating his voice, which dismissed its fatherly tenderness, he denounced the sins and follies of the people in tones of bitter invective. Again his tones changed, he pictured the dreadful consequences of sin; the cold chills crept over the hearer, his blood curdled in his veins, he was filled with horror. Once more the preacher changed his theme and his manner, and his voice was as plaintive as the wail of a dying babe; weep you must, you could not avoid it. Yet the preacher stood erect and still, and spoke right on.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. McAnally's estimate of Axley as an orator, it occurs to me, is overwrought. But the opinion of such a man as McAnally on any subject is worthy of consideration. Here is his estimate:

I have listened to popular orators among our statesmen, to distinguished pleaders at the bar, to the preachers who were followed and eagerly heard by enraptured thousands; but the superior of James Axley, in all that constitutes genuine oratory and true eloquence, I have not heard.<sup>2</sup>

Axley's strong faith, rich experience, and sensitive, emotional nature made him a good love feast talker. The Rev. Jacob Young, D.D., thus speaks of hearing him in a Conference love feast. He discovered in the Conference room a large, plain-looking man by the name of Axley. At length he arose to his feet and said: "I feel that I have something to say." He gave a plain, unvarnished narrative of his conviction, conversion, and call to the ministry. There was such a holy unction attending his words that the talk deeply

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<sup>1</sup>Dr. McAnally, in "Home Circle," Vol. III.

<sup>2</sup>"Home Circle," Vol. III.

affected every one in the house, from the bishop down to the youngest preachers. McKendree seemed delighted into raptures. The love feast closed with this talk. The preachers and people were too much overcome with emotion to continue the speaking exercises any longer.<sup>1</sup>

Axley, like many of the early preachers, was a good singer. His strong faith, powerful emotional nature, and strong, mellow voice, uniting with the natural gift of music, made him an excellent leader in congregational singing. When he was in the Opelousas country he called for lodging at the house of a well-to-do widow, after a day's ride without his dinner. The lady, judging from his appearance that he was a Methodist preacher, positively and rudely refused to let him stay. The weather was inclement, and he had reason to believe that if he did not obtain lodging here he would have to spend the night in the woods without food or shelter, or a bed upon which to rest his weary limbs. A new-made fire which he saw within was tempting to his chilled and weary body. He ventured to step in to warm a little. While sitting there a feeling of melancholy came over him, and, turning his thoughts heavenward, he began to sing :

"Peace, troubled soul, thou needest not fear;  
The great Provider still is near:  
Who fed thee last will feed thee still;  
Be calm and sink into his will."

As he proceeded his faith grew stronger and soared above the sorrows of earth. The lady's tears unbidden began to flow; the grown daughter was melted

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<sup>1</sup>"Autobiography of Rev. Jacob Young."



into tears, and all the children wept. When the song had ended, the lady informed Mr. Axley that he could stay, and ordered a servant to put up his horse, and the daughter added with half-suppressed emotion: "Feed him well."

We often hear of "the prayer of faith;" this was the song of faith. And I sadly ask, How does the soulless, operatic solo in our modern churches compare with the solo Axley sang on that evening?

Axley was especially characterized by the fervency and effectualness of his prayers. I mention one instance upon the authority of McAnally who had it from eyewitnesses, men of integrity and the strictest veracity. It occurred at Muddy Creek Camp Ground, some twenty miles below Knoxville. The country was suffering from a drought which threatened the utter ruin of all the growing crops. A camp meeting was in progress, and at eleven o'clock on Sunday Axley entered the pulpit with a heavy, troubled countenance, opened the services, and in the prayer, which was long and earnest, he pleaded for rain. He arose from his knees with a still clouded countenance; and instead of announcing his text, he sang a stanza or two and called the congregation to their knees again, and again pleaded most earnestly for rain. He arose from his knees a second time with his countenance still shaded, and the shade was apparently deeper than before. He seemed to hesitate; but after a few seconds he sang the third time and called the congregation to prayer. He arose from the third prayer with a cheerful and even joyous countenance. He announced his text, and went through the sermon without the slightest allusion to his course in the open-

ing exercises. It was afterwards remarked by some that his plea for rain in the third prayer was entirely different from the pleas of the first and second. In the last the plea was for infants and animals that had not sinned. Now, call it a coincidence, or call it what you may, the fact remains that only a few hours afterwards and during the afternoon there fell a copious shower.

Agnostics and ritualistic Christians will pronounce this an accidental coincidence; but who can say that that rain did not come in answer to Axley's fervent prayer? Why should we believe the story of Elijah bringing rain, and yet reject the story of Axley? If God does not hear prayer for temporal good, then the Lord's Prayer is misleading and the whole Bible is a collection of cunningly devised fables. Why should a righteous man under the Jewish dispensation have more power with God than a righteous man under the higher and more powerful dispensation of Christianity?<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Axley located to enable him to rear and educate his family; but in his local relation, although he addicted himself to common labor, he never lost the evangelical spirit. But it is likely that he would have fared better financially if he had continued in the regular work, for he became financially embarrassed by indorsing for a merchant who afterwards failed in business.

Axley was of the same type of preachers with Peter Cartwright, James Dannelly, Simon Peter Richardson, and Sam Jones. Usually evangelical in style, he oc-

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<sup>1</sup>Newspaper article of Dr. McAnally.

casionaly cut and slashed. His opposition to slavery may have done good in the long run, but at the time it prejudiced many good people against the Methodist Church and deterred many from joining it. On that question he was narrow and fanatical. The liquor traffic was the monster evil of his day, as it is of ours, but his denunciations of it were not always well tempered. Violence always weakens a good cause. Among those who fight the evils of the day the noisiest are not always the most useful. The horse that pulls with a jerk or prances carries less of the load than the gentle and steady beast that keeps his traces in constant tension. Violent denunciation excites and irritates, but its reaction is not favorable to the cause of morals and religion. Opposition to gaudy and extravagant dress among Church members, especially in their attendance on divine service, is right. Paul's opinion and advice on that subject are well worthy of prayerful consideration. But to class dress with revelry, drunkenness, the liquor traffic, gambling, etc., as some have done, is a great mistake. Axley's mistake was not so much in opposing ostentation and extravagance in dress as in condemning certain specified forms of it—that is to say, in opposing the fashions. It did not occur to him that in adhering to old fashions against the new he was adhering to fashions that were once new, and just as objectionable in their day, in the eyes of Puritanic Christians, as the new were to him in his day. Without any intention to apologize for meretricious ornamentation, which is really in bad taste, I hesitate not to say that the Church always makes a mistake when she attempts to become the milliner and mantuamaker of her mem-

bers. Neatness and plainness are always commendable, but the love of adornment is perfectly normal. It is right that we should make ourselves in person as agreeable to our friends as possible; for God has authorized ornament by placing around us a beautiful universe, paving the heavens with azure and strewing the earth with flowers and loveliness.

I am of opinion that the use of tobacco is a great physical evil; that it probably is doing more to shorten human life than alcohol itself. It is also indirectly a moral evil. But a cool and dispassionate presentation to the public of its evils will do more to deter men and women from the tobacco habit than such tirades as Mr. Axley was accustomed to perpetrate.

It is highly improper to indulge in offensive personalities in the pulpit, since the preacher has the floor, and a reply might be construed into a disturbance of public worship. Firing upon offended parties retiring from the audience, as related in one of the foregoing anecdotes, was neither just nor polite. But Axley's faults were only spots on the sun.

While traveling in this section he rode one day along the main street of the town of Dandridge, and as soon as he came opposite to a tavern in which there was a barroom he roared like a lion, yelling: "Hell fire! hell fire! hell fire!" This showed his earnestness and courage, but it was possibly not the best way to remedy the evil.

I have passed the residence, some two miles south of Sweetwater, Tenn., where Mr. Axley spent his last years. It was at that time a plain farm residence, showing signs of age and decay. The farm lay in a beautiful section, and from what I could see

of it I judge that it abundantly remunerated the toil of the preacher-farmer and his sons.

The Rev. James Sewell, a local preacher, gave me the following items of Mr. Axley: He lived within three miles of Axley, and was with him in his last illness. Axley was like nobody else. He had some severe sermons on drunkenness. A drunkard, T. H., had dropped into the neighborhood. After hearing a severe sermon on drunkenness from Mr. Axley, he called at his house. Mr. Axley invited him to come in, but he declined, saying that he had come to whip him. Axley urged him to come in and take his seat, as he proposed praying before they engaged in the fight. He read, knelt, and prayed, and prayed especially for H. When the prayer was ended, H. arose weeping and trembling, and left. That was the end of the fight.

Axley had a neighbor by the name of Sneed, who became a Baptist preacher, but at the same time ran a distillery. Axley, Sneed, and Sewell were holding a meeting together at a schoolhouse. One morning Axley got up early and went before breakfast to Sneed's stillhouse, where he was at work. He called him out and said: "Robert, I don't understand you; yesterday you preached Jesus Christ and him crucified, and now you are distilling death and damnation and selling it to your neighbors." Sneed became angry, but Axley rode off. Sneed reflected that getting angry would do no good, and said to himself: "This business does not look well in a minister; I'll quit it, I can live without it." He abandoned the business, and always gave Axley the credit for his reformation.

Mr. Axley's final illness lasted about three weeks.

He suffered much, but bore his sufferings with Christian fortitude. When asked by a member of the Church if it was convenient to have prayer with him, he replied: "It is always convenient to have prayer in my house." Just before he took his flight he called first his wife and then his children, one by one, and, laying his hands on their heads, imparted to them his dying blessing, asking each one to meet him in heaven. He also made the same request of his friends who were present, and in a few moments dismissed his spirit. He died February 23, 1838.

## CHAPTER XIV.

### FROM 1822 TO 1824.—SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE Tennessee Conference met in Huntsville, Ala., November 26, 1823. Bishops McKendree and George were both present, and presided alternately. Thomas L. Douglass was elected Secretary, and Robert Paine Assistant Secretary.

At this Conference the following delegates were elected to the General Conference to meet in Baltimore May 1, 1824: Hartwell H. Brown, Thomas Stringfield, William McMahan, Robert Paine, George Ekin, J. W. Kilpatrick, John Tevis, Thomas L. Douglass, and Thomas Maddin. These were all present at the opening of the General Conference, and bore their part in the business of the body. There had been a gratifying increase in the Holston country. The numbers in Society were reported as follows:

#### KNOXVILLE DISTRICT.

	Whites.	Colored.
Tennessee Valley.....	538	103
Sequatchee Valley.....	435	21
Hiwassee .....	455	17
Tellico .....	509	32
Little River.....	840	134
Knox .....	873	100
Powell's Valley.....	534	37
Nollichucky .....	1,636	172
	5,820	616

## HOLSTON DISTRICT,

Lee .....	716	56
Clinch .....	646	61
Tazewell .....	520	61
New River.....	884	108
Ashe .....	230	15
Abingdon .....	1,069	154
Holston .....	1,560	202
Carter's Valley.....	800	151
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	6,425	808
Total .....	12,245	1,424

Grand total, 13,669, an increase of 3,073, a large majority of the increase of the entire Conference.

The various charges of the Tennessee Conference reported a net increase in the membership of 4,343; of this increase, 81 were colored. The aggregate membership of the Conference was 25,509, of which 2,982 were colored.

These figures indicate that the labors of the ministry, traveling and local, in Holston had been crowned with great success; indeed, at the camp and quarterly meetings there had been a succession of Pentecosts—a revival wave of great power. The additions to the Church do not adequately measure the amount of good done. Properly to estimate this, it would be necessary to take into the account the permanent toning up of the spirituality of the membership, the fresh impulse given to the piety of other Churches, the conversion of hundreds who connected themselves with other denominations, and the moral and spiritual uplifting of outsiders—indeed, the general renovation and purification of society throughout the Holston section. Most of the men who were ap-



pointed to the Holston charges in 1822 are unknown to fame; but they have deserts far exceeding those of the military heroes of the nation, whose praises will live in song wherever the English language is spoken.

In a previous chapter we met with the name of Mrs. Millie Thomasson in connection with the Stone Dam Society and Camp Ground. We hear of this good woman again in 1822 in connection with the Chestua Society. This and the preceding year, as we have seen, were years of great religious prosperity in Holston, and God was enlarging the borders of Methodism; new Societies were springing up and new camp grounds were being established.

Mr. John Thomasson, in a letter to Dr. Cunnyng-  
ham, says:

In 1822 Millie Thomasson and six children moved to Monroe County, Tenn., and all joined by letter the Chestua Society, then in Hiwassee Circuit, James Witten being preacher in charge. In 1823, James Y. Crawford being preacher in charge, Chestua camp ground was erected and a camp meeting held; and, although the country was sparsely settled, there were some forty conversions and about as many accessions to the Church. At that time Hiwassee Circuit embraced all the territory known as the Hiwassee purchase. The preacher made a round in four weeks, riding in that time some five hundred miles, preaching from twenty-five to forty sermons each round. The camp ground square was soon occupied with camps built close together, and there were several on the outside beginning a second row. Millie Thomasson, my mother, was a widow for more than forty years, and always camped, sick or well. One year she was so low in health that the children thought she could not be hauled to the camp ground, but she said: "Yes, boys, you can prepare a sled and take me; and if I die, I will be already at the graveyard, and I would just as soon die there as anywhere." We took her and she got better, and lived fifteen years after-

ards. She finally died at the age of seventy-eight, and had triumphant death.

Religion is not only good for the soul, but, by the cheerfulness and hopefulness which it inspires, it is good also for the body. The serenity which it gives and the joy which it imparts cannot but exert a salutary influence over the nervous and vascular systems, and tend to prolong life. Grief and melancholy can kill, and joy and cheerfulness can keep alive. This short and simple story of Millie Thomasson, one of the wonders of Methodism in central and lower East Tennessee, is an illustration of the power of the grace of God to sustain and comfort a human soul under the burdens and amid the trials of life.

At the Conference of 1823 the following were admitted on trial: James J. Trott, James McFerrin, Thomas A. Strain, Isaac Easterly, Robert Kirkpatrick, Francis A. Garrett, Elbert F. Sevier, Creed Fuln, John Dye, Jesse F. Bunker, Felix Parker. Lewis Garrett, Sr., and Joshua W. Kirkpatrick were readmitted.

The appointments made for the Holston charges this year (1823) were:

#### KNOXVILLE DISTRICT.

Thomas Stringfield, presiding elder.  
 Tennessee Valley, Jacob Hearn, Isaac Easterly.  
 Sequatchee Valley, Abraham Overall, Robert Kirkpatrick.  
 Hiwassee, James Cumming, Felix Parker.  
 Tellico, David B. Cumming, James D. Harris.  
 Little River, George Ekin, James G. H. Speer.  
 Knox, Thomas Maddin, Francis Owen.  
 Powell's Valley, John Bowman, Thomas J. Brown.  
 Newport, Josiah Daughtry, Jesse Cunnyngnam.  
 Green, William S. Manson, James Y. Crawford.

## HOLSTON DISTRICT.

John Tevis, presiding elder.

Lee, John Bradfield, William Cumming.

Clinch, William Patton.

Tazewell, Abram Still.

New River, Lewis S. Marshall, Isaac Lewis, Josiah R. Smith.

Ashe, John Craig.

Abingdon, William P. Kendrick, E. F. Sevier.

Holston, David Adams, Josiah Rhoton.

Carter's Valley, John Kelley, Creed Fulton.

Hawkins, Edward T. Peery.

The General Conference of 1824 divided the Tennessee Conference, setting off the Holston Conference, which was made to include all that part of the State of Tennessee lying east of the Cumberland Mountains, and that part of Virginia and North Carolina embraced in Holston District; and also Black Mountain and French Broad Circuits, previously belonging to the South Carolina Conference.

McFerrin says: "This was a large territory, embracing many beautiful valleys and lofty mountains. The lands were fertile, and the country romantic and healthy. The rivers and smaller water courses were clear as crystal, while the thick forests everywhere, with the ever-varying scenery, made the country grand."<sup>1</sup>

The division left to the Tennessee Conference a membership of 11,828 white and 1,749 colored members, and gave to the Holston Conference a membership of 13,443 white and 1,491 colored members. The aggregates of the two Conferences as reported in 1824

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. III., p. 274.

were: Whites, 25,271; colored, 3,240; total, 28,511. In the list of whites were included 189 Indians, not reported separately. This was an increase in the old Tennessee Conference of 3,002. Sixty-three preachers fell to the Tennessee Conference, and forty-one to the Holston Conference.

It is only in the last quarter of a century that the Methodist Church has opened its eyes to the immense influence of woman in the spread of the gospel. Women have always constituted the bulk of the Christian Church, certainly always its decidedly more loyal and spiritual element; but woman's rights and capabilities have up to a very recent date been largely ignored. An editorial in *The Western Arminian and Christian Instructor* of February, 1826, correctly expressed the sentiments of the Church in relation to the rights and duties of women at that time, and, indeed, for a long time afterwards. I take the following excerpt from an editorial in that issue in relation to the "Wesleyan Female Society of Jonesboro, Tennessee," which was organized in the summer of 1824, a few months prior to the organization of the Holston Conference. It reads as follows:

How worthy an object of benevolence does this society contemplate!—to extend the good cause of the Divine Redeemer, that religion to which we are indebted for our elevation above the red men of the forest. The lovely and retiring modesty of the female sex, together with their delicate structure, forbids that they should ever rival the hardy sons of Levi in the gross services of the altar. The kind Author of our being never designed them to "go out into the highways and hedges" in search of lost sinners, to cross the everlasting mountains and traverse the dreary waste in order to proclaim "glad tidings of good things to all people." And yet

they may be abundantly useful—yea, they are greatly so. They not only welcome weary pilgrims to their friendly mansions and hospitable cottages; but they warm, clothe, and feed them with the best they have.

These words were penned by the father of the good woman who now conducts the *Woman's Missionary Advocate* of the M. E. Church, South—a periodical that represents a woman's organization which is not satisfied with woman's work in the home, but which is carrying on missionary operations on a large scale, not only addressing public audiences, but raising funds and sending women missionaries into the high-ways and hedges of both Christendom and heathendom.

This Jonesboro Society was a pulsation of that irrepressible vitality which Methodism had awakened in American womanhood, and a prophecy of the work of woman for woman and for the world, which we now witness with so much admiration and satisfaction.

The society was composed altogether of females, and its object was to raise a fund to be appropriated exclusively toward the support of the gospel in the Holston Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The regular meetings of the society were to be held on the first Mondays in January, April, July, and October in each year. The constitution—a well-drafted instrument—is before me. Accordingly at the second session of the Conference, which met in Jonesboro in October, 1825, the society turned over to the Conference \$40.25 to assist in supplying the deficiencies in the salaries of the preachers.

This may properly be considered the birth of the woman's movement in Southern Methodism, although

it had a long and helpless infancy. The secretary of the society was Mrs. Harriet Ross.

The first session of the Holston Conference began at Knoxville, Tenn., November 27, 1824. Bishop Roberts presided, and John Tevis was chosen secretary. At this Conference the following were admitted on trial: William T. Senter, David Fleming, John S. Henley, Branch H. Merrimon, Moses E. Kerr, P. Cumming, L. Jones, Robert J. Wilson, Goodson McDaniel. Located, Lewis S. Marshall. Transferred to the Kentucky Conference, John Tevis.

The appointments were as follows:

#### ABINGDON DISTRICT.

David Adams, presiding elder.  
 Lee, A. Still, B. H. Merrimon.  
 Clinch, John Craig, John S. Henley.  
 Tazewell, E. T. Peery.  
 Giles, John Kelley, P. Cumming.  
 New River, J. R. Rhoton, William C. Cumming.  
 Ashe, James D. Harris.  
 Abingdon, William Patton, Isaac Lewis.  
 Blountville, James G. H. Speer, Creed Fulton.  
 Holston, Josiah Daughtry, David Fleming.

#### KNOXVILLE DISTRICT.

Thomas Stringfield, presiding elder.  
 Knox, George Horne, E. F. Sevier.  
 Powell's Valley, J. R. Smith.  
 Cumberland Mountain, James Y. Crawford.  
 Kingston, L. Jones.  
 Washington, John Bowman, Goodson McDaniel.  
 Sequatchee, John Bradfield.  
 Tellico, A. Overall, Robert Kirkpatrick.  
 Hiwassee, William T. Senter.  
 Upper Cherokee Mission, to be supplied.

## FRENCH BROAD DISTRICT.

Jesse Cummyngham, presiding elder.

Carter's Valley, William P. Kendrick, M. E. Kerr.

Hawkins, Jacob Hearn.

Greene, W. S. Manson, F. A. Owen.

Newport, James Cumming, Robert J. Wilson.

French Broad, D. B. Cumming.

Black Mountain, Isaac Easterly.

Little River, George Ekin.

Maryville, Thomas J. Brown.

The fact that the first session of the Holston Conference was held in Knoxville naturally induces a retrospect. Knoxville has become an important, and, indeed the chief, center of Holston Methodism, and I am sure our readers will not object to a scrap of history as to its founding.

The first number of the first newspaper published within the borders of the State of Tennessee was issued at Rogersville November 5, 1791. The printer, publisher, and editor was George Roulstone. Though first published at Rogersville, the paper was entitled *The Knoxville Gazette*, as it was intended that it should be published at Knoxville as soon as that town should be laid off, for Governor Blount had determined to fix the seat of government there. In February of the next year Knoxville was laid off by Col. James White, and the *Gazette* was removed to it soon afterwards. Ramsey, writing in 1852, says: "It was issued from a cabin erected on the lot lately owned by Mr. Samuel Bell, on Gay Street." The *Gazette* was a small sheet, but as the pioneer newspaper of the State it engaged an interest to which its intrinsic merit would not entitle it. The publisher was a man of more than ordinary capacity. He seldom indulged

in abstractions, but confined himself to chronicling the happenings of the day.<sup>1</sup>

Colonel White laid off the town so as to consist of the necessary streets and sixty-four lots. The town was named in honor of Máj. Gen. Henry Knox, at that time Secretary of War, under President Washington. Several buildings were erected in 1792. The infant city was at that time within the bounds of Hawkins County. But Knox County was established by an ordinance of Governor Blount in 1792. The first courthouse was built of squared logs let down close together. It was a small building, not more than fourteen feet square.

Knoxville was at that time the seat of the territorial government, and so continued till the territory became a State. Knoxville became the seat of government of the State of Tennessee, and so continued to be for many years after.

Its successors were Kingston, Murfreesboro, and Nashville; and in 1817 it again became the seat of government, but not permanently. The flood of emigration soon carried the center of population beyond the Cumberland Mountains, and with it the seat of government. Knoxville lost the scepter, but not her ancient honors. Here Soollecuttah, Kunoskeskie, Nemtooyah, Chuquilatague, Enolchi, Talohtuski, and other chieftains of the Cherokee Nation met Governor Blount in council, smoked the pipe of peace, and formed the treaty of Holston; here the pious White, the founder of Knoxville, pitched his tent in the wilderness, lived his life of patriarchal simplicity and

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<sup>1</sup>Semicentennial address by Rev. T. W. Humes.



unostentatious usefulness, and here he died. Here the infant territorial government was cradled, and nurtured in its youth by the paternal care of Blount, of Anderson, and of Campbell. Here, too, the sages of 1794 met and made laws. Here, too, was born the infant commonwealth that has since grown into a great State—Tennessee.<sup>1</sup>

The first church in Knoxville was erected in 1812, and was of brick. It was a Presbyterian meeting-house. What for many years has been known as the First Presbyterian Church was erected on the site of "the old brick meetinghouse," and under the administration of the Rev. James Park, D.D., it was recently supplanted, on the same lot, by the present large and beautiful structure.

Blount College was chartered by the Territorial Legislature in 1794, and stood north of the town as it then was; and in 1808 the Legislature of Tennessee chartered East Tennessee College, and Blount College was merged into it. East Tennessee College was first built on the land of the block in which the First Baptist Church now stands. It was a two-story frame structure, near the northwest corner of the block, and was used until 1827, when the old central building on University Hill was finished, and the school was moved into it. In 1840 East Tennessee College became East Tennessee University, and in 1879 it became the University of Tennessee. Thus it will be seen that Blount College was the embryo of the present State University.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Ramsey's "Annals of Tennessee," pp. 638, 639.

<sup>2</sup>Letter of Rev. James Park, D.D.

Among the first settlers of Knoxville were James White, James King, Mr. McLemee, Governor Blount, Hugh Dunlap, Samuel and Nathan Cowan, Joseph Greer, John Chisholm, Mr. Stone, Capt. John Crozier, and Major Arthur Crozier.<sup>1</sup>

In 1824 Knoxville did not rise above the dignity of a village. The writer stayed a night in Knoxville in the year 1851, at the hospitable residence of Samuel Patton, D.D. The bulk of the town was then what is now the old part of East Knoxville, and the remainder lay along Front, Main, and Cumberland Streets. West and North Knoxville did not exist. Even during the War between the States the town scarcely rose above eight thousand inhabitants; it now numbers seventy-five thousand. It has put on city airs, and is destined to become a city of great importance. It is a Methodist center, and the Methodists have there a number of pastoral charges, with a large membership of wealthy, refined, and deeply pious people.

In some reminiscences contributed to the *Methodist Advocate* in 1887, the Rev. William C. Graves says: "I recollect well when the first session of the Annual Conference was held. I was then about nine years old; it was late in November, 1824. The session was held in the red house in East Knoxville. Either then or before or afterwards I formed the acquaintance of nearly all the preachers that were present on that occasion. Several of them were about father's house during the session."

The "red house" spoken of by Mr. Graves was on

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<sup>1</sup>"Annals of Tennessee," pp. 557-560.

the south side of Main Street, opposite the Methodist church on the hill in East Knoxville, and was the property of the Hon. Hugh Lawson White, who kindly tendered it to the Conference for its sessions.

While dwelling upon events in connection with the town of Knoxville I cannot forbear to copy from the *Knoxville Daily Sentinel* of October 30, 1905, a brief notice of a case of longevity which does honor to the climate of East Tennessee and the health-inspiring conditions that prevailed more than a hundred years ago where now the growing city of Knoxville is enlarging its borders and building its palaces:

To be older than the United States government, to have been a toddling infant when Washington was inaugurated President in the eighteenth century and to walk erect in full possession of her faculties under Roosevelt's administration in the twentieth century, to have witnessed all the stirring events of a wonder-working century, to have survived out of the old time into ours, has been the good fortune of Mrs. Mary Ramsey Woods, of Hillsboro, Oregon, who is probably the oldest woman in the world.

In her one hundred and nineteenth year Mrs. Woods is still quite active. Daily she walks about the garden of her daughter's home with whom she lives, and sits upon the porch in sunny weather to converse with visitors. She keeps well posted on the events of the day and maintains a lively interest in politics.

Mrs. Woods was born on May 20, 1787, at Knoxville, Tenn., the year that the Northwest Territory was organized and two years before the United States constitution went into effect. Her maiden name was Ramsey, and her father burned the brick and built the first brick structure in Knoxville.

At an early age Mary Ramsey married Jacob Lemons, and was left a widow seventy-three years ago, at the time that Andrew Jackson was nearing the end of his first term as

President. As a young matron, she distinctly remembers the War of 1812, when her father strapped his blankets across his shoulders, took down his old rifle, and fought the British until the close of the struggle.

After the death of her husband, she accompanied her daughter, Mrs. C. B. Southworth, and her husband across the plains to Oregon, arriving in Hillsboro in 1853. She was then sixty-six years old, but rode a bay mare the entire distance from Tennessee, her daughter and her husband driving an ox team.

Soon after arriving in Hillsboro Mrs. Lemons married John Woods, with whom she lived happily for many years. At Hillsboro she built the first hotel, which occupied the site of the opera house now being constructed. The couple ran the hotel until forty years ago, when her daughter, Mrs. C. B. Reynolds, formerly Mrs. Southworth and her only surviving child, succeeded her in its management.

Mrs. Woods had four children by her first husband: Mary J. Lemons, who died in Tennessee two years ago at the age of ninety-eight; Isaac Lemons, who died in Kansas City, Mo., forty years ago; Nancy E. Bullock, who died at Hillsboro thirty-eight years ago; Mrs. C. B. Reynolds, who is now living in Hillsboro, and, while seventy-five years of age, is devoting her life to the care of her aged parent.

Mrs. Woods weighs one hundred and thirty pounds, dresses and cares for herself, and walks about the yard and the house. She is hard of hearing and blind in one eye, but otherwise hale and hearty. She is able to thread a needle and does much sewing. About six months ago she cut a tooth. Her memory is good as to past events. She became a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church one hundred and six years ago, and is now a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

It is my purpose to give a history of the Methodist people, so far as the materials for such history have come to hand. In accordance with this purpose it is proper here to introduce a brief notice of one of the

Methodist pioneer women who assisted in laying the foundation of Methodism in upper East Tennessee.

Mrs. Mary Rockhold, an amiable lady and eminent Christian, daughter of Robert Washam, was born in Wythe County, Va. Though brought up in the Quaker faith, she embraced religion at the age of fifteen and attached herself to the Methodist Church. At the age of twenty-three she was married to Mr. Thomas Rockhold, of Sullivan County, Tenn. In 1816 they removed to Blountville, Tenn., where they spent the remainder of their days. When they settled in Blountville, there was but one person in the place who was a member of the Methodist Church—a lady by the name of Johnson. Mrs. Rockhold had a passion for doing good; but this passion was “inflamed by reason, and by reason cooled.” She generally contributed to the support of the pious and humble ministers of Christ, and fed and clothed the gracious Master in his members. Shortly before her death she contributed fifty dollars toward building a union chapel in Blountville, and at her request fifty dollars more was sent by her husband to the Holston Conference to supply the wants of the preachers.

About twelve months before her death she professed at a camp meeting to have experienced the “power of sanctifying grace,” and went home praising God for the perfect love that casteth out all fear. She appeared renewed not only in soul, but in body also. She died September 7, 1824. The Rev. David Adams preached her funeral sermon; text, Job xix. 23-27. This text she had a number of years previously selected for her funeral discourse.

Charles Rockhold came to Sullivan County, Tenn.,

about the year 1795, and settled on Holston River near the old Bushong Furnace. He was of English and German descent. He had three sons (Thomas, William, and Francis); also three daughters (Constance, who married a Mr. Booher near what is now Bristol, Patience, who married a Mr. Riley, and another daughter whose name I have not learned). Thomas Rockhold first appears on the records of Sullivan County in February, 1799. He was Sheriff of Sullivan County during the years 1805-06. Thomas and William Rockhold sold goods in Blountville about that time. William Rockhold was also State's Attorney about the same time. William Rockhold bought a farm on Holston River in 1815, and there he lived and died. It was on this farm that Rockhold's Camp Ground was established. About the year 1815 he married Harriet Netherland, a sister of Col. John Netherland, of Rogersville, a lawyer of celebrity. All of William Rockhold's children were members of the Methodist Church except the two oldest daughters, who married Presbyterians. It may be proper here to note that the Rev. Thomas K. Cattlett's second wife was Margaret Netherland, a sister of Mrs. William Rockhold.

John Tevis was admitted into the Ohio Conference in 1815. He became supernumerary in the Kentucky Conference in 1828, and was superannuated in 1835. He traveled in the Ohio Conference till 1820, when he was appointed presiding elder of the Holston District, in the Tennessee Conference. He remained on this district four years. He was transferred to the Kentucky Conference in the fall of 1824.

John Tevis was born in Baltimore, Md., January

6, 1792. He was of English extraction, and his ancestors were communicants of the English Church. Unable to reconcile the dogmas of Calvinism with the general atonement taught in the New Testament, he turned away from the beggarly dogmas of the schools to the word of God, and by prayer and meditation sought the path of duty and safety. On the 9th of May, 1813, he attended a class meeting in Shelbyville, Ky., and gave his name as a seeker of religion and a member of the Church on trial. About four months afterwards he was made to rejoice in a sense of sins forgiven. He felt impressed that it was his duty to preach the gospel, but he hesitated on account of his limited education, which was such only as was furnished by the common schools of his day in Kentucky. Encouraged by William Adams, who at that time was traveling the Salt River Circuit, he made known his impressions to his excellent father, who, though he had designed him for another calling, yielded to his son's convictions. On the 10th day of March, 1815, he left his father's house to enter upon the work of the itinerant ministry. He was among the most useful preachers of his day. The four years in which he presided over the Holston District were years of remarkable spiritual prosperity in that district. When he was appointed to the district, the membership numbered 2,920; when he left the district, it numbered 7,991—a gain in four years of 5,071, or a gain of nearly 174 per cent; that is to say, the membership was nearly trebled. Among the many added to the Church in these years was Miss Julia Ann Hieronymus, the remarkable lady who afterwards became his wife.

Mr. Tevis and his excellent wife had the honor of founding Science Hill Academy, in Shelbyville, Ky.—the first female institution of learning founded in the West—an institution that had a long and useful career, educating hundreds of young women who became ornaments to society and blessings to the Church.

Mr. Tevis had strict notions as to ministerial dignity and propriety, which governed his deportment. He abhorred sin and folly in others; but, though he occasionally felt it to be his duty to rebuke wrongdoers, he was neither sour nor censorious. He practiced what he preached, and lived what he enjoined upon others. His constant sanctity awed others into reverence for him. As he would walk along the streets, men would remark: "There goes a good man." Though a superior preacher, he was especially powerful in prayer. It grew into a proverb: "If you want a revival, Brother Light must preach, Brother Stamper must exhort, and Brother Tevis must pray."

Though confined to his bed by paralysis for many years before his death, he suffered very little pain. His chamber was the sweetest and most cheerful place in the house. The chamber where he met his fate was quite in the verge of heaven. He died January 26, 1861.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Tevis and his excellent wife were well known in Holston, and are still remembered with affection and admiration by some of the oldest inhabitants. Their names are household words in many Methodist

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., pp. 352-356.





MRS. JULIA ANN HIERONYMUS TEVIS.

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families in Southwestern Virginia and East Tennessee. Mr. Tevis became acquainted with Miss Hieronymus while on the Holston District, and they were married at the residence of Capt. Francis Smith, in Abingdon, Va., March 9, 1824, the ceremony being performed by the Rev. William P. Kendrick.

Miss Hieronymus was born in Clarke County, Ky., December 5, 1799. For the purpose of educating his children, Mr. Hieronymus removed to Winchester, Va. There she laid the foundation of her education. From Winchester her father removed to Washington City, where she completed her course of study. She was not educated for a teacher, but to fit her for being an ornament in society. But man proposes, while God disposes; and it was evidently the design of Providence in equipping her with superior natural and acquired endowments, as she was equipped, that she should lead a career of great usefulness in the education of the girls and young women of Kentucky and other States of the Union, as she did. A reverse in the financial affairs of her father induced her to engage in teaching. She first taught in Wytheville, Va., boarding in the family of General Alexander Smyth. General Smyth was a first-class lawyer, a man of learning and refinement, and he had a most excellent family in an intellectual, social, and moral point of view. Mrs. Tevis, in her book, "Sixty Years in a Schoolroom," says:

And now like a sunbeam of light across the shadows of the past comes the memory of my much-loved pupil, friend, and companion, Frances Smyth, who, though only fourteen years of age, rendered herself both useful and agreeable to me. A certain expression of frankness about her won my

heart immediately. So natural and without disguise was her character and so winning the simplicity of her manners, due to her childlike innocence and sweet feminine timidity, that she soon became the sunshine of my daily existence, helping to dispel the clouds that sometimes gathered about my heart. There was something noble in the lineaments of her face, brilliantly lighted up at times and corresponding with her graceful figure. Her eyes were as "bright and blue as the summer sky," and her mouth trembled with half smiles, arising from the very buoyancy of inward gladness. Her complexion was enriched by the sweetest and most delicate bloom, allied to a tone of cheerfulness, and her every motion was so light and free that a poet might have supposed her some "Hebe or fair young daughter of the dawn." She was my constant and efficient aid in carrying out every arrangement; yet she was gentle, confiding, and one of the most obedient of my pupils.

This lovely little girl, who may find mention again in the story of Holston, afterwards became the wife of Col. James Piper, and later of the Rev. John M. McTeer. She was unusually endowed by nature, her educational advantages were excellent, and in her mature years she was a model of piety. She was a wonderful woman.

Mrs. Tevis gives an account of her first difficulty in her school in Wytheville. It was with a little girl ten years of age, the youngest child of a large family, who had been badly spoiled. She was noisy, indolent, and impatient of restraint. Continually teasing and annoying others, she went on from bad to worse. One afternoon her resistance to authority reached its climax, and Miss Hieronymus took her to an adjoining apartment, spanked her with a slipper (probably the first whipping she had ever received), and then requested her to go home and not to return. When

Miss Hieronymus entered the dining room next morning General Smyth was cold and reserved. Frances ventured one kind glance from her sunny blue eyes; but Nancy, her younger sister, sat trembling, with flushed face, and sweet little Nannie Henderson, a granddaughter, seemed fluttered and amazed at the teacher's presence. No one spoke at the breakfast table except by way of cold courtesy. Miss Hieronymus would not have taken a step backward, if she had lost her school. But lo! she had scarcely ended calling the roll next morning in the schoolroom, when in walked the refractory pupil, accompanied by the other four of the family. You can imagine the teacher's relief when she read a note handed her by the refractory pupil, running thus: "Please receive my penitent little girl again, with the positive assurance that everything shall be done to prevent future trouble; and we will aid you in subduing and punishing any disobedience on her part. We are satisfied that you will do everything in your power to promote her highest interests, and are willing to leave the matter in your hands."

The struggle was over, and the victory was on the side of law and order. The girl remained with Miss Hieronymus as long as she remained in Wytheville, and became an obedient pupil; and the family became and continued to be among her best friends.<sup>1</sup>

Capt. Francis Smith, of Abingdon, having offered Miss Hieronymus the situation of governess in his family, with a salary equal to the income of her school at Wytheville, she accepted. Captain Smith

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<sup>1</sup>"Sixty Years in a Schoolroom," pp. 164-168.

lived near Abingdon, his place being afterwards called "The Meadows." He was a lawyer and farmer, and a man of wealth. She taught Captain Smith's daughter and three others. Her pupils were Mary Smith, Mary Campbell, Rachel Morgan, and Elizabeth Trigg. At that time Abingdon was a mere village. The Presbyterians had a church and pastor; but the Methodists had no meetinghouse, and none was built till 1823, and it was a very small framed building.

Among the young friends of Miss Hieronymus was Rachel D. Mitchell. At the age of eighteen, in the year 1822, she was married to Mr. George V. Litchfield, a resident of Abingdon. That this was a wise and happy union was proved by a long life of wedded happiness. The bride was the ideal of innocence and loveliness; the bridegroom was a model of dignified manhood, whom it was natural to esteem and love. Noble sons and lovely daughters grew up like olive plants around their table. Mrs. Tevis had the pleasure of educating two of her daughters. I might mention here that one of these became the wife of Dr. William G. E. Cunnyingham. The house of Mr. Litchfield was always a preachers' home, and a free and luxurious hospitality was dispensed under his roof. The delicacy and richness of the viands which visitors enjoyed at the table of Mrs. Litchfield were often a matter of admiration. This stanch Methodist family had much to do in sustaining Methodism in Abingdon, and some of their posterity are yet among the leading supporters of the Church in that community. Mrs. Litchfield was a sister of John D. Mitchell, father-in-law of the Rev. Henry C. Neal, of the

Holston Conference. Mrs. Tevis in her autobiography mentions as among her friends Mrs. Joseph Trigg, at first a society woman, but after her conversion a devoted Methodist and exemplary Christian. She was subsequently married to the Rev. Joseph Haskew, and "Aunt Bettie Haskew" is everywhere remembered in Southwestern Virginia as a burning and shining light. Another dear friend of Mrs. Tevis was a Mrs. Henderson, a widowed lady, a niece of William King, who established King's Salt Works. Her maiden name was Rachel Findlay. She was the oldest sister of Col. Alexander Findlay and Mrs. Bettie Haskew. After Miss Hieronymus became acquainted with her she married Peter I. Branch, an elegant gentleman, whose son, Walter Branch, was, after the death of his parents, reared and educated by Father Haskew and wife; and in his day he was a consistent Christian, devoted Methodist, and Church worker.

Mr. Francis Smith's wife was the widow of William King, and a most estimable Christian woman. She was a Presbyterian; but her kindness in entertaining Methodist preachers led to the acquaintance between Mr. Tevis and Miss Hieronymus, which ripened into holy wedlock. Mary Smith, the pupil of Miss Hieronymus, afterwards became the wife of Gov. Wyndham Robertson. Mr. Robertson, though not a Methodist, is well known in Methodist circles, as the founder of the Robertson Oratorical Prize Medal of Emory and Henry College. At an early day in the history of Virginia Mr. Robertson was elected Lieutenant Governor of Virginia under Governor Tazewell, and upon the death of Governor Tazewell he became Governor. The Francis Smith place was named "Mary's

Meadows" after Mary Smith, wife of Governor Robertson.

The conversion of Miss Hieronymus is an interesting story, and cannot but be profitable to my readers. When she came to Virginia, she was a society young woman; and though not passionately fond of the dance, she did not decline an invitation to dance with gentlemen whom she had reason to respect. Her nature was essentially unfitted for fashionable society; but she went into it because it was easier to go than to refuse the kindness that forced on her the uncongenial amusements of fashionable life.

Some amusing mistakes were made in attempts to speak the unpronounceable name "Hieronymus." At a dancing party in Wytheville her first partner asked the pleasure of dancing in the reel with "Miss Roundabuss;" the next, a lad of seventeen, very pompously called her "Miss Hippopotamus." A young disciple of Æsculapius thought he had it precisely right when he addressed her as "Miss Heterogeneous;" but all agreed at last that it was safer and more convenient to call her "Miss Julia Ann."

Within the great soul of this young woman there was an "aching void" which the world could not fill. She read her Bible much and prayed often; but she was not satisfied. She cheerfully relinquished those frivolous amusements, into which she had been drawn more by circumstances than by taste—never having been fully satisfied that they were in keeping with the wants of an intellectual nature.

She availed herself of the privileges of a protracted meeting in Abingdon. Against the protest of Captain Smith she attended the love feast, which made a deep

impression upon her heart, now open to the reception of the truth. She then and there decided to abandon the world and become a Christian without compromise. She declined to attend the usual Fourth of July ball, to which she was expected to accompany her pupils. She did this at the risk of adverse criticism and the forfeiture of the friendship of some. But her heart was fixed; and her relief can be imagined when, on announcing her decision to her young pupils, they all cheerfully acquiesced. In her new departure she was applauded and encouraged by her friend, Mrs. Joseph Trigg, "Cousin or Aunt Betty," as she was familiarly called, who had now become a Methodist, combining the characteristics of Martha and Mary, and was as prominent a member of the strictest of all sects as she had been a leader in the fashionable world. At a quarterly meeting held some eighteen or twenty miles from Abingdon, Miss Hieronymus attended the love feast, and arose and requested the prayers of God's people, asking that the Lord's Supper might be administered the next day in order that she might have an opportunity to pledge herself in solemn covenant to Jesus by partaking of the emblems of the eucharistic feast; and she promised that at the next circuit preaching in Abingdon she would join the Church. Her request as to the administration of the Lord's Supper was granted. The next morning she anticipated the sun in rising that she might read, pray, and meditate upon the solemn covenant which she was to make that day; and O how earnestly did she pray that she might not eat and drink to condemnation! She caught a glance of herself in the old-fashioned mirror just before she de-



scended to the breakfast room, and was startled at the incongruity of her dress for the sacramental occasion. Her large double collarette of book muslin seemed more conspicuous than ever before; her hair, dressed *a la mode*, with curls on the face, would, she thought, contrast strangely with the Quaker-dressed people with whom she was to be associated. So she exchanged the collarette for a simple muslin kerchief folded over the bosom, and combed her hair smooth behind her ears.

After it became known that Miss Hieronymus had become a Methodist, her gay young friend, John Mitchell, would call every day or two to see how she was getting along "in making herself as much like old Mother Russell as possible."

The appointed day for circuit preaching in Abingdon came. She walked through the orchard, the nearest way to town. "It was," to use her own language, "a charming morning. Summer was arrayed in her brightest tints. The blue sky above was cloudless and beautiful;" and to her "the air was never so balmy, the trees so green, or the songs of the birds so sweet. The dew sparkled in the flower cups," and she "rejoiced in the assurance that all these lovely objects were the exponents of God's wisdom, tokens of his benevolence, and the perfect image of his greatness."

The Rev. Josiah Rhoton was the preacher. The sermon over, Miss Hieronymus was formally inducted into the Church, after which she was completely surrounded by Christian friends, who wept and rejoiced over her as a new-found sister.

In September, 1823, Miss Hieronymus attended a camp meeting at Sulphur Spring, Smyth County, Va.

At this camp meeting she obtained the assurance of faith. She knew that a change had taken place in her heart, that the things she formerly delighted in no longer captivated her senses; but she also knew that she had not experienced the radical change, the psychic revolution, called conversion, or, more properly, regeneration. She thus describes her full initiation into the divine life:

On an afternoon of a day that had been filled with intensely interesting scenes I went with a few pious friends up into the mountain to pray. "Aunt Betty Trigg" was among the number, her soul full of love and prayer. We knelt beneath the wide-spreading branches of an oak, whose leaves had been repeatedly agitated by the breath of fervent prayer, resolved to wrestle like Jacob until the blessing was obtained. All prayed; but one voice was heard above all the rest, and then came the hallowed silence of humble saints absorbed in prayer for me, while I felt the full force of that expression, "I can but perish if I go; I am resolved to try." It was a season of holy influences. . . . I felt willing to yield all to the will of God and place my hopes of happiness for time and eternity at the foot of the cross, and then came a "joy and peace in believing" that words could not express, and I sat like Mary at the feet of Jesus and wept with that sweet song in my mouth:

"In such a frame as this  
I'd sit and sing my soul away  
To everlasting bliss."

The conversations, prayers, and sermons of the presiding elder now became more interesting than ever to Miss Hieronymus. Before Mr. Tevis left the house of Captain Smith in the autumn of 1823 to visit his father, near Shelbyville, Ky., he prayed, and his prayer was more than usually fervent, and it was characterized by a simple and lofty eloquence that

kindled a devotional spirit in every heart; and when he bade the family farewell there was a glow of holy feeling in his face. As Miss Hieronymus walked to the window to watch his receding form, she was conscious of a deeper interest in Mrs. Smith's model preacher than she was willing to acknowledge to herself. The attachment proved afterwards to be mutual. A few letters passed, a candid interview was had, an engagement was entered into, and, the two hearts being already one, the two lives were made one.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. and Mrs. Tevis founded Science Hill Academy in 1825. This school had a small beginning, but eventually became popular and extensively useful. After the death of Mr. Tevis, Mrs. Tevis carried on the school with marked success. Her connection with the school lasted for more than fifty years. Her superior talents, splendid education, great dignity of character, deep piety, and extensive usefulness have won for her an enviable name.<sup>2</sup>

Thomas Maddin was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1818, located in 1826, and was readmitted in 1837.

His only Holston charge was Knox Circuit, to which he was appointed in 1823, Francis Owen being his colleague and assistant. His valuable labors were wholly dispensed within the Tennessee Conference. I met him at the General Conference at Louisville in 1874. I happened to be sitting in the same pew with him during a missionary rally, which, though

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<sup>1</sup>"Sixty Years in a Schoolroom," pp. 161-164.

<sup>2</sup>Redford's "Life of Kavanaugh," pp. 94-96.

addressed by Bishop Pierce and others, was rather dull till Dr. McFerrin took the stand. The Doctor was unusually humorous that evening, when Dr. Maddin, turning to me, said in a deprecating manner: "I wonder if they are going to turn it into a circus?" This was my only contact with this good man, who then and there impressed me as a solemn, earnest man of God. Dr. Maddin several years since went up to his reward.

Thomas Maddin was born in Philadelphia, Pa., February 13, 1796. His father was a Roman Catholic. His mother was brought up among the Quakers. Thomas early went to confession. He was selected to attend the priest in the celebration of mass, and became quite a proficient *thuriferarian*. He was put upon a preparatory study looking to the priesthood. Soon after this, being put to business in the city, he drifted at first from his religious moorings. Fortunately, however, he was eventually thrown with Methodists, and became impressed with their pure morality, uniform piety, and love for the means of grace. He attended Methodist meetings, and was powerfully convicted and converted. The priest sought an interview with him and endeavored to argue him out of his new departure. The young man replied: "Mr. Harrold, you cannot expect me, a boy, to dispute with you, a man; but I have one thing to say: I know that God, for Christ's sake, has pardoned my sins." The priest raised his hands in holy horror and exclaimed: "You are a lunatic! you are a lunatic!" But the young man stood by his experience, and could not be swerved from his purpose to be a Methodist. The priest parted with him affectionately, expressing

the hope that he would yet be a good Catholic; but he would never after that speak to him when he met him. Thus did the grace of God rescue this promising young man from a religion of dead forms, very little better than the veriest heathenism. The priest plainly showed that he knew nothing of the life and power of true religion, and that he was a formalist and bigot. Mr. Maddin's father disinherited him; but his mother and many of his relatives were happily converted, and became members of the Methodist Church. He emigrated to the State of Kentucky; and, impelled by a desire to save souls, he began to hold meetings and, indeed, to exhort and preach; but for some time he declined to take preaching license. At length, however, he was persuaded by the Rev. James Ward to allow his application for license to go before the Quarterly Conference of Jefferson Circuit, by which, after examination by the presiding elder, Marcus Lindsey, he was authorized to preach. Mr. Maddin was an intelligent man and a good preacher. He served some of the most important charges in his Conference, and as a Christian and minister was always above reproach. He was respected and venerated wherever he went.<sup>1</sup>

Samuel B. Harwell was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1818, and located in 1825; was readmitted, in the Holston Conference, in 1846; probably placed on the superannuate list in 1858. He is not mentioned at all in the minutes of 1857, but appears as a superannuate in the Minutes of 1858; and he sustained this relation to the day of his death, which occurred

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. III, pp. 34-45.

at his home, in Roane County, Tenn., August 16, 1874. He was a man of strong mind, was familiar with the doctrines of the Bible, and unswerving in his devotion to his Church. He was above mediocrity among the Holston preachers of his day. During a long life and a long public career he maintained a consistent Christian character. He was long afflicted with dropsy, of which he died. He was patient in suffering, unwavering in his trust in Jesus Christ, and he departed this life in blissful hope of a better one.

The Rev. Joseph A. Bilderback tells me that he once heard Samuel B. Harwell, then in advanced life, preach at Winton's Chapel, in Roane County, Tenn. His voice was weak and husky at the beginning, but it cleared up as he proceeded, and it at last showed great strength and compass. Harwell that day was remarkably clear in argument and forcible in expression. He preached with great spiritual power, and while he was explaining the process of repentance, faith, and regeneration, a young lady present was happily converted. She was a member of a large class of young ladies in the Sunday school, whose teacher was the wife of Mr. John A. Winton. All her pupils had been brought to Jesus except this one, who on that day found him precious to her soul.

Jesse Green was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1817. His Holston appointments were as follows: 1817, Ashe; 1818, Clinch; 1820, Powell's Valley; 1821 and 1822, New River. In 1823 he was transferred to the Missouri Conference, where he held some of the most responsible stations, for many years being presiding elder. During his itinerant career his fields lay in Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois,

and Missouri, and he died a member of the St. Louis Conference.

His father, Jesse Green, was born in Delaware, June 14, 1753. He was united in marriage to Isabella Gibson in 1781. Her father, James Gibson, was a captain in the Revolutionary army. Jesse Green, Sr., and James Gibson followed the fortunes of John Sevier, Governor of the State of Franklin, and adhered to him in his captivity. While he was a prisoner in the hands of the authorities of North Carolina, they pursued his captors across Yellow Mountain, assisted in his rescue at Morganton and in bringing him back in triumph to the frontier.

Jesse Green, Jr., was born in East Tennessee, in the Winton neighborhood, on the south side of the French Broad River, some seven miles east of the present site of Dandridge, November 29, 1791, and was from a child a sprightly, active boy, of a lively, playful temperament, but possessed of a tender and affectionate disposition. He was a friend and playmate of Jesse Cunnyngham. His parents were devout Methodists. His literary opportunities were limited; in youth he acquired only the rudiments of an English education. In his day a man who could read, write, and cipher to the single rule of three was considered a respectable scholar, and a man who had ciphered through the book, and besides studied grammar, was something of a prodigy of learning! However, Mr. Green was not such a prodigy.

He attended a camp meeting at Winton's, afterwards called Muddy Creek Camp Ground, and there he was powerfully convicted and converted. When his first ecstasy had partially subsided, he began to exhort

those around him to come to Christ, and went all over the camp ground recommending the Lord Jesus to all whom he met. Here he also connected himself with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He was licensed to exhort by John Bowman. While he was yet an exhorter he was drafted into the army, and remained in it from October, 1814, to May, 1815. He joined General Coalter's Brigade at Knoxville, marched to Mobile, and was at the fort when it surrendered to the British. He was a good soldier, and maintained his Christian integrity in the army. Having returned from the army, he felt powerfully impressed that it was his duty to preach the gospel. He was licensed to preach February 15, 1817, under John Henninger, presiding elder. On his circuits he had great success; indeed, he was a revivalist. He was almost idolized by the people. Mr. Green was from childhood eager for knowledge; and while other children were at play he would be seen sitting among the older people, listening attentively to their conversations.

After Mr. Green entered the ministry, he was uniformly serious, but always affable and sometimes humorous. One of his leading traits was firmness. He was not a reed shaken by the wind. Jesse Cunyngnam once accompanied Mr. Green to one of his appointments on New River Circuit, and Cunyngnam's description of the manner of making coffee at that time on that circuit will give the reader some idea of the plain manner of life of our forefathers in this country. The description is substantially as follows: A boiler of ten or twelve gallons' capacity was filled with water and hung over the fire. A quart or more of corn meal, parched in an oven, was then put into a



vessel, and some of the hot water was poured over it, with a quantity of cream or sweet milk; then the mixture was poured into the pot over the fire, and a considerable quantity of maple sugar was dropped into it. It was boiled for a few minutes, and then taken from the fire, and was ready for use. The family and guests then seated themselves around the table, where there was an abundance of well-baked corn bread, and they ate heartily, and thanked their Heavenly Father for setting for them so bountiful a table in the wilderness. This was a sample of much, but not all, of the fare on Mr. Green's Circuit.

The following is in substance a letter written by Rev. Creed Fulton in 1851: About the year 1822, at a quarterly meeting held for the New River Circuit, in Grayson County, Va., by the Rev. John Tevis and others, Mr. Fulton for the first time saw Mr. Green, who soon became an esteemed acquaintance of Mr. Fulton's father and family, on whom he bestowed pastoral visits accompanied by prayer and religious advice. He took great pains with young Fulton, with a view of introducing him into the ministry. Under his personal care Mr. Fulton first left his father's home. He took the young man with him to the northern part of New River Circuit—a territory probably embracing a dozen or more pastoral charges at the present time. It was in the winter. A few days after this tour was commenced the weather became intensely cold. One Monday they proceeded northward from the town of Wytheville. They soon found themselves advancing upon mountain scenery of exceeding grandeur. As they wended their way amidst the spurs and gorges of the mountains, the forests were adorned with feş-

toons of hanging icicles, which served as prisms to analyze the sunbeams and reveal the beauties of the rainbow, that melted away into rich and bewildering varieties of color. Such scenery served to beguile the tedium of the journey amid those wild and frozen ridges. When they reached the summit of the first mountain, their vision was instantly filled with grandeur and sublimity, captivating the utmost powers of imagination in bewildering admiration. Other and higher mountains beyond loomed up before them. The silence of the intervening vales was disturbed only by murmuring streams gliding away. A mantle of snow spread over hill and dale glittered in the sunbeams beneath ice-bound forests, and invested those high walls of nature with superlative sublimity. Mr. Fulton never saw nature in any mood that seemed more eloquent of the power and majesty of the Creator. The day was fast wearing away as they were descending a rugged mountain declivity, rendered not a little serious from the apprehension that a slip of horses' feet might precipitate them into the greatest perils. The valley below presented to the eye nothing but a wild and cheerless wilderness, apparently the chartered home of the ferocious children of the woods. The scene and approaching night turned the soul back on itself, and the stripling preacher thought of a place of rest and of the comfortable home he had so lately left. He thought of a mother's kindness and a father's care—of brothers and sisters. With anxious look he turned to "Brother" Green and said: "What kind of people and place shall we have to-night?" He answered: "You shall soon see." After toiling two miles farther, they found the place. Who could describe it? It

was a miserable log cabin with the cracks all open, and a sort of pen for horses—these were the improvements. As Mr. Green crossed the floor he smote a pig, which came squealing and dashing by the young sprout of divinity. The next animal he raised was a dog; this creature, being briefly chastised, fled, uttering many cries and lamentations. There was also a gander reposing in one part of the room. But the good woman said: “Brother, the gander is sick; I will have him taken out.” The floor was deeply covered with dirt and ashes. There was absolutely no bed in this miserable hovel. On a scaffold set in one corner of the room the family passed the night. The supper was fat bear meat, coarse bread, and wild tea. But now Brother W—, the man of the house, arrived, and seemed glad to find the preachers as his guests; and he rendered very important service in keeping up a log heap fire to war against the terrible cold. The hour of rest came, and, prayers being over, the preachers spread their bearskins and used their saddles for pillows and their cloaks for covering. Thus situated, they endured “hardness as good soldiers” until about midnight, when they found it necessary to awaken the landlord, that he might renew the log heap. At last came welcome day. They touched lightly as the bear meat and other dishes were passed at the breakfast table. Mr. Green notified the young preacher that he must preach that day. The hours to him seemed to hasten. Soon the sons and daughters of the coves began to appear. O what hoosiers they were! Such costumes the young divine had never seen. He tried to preach from: “By whom shall Ja-

cob arise? for he is small." It was astonishing to see how the people wept under the fervor of the young orator. Mr. Green followed with a forcible exhortation, attended with great effect. The scene changed: they saddled their horses and forged their way over hill and dale, through snow and ice and awful narrows, until night came on, and cold and hunger pressed them sorely. They reached the valley of East River, in what is now Giles County, and soon the light of a domicile appeared. This sent a gleam of joy through their shivering spirits. The bark of a friendly dog gave notice of their approach, while the goodman of the house met them with an overflowing welcome and hurried them into the house. When they entered, their eyes and hearts were charmed with the sight of one of the sweetest and cleanest chambers that the energy and ingenuity of woman ever adorned. In the center of the room stood a dining table in complete trim, while before the fire sat glittering in brightness a coffeepot and dishes, with fried ham and biscuit. The scene, in such marked contrast with the entertainment of the previous evening and with a smiling lady sympathizing with and consoling her jaded guests most fervently, seemed a new world to the embryo itinerant. No poet could adequately describe with what relish and delight the weary preachers addressed themselves to the hospitalities of that Christian home. It was an hour when life seemed to be new, and the capacity for enjoyment full.

But to return to Mr. Green in the West. He took sick in a protracted meeting in which he preached a number of earnest and effective sermons, and in

about five days thereafter he ascended. He died in Henry County, Mo., April 18, 1847.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Green was a man of marked ability. He was small of stature, erect and manly in form and bearing, and he looked like one ordained to lead and govern among the hosts of Israel. His eyes were expressive of sympathy, ardor, purity, and love; and when lighted up with the inspiration of his theme, they were electrifying. His sermons often contained the rare combination of the metaphysical and emotional. He commanded the attention and respect of the most intelligent hearers. "He spake as one having authority," and his denunciations of sin and appeals to sinners were sometimes terrific. He was a man of one work. He was kind and encouraging in his bearing to young preachers.<sup>2</sup>

In 1847 the St. Louis Conference adopted a preamble and resolutions as a tribute of respect to his memory, recording "a humble testimony of his inestimable worth" and an expression of their "deep and sincere sorrow for the loss of him." The preamble stated: "Brother Green entered the ministry in early life, with qualifications for extraordinary usefulness; and during the whole period of thirty years to his death his course in the itinerancy was alike laborious, self-sacrificing, holy, and successful."<sup>3</sup>

John Dever, the name sometimes improperly spelled Daver, was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1817, and located in 1823.

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<sup>1</sup>"Life of Jesse Green," by Mrs. Mary Green, pp. 7-38.

<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 470, 471.

<sup>3</sup>"General Minutes of the M. E. Church, South," p. 108.

Dever began his labors on Christian Circuit, in Green River District. His Holston appointments were: 1818, Lee; 1821 and 1822, presiding elder of French Broad District.

He settled as a local preacher in Knox County, Tenn., on the south side of Holston River, below the mouth of Little River, two and a half miles from Wright's Ferry. The Church which he attended was Mount Moriah.

Mr. Dever was favored with a commanding person, was of good height and well-proportioned, with a ruddy, fresh complexion, clear blue eyes, and a bright, intelligent, and amiable countenance. He made a fine impression in the pulpit, and by his deep piety, fervent and evangelical preaching, won all hearts. He was a "star preacher." His social and conversational powers were superior, making him the center of every circle he was in. When on French Broad District he was about thirty-five years old.<sup>1</sup>

Arthur McClure was admitted into the Tennessee Conference in 1822; and died September 26, 1825, while on Limestone Circuit. His only Holston appointment was to New River Circuit, as helper, in 1822. He was born in East Tennessee February 16, 1801. In about his eighteenth year he experienced the power of divine grace in regeneration. After his conversion he made rapid improvement in the knowledge of divine things, and received license to exhort. He was licensed to preach September 29, 1821, and joined the traveling connection the next year. On

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<sup>1</sup>Hon. William Garrett, in "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 517, 518.

New River Circuit, his first charge, he labored with success, and was greatly beloved by the people. Nature formed him for hardship, study, and usefulness. He improved rapidly in preaching, and his labors were always acceptable. In 1823 he was appointed to Jackson Circuit, and in 1824 to Limestone Circuit. One of the greatest revivals of religion ever witnessed within the bounds of the Huntsville District occurred on Jackson and Limestone Circuits, while he had charge of them. While on Limestone Circuit he sank under a violent attack of bilious fever, which baffled the skill of his physicians. On his dying bed he reviewed, with satisfaction, the genuineness of the doctrines which he had preached, and on which now rested the eternal interests of his soul. In his last moments he opened his eyes, and with a smile exclaimed: "O Jesus! the sweetest name that ever saluted my ears." He departed in triumph.<sup>1</sup>

The readers of Methodist history will not fail to observe that the colored people were large sharers in the benefits of the gospel as preached by the pioneer Methodist preachers in Holston. Methodism, with its extemporaneous preaching and warm, gushing religious experience, is peculiarly suited to the colored man; and few trophies are more glorious than those it has won among the colored people. Among the plantation hands and the black mammas of the home were found some of the sublimest specimens of purity of character and religious consecration. Called to be children of God, some of the men were also called to preach.

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<sup>1</sup>"General Minutes," Vol. I., pp. 540, 541.

We are indebted to the Hon. William Garrett for the mention of some of the negro preachers whom he knew. Joseph, a slave, the property of Francis J. Carter, Esq., of the Dutch Bottom, in Cocke County, Tenn., was a man of deep piety, and not only had the confidence of his owner, but of the people of the country generally. He was licensed to preach about the year 1818. His master was kind and indulgent toward him, and he was permitted to attend school at Anderson Academy for a session or two, boarding or staying at the house of James Gilliland. His tuition was free. He made reasonable proficiency. He preached in the country extensively in private houses as well as in churches. He was modest and diffident, and preferred to preach in the out-of-the-way communities, and there he had many seals to his ministry. His congregations were often large, and the more intelligent and refined among the people attended his ministry with profit. Although thus flattered, he did not lose his modesty and diffidence. His gifts in prayer were extraordinary. He was faithful to the end of life.

Simon Rodgers, a free man of color, was another useful preacher. He commenced preaching before Joseph did, had more mind and culture, but not more of the confidence of the Church.

Thomas, a slave, the property of Benjamin Thompson, came forward a few years later, and as a pupil at a Sunday school taught by Mr. William Garrett for two years he made proficiency. In this he was aided by a quick and ready mind, and an eagerness for knowledge. His attainments in Scripture knowledge were surprising. He was a humble, useful man. In



the year 1869 the Hon. William Garrett, his former Sunday school teacher, received a message from him full of kind and grateful remembrances, and with assurances that, though he was near the end of his earthly journey, he had a firm reliance upon the gospel, which he had preached for over forty-five years.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>“Methodism in Tennessee,” Vol. II., pp. 523, 524.

## CHAPTER XV.

### SKETCHES OF PREACHERS.

THE year 1824 begins a new era in Holston Methodism. We have had to do with its pioneer history proper up to this date. The men and women who have been brought to our notice laid deep and broad the foundations of Methodist Christianity in this hill country; but the men and the women who shall now be brought to our notice built on these foundations. The first circuit in Holston was organized in 1783 with a membership of sixty; the Holston country, comprising a district of six circuits, fell into the Western Conference at its organization, in 1802, with a membership of 2,980; when the Western Conference was divided, in 1812, the Holston District fell into the Tennessee Conference, with nine circuits and a membership of 6,335. In 1824 the Holston Conference started out with three districts, twenty-six circuits, and a membership of 14,934. This was creditable progress, when all the circumstances are taken into consideration. It was a net acquisition to the Church, over deaths, removals, withdrawals, and expulsions, of more than three hundred and fifty-four members per annum, in a comparatively small district of country, hilly and mountainous, sparsely settled, with no railways, very little navigation, and competing, as it did, with the rich prairies of the West and the broad savannas of the South, this increase having been made in the face

of the combined forces of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and the decent and conscientious competitor of Calvinistic Presbyterians and Baptists, who had preoccupied the ground.

In biographical notices of preachers it has been my policy to withhold a particular sketch of each man until his connection as a traveling preacher with the Holston work has ceased, whether his connection has been severed by location, transfer, death, or otherwise; but a number of useful and prominent men labored in the Holston country both before and after the organization of the Holston Conference, and some of them many years thereafter; and it would not be doing them justice to defer mention of them up to the date of their severance from the Holston work. It is due to these men that they should have credit for the part they took in the pioneer work of Holston Methodism; for peculiar honor attaches to men who have been at the beginnings of great enterprises and have taken a part in the founding of useful institutions. The world will never forget Adam, the founder of the race; Noah, the second founder of the race; Abraham, the father of the faithful; Jesus, the founder of Christianity; Luther, the founder of Protestantism; Wesley, the founder of Methodism; Asbury, the chief founder of American Methodism, and the local and traveling preachers who planted Methodism in the wilds of the West, and upon whose foundations we are now building. I shall, therefore, make an exception of the cases of the prominent men who labored in the Holston country both before and after the year 1824.

John Henninger was admitted into the Western

Conference in 1807, and died December 18, 1838. His first circuit was Carter's Valley. He afterwards traveled in Kentucky, Louisiana, and Mississippi. The major portion of his service was rendered in the Holston country, and he was eminently a Holston man. His career as a preacher was long and useful. He was a man of popular talents, and he left the savor of an unusually good name in the bounds of the Holston Conference.

John Henninger was born in Washington County, Va., in the year 1780. He was of German parentage. He embraced religion and joined the Methodist Church in his sixteenth year. Not a great while after his conversion he was licensed to preach, and he preached for some years as a local preacher; but not satisfied with this narrow field of usefulness, he joined the traveling connection. In 1816 he was made presiding elder of the French Broad District, and remained in charge of it two years. He located in 1818, and was readmitted in 1825, appointed presiding elder of Knoxville District, and in 1828 was transferred to the Washington District. In 1829 he was appointed Agent of Holston Seminary, with the Rev. Thomas Stringfield. In 1830 he was returned to the Washington District, on which he labored four years. In 1834 he was granted a supernumerary relation and placed in charge of the Washington Circuit, and in 1835 he took charge again of the Washington District. At the close of this year he became a superannuate; but with slightly improved health, he took the Washington District again in 1837, upon which he finished his course. While in the local relation he made his home in Bledsoe County, Tenn., not far from Pikeville.

Here he had his warmest friends, and here his family entered into marriage relations. He spent his last years, however, in Bradley County, Tenn., and died there.

For some time before the attack of fever from which he died he had a presentiment of his approaching end. Does God by some kind of inspiration honor, in special cases, his faithful servants with notice to set their houses in order? or do their guardian angels whisper to them of their approaching end? or does a consciousness of decaying vitality and waning strength admonish them of the approach of dissolution? Who can answer these questions? Howbeit Henninger felt that his end was near, and it gave him no alarm.

In his last illness he was deprived of the kind attentions of his beloved wife, who lay sick of the same fever in an adjoining room. Learning that her end was near, he made his way, by the assistance of friends, into her room, and said substantially: "My dear, I thought I should go first; now I see that you will go before me and obtain the crown; but I shall soon follow you." After the death of his wife, who entered the spirit world some four or five days before he did, he spoke in tender and comforting words to his bereaved children.

The Rev. Josiah B. Daughtry visited Mr. Henninger during his sickness. One day Mr. Henninger fell into a doze and, awaking suddenly, cried out: "O what have I seen? Was I asleep or not? I saw thousands of beautiful things." Then turning his head toward his children, he added: "I saw your mother in heaven. She was beautiful." He then called

Mr. Daughtry to his bedside, and said: "I have some serious conversation that I wish to hold with you; but I am too full." In a few moments he resumed: "We became acquainted with each other when we were both young men; we have fought side by side; but now I shall leave you. I shall die. Preach my funeral sermon; bury my wife at the town of Cleveland, and leave a place for me by her side; there the plowshare will not run over my grave. The town is a public place, and many of the preachers will pass there. I want them to call and see my grave; it may do them good."

I pause here to remark that scores of preachers have visited the grave of Mr. Henninger, in the Cleveland Cemetery. When stationed there in 1856, I often found it convenient to visit the cemetery for study and meditation, and often looked upon the marble that pointed out the resting place of Henninger and wife.

As a man, Henninger was naturally of a lively, buoyant temperament; but he had occasions of depression. As a Christian, he was faithful and consistent. He was respected by even the irreligious and profane. As a husband and parent, he was characterized by great tenderness and affection. He was endeared to his family in an unusual degree, and around the fireside his Christian virtues shone with peculiar luster.<sup>1</sup>

Mr. Henninger was in his day one of the foremost men of the Church. Dr. Redford says of him: "Although Mr. Henninger remained but a single year in

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 112.

Kentucky, by his expansive intellect, burning eloquence, and fervent piety, he made an impression upon the community and the Church that two generations have not effaced. While his talents ranked him with the first intellects of the State, his indomitable energy and extraordinary zeal made him more than equal to the hardships and sacrifices incident to the pioneer preacher. Attracted by the charms of his eloquence, hundreds everywhere crowded to his ministry and listened to the invitations of the gospel as they fell from his lips."<sup>1</sup>

Judge Pirtle, of Louisville, Ky., says: "Mr. Henninger was an extraordinary young man, of powerful, subduing eloquence, and of good, calm, judgment. His very name brings to me some of the most sublime memories of my life."<sup>2</sup>

It is said that his pulpit efforts were so overpowering that the large assemblies to which he preached would sometimes arise from their seats and crowd around the pulpit, eager to hear his every word. His labors were often crowned with gracious revivals of religion.<sup>3</sup>

I have heard the following anecdote of him. At a certain camp meeting he and the Rev. Thomas Stringfield were appointed to preach on Sunday morning, one after the other, Stringfield first. While they were meditating in the preachers' tent, Henninger overheard two men speaking of the anticipated homiletic duel. One of them said that Stringfield would preach

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II, pp. 58, 59.

<sup>2</sup>"Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., p. 59.

<sup>3</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 112.

the better sermon; the other said that Henninger would. "What will you bet?" said one of them. "I will bet you a pumpkin," said the other. The wager was accepted. The joke was too good to keep, and Henninger at once informed Stringfield of the bet. It was too much for Stringfield's refined, sensitive nature. After his sermon was over his friends, mortified at his failure, came to him and asked what in the world was the matter with him. He replied: "I could not get that pumpkin out of my head." Henninger was more fortunate; he had let the conversation which he had overheard go into one ear and out at the other, and the pumpkin did not disturb him.

In conversation with Rev. James Sewell, a local preacher, I obtained the following particulars in regard to Mr. Henninger. Mr. Sewell knew him well. Mr. Henninger was an extraordinary man, of over-medium size, with an open, friendly countenance. A sweet-spirited man, he made friends wherever he went. In the pulpit his favorite theme was the resurrection of the human body. Henninger used to tell an anecdote of his father. When he heard that his son was to hold a camp meeting some seventy-five miles away, he went to the meeting in company with others. On nearing the camp ground and hearing the voice of his son, who was at that time preaching, he exclaimed: "O that all my sons had been Shon!"

The following anecdote is told by Dr. McAnally: Rev. John Henninger, as presiding elder, was holding a quarterly meeting at a meetinghouse near the residence of James Axley. The large attendance on Sunday rendered it necessary, for the accommodation of the multitude, that the services should occur in the



open air. Henninger, who preached, took his stand by a large tree, and Axley sat down on the turf at the root of the tree. Rev. R. M. Stevens sat a little farther from the tree, where Axley was in full view. Henninger had long suffered from asthma; and standing as he then was, a brisk wind was blowing directly in his face, and it was soon apparent that in such a breeze he would be unable to go through the services. Axley manifested much uneasiness, turning from side to side with smothered groans. He at length rose up, covered his face with his hands, leaned his head forward against the tree, and stood there in that posture for some minutes. Stevens afterwards remarked: "I declare to you that soon after he sat down I looked in vain for stirring leaves; the wind had entirely ceased." The sermon went on, and it was finished with ease to the speaker and benefit to the worshiper. In the afternoon Henninger, Stevens, and others went with Axley to dinner; and while at the table Axley, with tears trickling down his cheeks, said: "John, you are getting old, I am getting old; I wished to hear you preach one time more; did not know but this might be my last chance to hear you, and I saw that the wind was about to cut off your voice; so I begged God to stop it."<sup>1</sup>

I take pleasure in reproducing the following estimate of Mr. Henninger from the eloquent pen of Rev. C. D. Smith, D.D., written from Franklin, N. C., and published in the *Holston Methodist* in December, 1886:

When I entered the Holston Conference as a probationer, John Henninger was in the prime of life and in the height of

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<sup>1</sup>A newspaper article by Dr. McAnally.

his ministerial success. His name had become a tower of Methodist strength throughout all lower East Tennessee. He met the surging columns of infidelity and the cohorts of bigotry and prejudice, and routed them at every point. A good deal of that country was new, and the elements of society were in a formative state at that time. I have no doubt there are now many strongholds of Methodism throughout all that section, the foundations of which were laid by the labors and success of John Henninger. I had seen him in the pulpit and felt the shock of his magnetism; and in the fall of 1838, while on my way to Conference, which met that fall at Wytheville, Va., at the request of a brother I left my route and called at his home, where I spent a day and night with him, while he prepared his necessary reports and papers concerning his district to send to Conference by me. He was detained at home on account of the sickness of his wife, and shortly after I left he was taken down himself, and in a few weeks they both died. What I did not know of his character and labors personally I learned from those most intimately acquainted with him.

Mr. Henninger was a man of fine social qualities. He was never dogmatic, never morose, never crabbed, never assuming in his social or official intercourse with others. There was a life and freshness about him always captivating. While he was what you would call a lively companion, he never descended to driveling and never made himself ridiculous. There was a manly sense of propriety about him which never failed him. His impulses were of a high order, and proceeded from a warm and generous nature. There was no duplicity in his friendships, and his censures of his brethren were rare and always for cause. He was of a nervous, sanguine temperament, and hence of an affectionate disposition and strong attachments. How much of the grace of these traits of character was due to the renewing power of God in his conversion, we will not undertake to say. We have no doubt, however, that divine grace gives many a noble touch and finish to the best-adjusted traits of human character.

As a preacher, John Henninger possessed many of the elements of success. His personal appearance was prepossess-

ing, and his manly, open, and expressive countenance always commanded attention. His voice was pleasant and musical, and its mellow intonations lent a charm to his sermons. His magnetism was wonderful. Few persons of ordinary sensibilities could long sit under one of his sermons without being captivated by him. There is, however, an erroneous opinion abroad about magnetism in the pulpit. That it is in some sense an element in some human organisms, we admit; but much of its power in capturing and leading men to the cross is due to the presence of God, to the fellowship of the soul with that holy unction which God only can give. This Mr. Henninger possessed to an eminent degree. His earnestness was intense, so much so that he forgot John Henninger in his love for sinners and in the glory of the Lord which enveloped him. He was not only consecrated to God entirely, but had a constant fellowship with the Spirit, such fellowship as warmed his noble nature and sent him to the multitudes with the most ardent appeals for the salvation of sinners. Coming as though he were just from the altar of incense in the tabernacle, he was a giant refreshed with new wine and on his way to the field of victory and conquest. These were the sources of his success. His methods were simple and easy. He was a close and prayerful student of the truth as set forth in man's depravity and in the plan of salvation. He did not trust to the arts of flattery and compromise to win sinners to the cross, but relied upon the truth and the power of God to make it effective in the salvation of sinners. Hence his assaults upon the fortifications of unbelief and formality were direct—not in cold, snappish criticism, nor in a half-compromising tone, as though inviting capitulation on halfway ground. Rather, his sermons were as the work of a giant tearing down the walls around those who felt themselves amply fortified in carnal security, and who, when every refuge had been demolished, were compelled to make an unconditional surrender. In his enforcement of truth and in his heart-searching appeals to the unconverted he was sometimes grandly eloquent, and some of his perorations were of the most persuasive and thrilling character. Every sentence on such occasions sparkled with a holy fire that reminded

one of electric flashes upon the bosom of the storm cloud. He was not a seeker after fame. So far as he coveted the good opinion of mankind, it was that he might have greater facilities for bringing them into the loving and endearing fellowship of Christ. Circumstances surrounded the preachers of Mr. Henninger's day which made a singleness of heart and consecration necessary to success. There is much along this line for thought and prayer. The mistake of the present day consists in supposing that the altered condition of society has in some way modified ministerial obligation; but the fact remains that none of the refinements and fashions of society have, in the least degree, mitigated human depravity. Men and women are now as culpable sinners as in the days when John Henninger and his associates preached. Nor will God require less in the way of repentance and faith now in their conversion than he did then.

Mr. Henninger was not a classical scholar. He, however, made good use of clean-cut English. It was not his habit to rely upon rhetoric for success, but upon preaching the word in demonstration of the Spirit and power. He was, nevertheless, an ardent friend of liberal Christian education. On this point, as on all others, he was sound to the core, believing that the highest education, when sanctified by the Holy Ghost, becomes a great power for good and a grand instrument for the evangelization of the world; but when not so consecrated becomes a fruitful source of self-sufficiency and skepticism, and is likely to be turned as a dangerous battery against the cardinal doctrines of Christianity.

Mrs. Henninger was born in Scott County, Va. Her maiden name was Jane Anderson. She embraced religion in her sixteenth year, but was much opposed by her relatives, who were at that time strangers to experimental godliness. In 1815 she became the wife of Mr. Henninger. She was a woman of superior intellectual and moral endowments, and filled her place as a preacher's wife admirably. She was a helpmeet indeed to her husband under all circumstances, and

was a thoughtful, affectionate mother to eight lovely children. Her house was the home of preachers. When dying she said in her calm and usually delicate manner: "I have nothing to fear; my way is clear."

Rev. Ira Falls is responsible for the following anecdote: Mr. Henninger had an appointment to preach near where Miss Jane Anderson lived. A friend had given him a description of her, extolling her virtues and advising him to make her his wife if possible. The heart of the preacher became at once deeply enamored of the lovely creature that his imagination had pictured. At the hour for preaching Mr. Henninger began the service by attempting to read a hymn, when the young lady entered the church. By the description he had received he recognized her, the blood rushed to his head, his heart began to palpitate, and he was utterly incapacitated for preaching or even reading the hymn correctly. The hymn which he attempted to read began with, "O for a heart to praise my God;" when he reached the line, "O for a lowly, contrite heart," he read it, "O for a loving, contrite heart." Observing his blunder, he rectified it and proceeded to the next line, which reads, "Believing, true, and clean;" this he read, "Loving, true, and clean." Finding himself incapacitated for the duties of the hour, he closed the hymn book, remarking as he took his seat that he was unable to preach, and knew not why. That he was not able to preach was evident, but that he knew not why was not so evident. But his lack of candor as to this particular was excusable on the maxim enunciated by Washington Irving that "All stratagems are excusable in love." It is pleasant to know that Miss Anderson had the char-

ity to forgive the preacher for his failure and lack of truthfulness on this occasion, and that she sealed his pardon by becoming his wife afterwards.

Of the children, Eliza married Joseph Hixson, a farmer of Bledsoe County, Tenn.; Narcissa married John Starr, who removed to Missouri and engaged in farming; Asbury married Miss Elba Johnson, an elect woman of Bledsoe County; Emily married R. H. Hudson, of Wilson County, Tenn., and the couple settled near Pikeville; Margaret married that excellent man, Judge R. P. Loyd, of Bledsoe County; Mary married Jefferson Sawyer, of Hamilton County, Tenn.; Sarah married for her first husband Frank Skillern, and for her second William Skillern, farmers of Bledsoe County; John S., a bachelor, emigrated to Missouri in 1852, where he has since resided, except during the time he spent as a soldier in the War between the States. It was the good fortune of the entire family to spend their lives amid the rural scenes of farm life. I do not know of a better family anywhere. Sprung from a man of intellect and from a woman of unusual physical, intellectual, and moral worth, they have left a posterity that rank high intellectually, socially, and religiously.

John Bowman was another pioneer whose labors in Holston before the organization of the Conference entitle him to mention at this point. He was born in Frederic County, Va., September 13, 1773; and left this transitory world September 25, 1847, in the seventy-fifth year of his age. He was admitted into the Western Conference in 1808. He was one of those men whose eccentricities conspire with genuine intellectual and moral worth to give them notoriety.

His parents were members of the Lutheran Church. His mind was impressed with something of the fear of God before he was four years of age. At times for years he felt the conviction of sin, and he sometimes heartily wished that he had died in infancy, or had been some creature without moral accountability. He often resolved to be better, but failed to carry out his resolutions, and he heartily wished he could only feel how hot hell was for one minute; then he thought he would do better. When grown he occasionally went to hear Methodist preachers, and was sometimes awakened by their sermons; but he soon quenched the Spirit, till their preaching did not greatly affect him, and he, in a measure, quit going to hear them. At length the grace of God put it into his heart to go out every evening after dark and study about the uncertainty of life, the certainty of death, the length of eternity, heaven, and hell. When night came on, he went out and began his meditations, when he was so convinced of his sinful state that he was afraid that he was out of the reach of mercy; but he resolved that if he went to hell he would go praying. However, a reaction took place, and he became convinced that there was mercy for him. But Satan threw another obstacle in his way: he was troubled with the fear that if he was converted he would apostatize; he was tempted to believe that there were two sins which he could not overcome: playing at fives and resenting insults and returning blow for blow. He looked upon backsliding with abhorrence, and therefore determined to abandon all ideas of religion. Having his Bible in his hands, he was about to lay it aside; but at that moment the following words

were impressed on his mind as plainly as if literally spoken by the Lord: "Oft have I striven with you by my Spirit, and you have quenched it, putting off your return to me; and if you put it off this time, it will be the last time that my Spirit will visit you." The sentence went through his whole system, agitating him from head to foot. Then, and not till then, was his heart fully surrendered to Christ and he was enabled to believe to the saving of his soul. His burden of guilt was removed, and everything he beheld glistened with a glorious transfiguration. But he looked for the Lord to speak to him and tell him in so many words that his sins were forgiven. His disappointment in this thing brought upon him sore distress of mind. However, on the first day of April, 1802, he joined the Methodist Episcopal Church on probation.

He felt called to preach as a traveling preacher, and did not expect a second call to locate. But his consciousness of his disqualification for the high calling of the ministry caused him to hesitate many years. He had painful exercises of mind. He was too timid to pray in public or talk in love feasts, although he felt it to be his duty to take up these crosses. One day while doing carpenter's work on the roof of a house the conviction that it was his duty to preach weighed heavily on his mind; but these words came into his mind: "A pretty fellow to preach that cannot speak in love feast!" His mind was powerfully agitated, and he swooned and fell from the house. He lay a long time in a cataleptic condition. While thus lying he thought he went to heaven, just inside of it, that he was there told that his sins were forgiven, but that he must go back and preach the gospel. He



thought that he looked down and saw a congregation. When he came to himself, he found that he was badly hurt, and he did not recover for a considerable length of time. Sometimes he overheard persons saying that he would not recover, but he would say in his mind: "I know I shall, for I have to preach." In May, 1808, he was licensed to exhort, and in August of the same year licensed to preach, and recommended to the Annual Conference for admission into the traveling connection.

He began his itinerant career as helper to Ralph Lotspeich on Fairfield Circuit, in Ohio. In his second year he was in charge of Carter's Valley Circuit, in the Holston country. At the close of his year on Carter's Valley Circuit he was discontinued on account of ill health, and was not readmitted till 1812. But during this hiatus in his itinerant ministry he did a good deal of effective pulpit work. After three years in Kentucky and Middle Tennessee he returned to Holston, and was placed in charge of the French Broad Circuit; and up to the date when he was placed on the ineffective list he was appointed from year to year to the best circuits in the Holston country, with the exception of two years in location, from 1817 to 1819, his location having been rendered necessary by some lawsuits in which he had become engaged. From 1826 to the date of his death he was either supernumerary or superannuate. He died in great peace in Carter's Valley, Tenn.

Bowman was a bachelor. He began the ministry with some private means, by close economy he saved something out of his meager salaries, and left considerable sums of money to various benevolent institu-

tions. Among other bequests, he left one thousand dollars to the Missionary Society of the M. E. Church, South, one thousand dollars to the Chartered Fund, and I have before me a statement of receipts by W. McClain, Secretary and Treasurer of the American Colonization Society, showing that Bowman's residuary bequest to that society amounted to two thousand seven hundred and fifty dollars.

Bowman was above mediocrity as a preacher, especially as to the extent and accuracy of his acquaintance with the doctrines of his Church; and he carried the black flag against all tenets opposed to these. He had studied and mastered the Constitution and Discipline of the Church; and he was frequently known to set bishops and presidents of Conferences right on questions of law, and that, too, in a manner which was anything but flattering to the self-complacency of the rectified parties.

He had a contempt for insincerity and dissimulation, and instances of the kind coming under his notice seldom failed to meet with a candid rebuke. While on a circuit in Western Carolina he happened to be spending a day at a house where there were three or four small, unruly, badly governed children. The mother frequently scolded the brats, protesting that they were always worse than usual when strangers were about. She threatened them first with one punishment, then with another, till finally she began to threaten them with "Uncle Bowman." It was: "Quit this or quit that, or I'll make Uncle Bowman whip you." Finally, as if out of patience, she spoke to the preacher, who was quietly reading by the fire, and said: "Brother Bowman, I do wish you would whip those chil-

dren!" "Well," replied the old man, "I suppose I can;" and laying down his book, he went out, got a switch, genteelly flogged every one of them, then took up his book and resumed his reading. The good sister was much offended, of course, and affirmed that she didn't thank anybody for whipping her children! To which the preacher calmly replied: "You asked me to do it; I thought it would accommodate you, and, with you, I thought they needed it." It was the last time, however, that he was ever requested to whip the children in that family.

Bowman, though a plain, blunt man, was sometimes adroit in administering public reproofs. At one of his meetings two boys behaved badly in the back part of the house. Before dismissing he said: "I noticed during divine service that two boys in the back part of the church behaved badly; and I would now reprove them, but I am afraid to do so; for sometime since I severely reproved a young man for behaving badly in church, and I afterwards learned that he was an idiot, and I have been sorry for reprovng him ever since."

Many persons who had a slight acquaintance with Mr. Bowman regarded him as morose and querulous, possessing little of the finer feelings that adorn the more refined and cultured; but in this opinion they were mistaken. He was "a plain, blunt man;" but, withal, far from being coarse or ascetic. He was ardently attached to his friends, and was always ready to aid them and sympathize with them. Beneath a rough exterior there was a vein of profound altruism and genuine politeness.

Few men of any age ever walked more humbly

with their God, were more regular in their devotions, or enjoyed more of the sweet influence of the Holy Spirit in their hearts. His associates learned many valuable lessons by observing his quiet spirit, his upright walk, his prudent and intelligent conversations, and the evidences of his strong and abiding faith in the Redeemer of men.<sup>1</sup>

The Hon. William Garrett in a letter published by Dr. McFerrin mentions Mr. Bowman. He was in charge of Newport Circuit in 1827. The Church was at a "standstill," and there was in it the débris of backslidden and disorderly members—the accumulation of many years of lax discipline. Bowman was the Hercules to cleanse the Augean stables. He loved the Church, realized how essential to its success and usefulness was the purity of its membership, and no persuasion could dissuade him from calling derelict members to account. He believed that it was as much his duty to administer discipline as it was to pray and to preach. He was eminently a cleanser of the sanctuary; and faithfully did he discharge this duty, not with any offensive assumption of authority, but with Christian meekness and holy boldness. He seldom returned to Conference an increase of members, but usually a decrease. Dram drinkers, dancers, card players, wearers of superfluous dress, or neglecters of class meetings never escaped his vigilance. Without positive reformation, they were brought to trial. The Church in that day had faith enough in God and purity enough to bear this disciplinary rigor.

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<sup>1</sup>McAnally's "Life and Times of William Patton," pp. 77-80.

Revivals usually followed this kind of administration, and the preacher who succeeded Bowman was fortunate in doing so.

Bowman was a sound theologian, and preached a thoughtful sermon; but his delivery was not good. As a pastor he was devout and prudent, "holy in all manner of conversation." In person he was rather large, with a dull, heavy look, which, however, was lighted by a keen black eye, indicative of cunning.<sup>1</sup>

Dr. John H. Brunner kindly furnishes the following notice of Bowman for this volume:

Of John Bowman, the bachelor preacher, much might be said in his favor. Why he did not marry, I do not know. On one occasion he amused a brother preacher by asking the question, "Would you like to know the nearest I ever came to getting married?" "Yes; please tell me." "Well, Sister — one day said she felt very lonesome since the death of her husband. I told her that I had reason to believe that she did. Then she said that she needed some one to take charge of the farm and help her to raise the children. I told her that that would be a big undertaking. And that is as near as I ever came to marrying."

He labored faithfully on the charges to which he was sent till well advanced in years. He looked carefully to discipline and pruned the Churches of many disorderly members. But he was gentle in his heart. As a boy, I loved him and loved to hear him preach. The mothers of families were his friends. Many were the kind little offices he did for them in their household cares. The mother of Judge D. M. Key was wont to tell that on one occasion, seeing her spinning with a broken distaff, he went to the forest and cut and prepared a new one, which she kept as a memorial for many years.

His pay was small on the circuits; but he saved his money,

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<sup>1</sup>Hon. William Garrett, in McFerrin's "Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 514, 515.

and at last bequeathed a thousand dollars to the Chartered Fund for the benefit of worn-out preachers and the widows and orphans of such as had died in the work.

The last sermon I heard him preach was at Hankins's Schoolhouse, on the Greeneville Circuit. I think he had been sent to fill the appointments of some disabled brother. The hearers were few, but to them the sermon was one of strength and consolation—the right thing for the occasion.

His death was mourned by a large circle of his kindred, my neighbors, as well as by many others to whom he had preached, among these my own mother. Sacred be his memory!

Jesse Cunnyingham was admitted into the Western Conference in 1811, and on the division of that Conference he fell into the Holston Conference, and located in 1826. He was readmitted in 1849, and placed on the superannuate roll. His labors lay in Middle Tennessee, Kentucky, and the Holston country, mostly in the last-mentioned section. His first charge was Holston Circuit. In 1816 he was appointed presiding elder of the Holston District, upon which he remained four years. In 1824 he was appointed presiding elder of the French Broad District, and served in that charge one year. He labored on circuits only a few years. Owing to his feeble health and the exigencies of a growing family, he was either local or on the supernumerary or superannuate lists the larger part of his ministerial career.

He was born on French Broad River, ten miles above Knoxville, in Jefferson County, Tenn., October 25, 1789. His father, William Cunnyingham, was a native of Alexandria, D. C., and his mother a native of Shenandoah County, Va. The family came originally

from the North of Ireland, and were sturdy Scotch-Irish Protestants.

About the year 1786 a number of families emigrated from Shenandoah Valley, Va., to a section of the French Broad River afterwards known as the Taylor's Bend and Pine Chapel neighborhoods. Taylor's Bend is a few miles above Dandridge, and Pine Chapel was erected on the south side of the river some seven or eight miles east of Dandridge. Some of these emigrants settled on one side of the river, and others on the other side. Among them were the families of Mrs. Arabella Cunnyngnam, and John Winton, her son-in-law. Mrs. Cunnyngnam was the widow of James Cunnyngnam, who emigrated to America in 1769, landed at Philadelphia, and located in Shenandoah County, Va. After reaching America, he lived only sixteen or seventeen years. He was a devoted and consistent member of the Protestant Episcopal Church when he lived in Ireland, and continued to be so to the day of his death. Mr. Cunnyngnam was married before he left Ireland. The maiden name of his wife was Good. She was of a different spirit from himself, and would keep her spinning wheel whirring while her pious husband was engaged in family devotions. She was in hearty sympathy with her neighbors, whose moral training allowed them to take the sacrament on Sunday, and to fiddle, dance, and indulge in all forms of worldly pleasure during the week. Before she emigrated to the wilds of Tennessee her husband was called to a more genial clime than earth, and to more hallowed associations than those of his home and neighborhood. Mrs. Cunnyngnam afterwards found a home in the wilderness of

East Tennessee, and about the year 1790 she found peace in believing, in a revival conducted by John McGee. Her daughter, Arabella, had preceded her by some years into the kingdom of grace, having been happily and soundly converted under Methodist preaching in Virginia. The Methodists of the neighborhood soon erected a chapel, long known as Pine Chapel, where a large and influential society was afterwards built up.

James Cunnyingham and wife, Arabella, had six children. James, the oldest son, was murdered by Cherokee Indians. William married, and ultimately removed some twenty-five miles southwest of where his mother lived, and built on the main road between Knoxville and Greeneville, near Seven Islands. Charlotte, a daughter of James and Arabella Cunnyingham, married George Turnley, a son of John Turnley, March 3, 1791. She was a sister of William Cunnyingham. William Cunnyingham was the father of Jesse Cunnyingham, and grandfather of the late Dr. William G. E. Cunnyingham. Arabella Cunnyingham, the oldest daughter of James and Arabella Cunnyingham, married John Winton before they emigrated to Tennessee; and she was the chief instrument in bringing the settlement on the French Broad to a saving knowledge of Jesus Christ.

George Turnley was born in Botetourt County, Va., August 3, 1762. He and his bride removed immediately after marriage into a snug log cabin of hewn logs, fifteen feet square, built by himself before his marriage. His wife died in 1834. He himself died September 3, 1848, and was buried at Pine Chapel.

Charlotte Turnley was of small stature, robust, and



possessed of great powers of endurance. She had dark hair, black eyes, and dark complexion. She was industrious and energetic, and possessed more tact and ability in the management of business affairs than her husband. Truly it might have been said of her: "She looketh well to the ways of her household." She possessed some asperity of temper, which was the more apparent by the contrast with the mildness of her husband. Her hand was always open to the needy; her rounds of charity were never forgotten; even in her last days, when she was upon a bed of sickness, her messages of solid comfort were regularly dispatched to those who had learned to expect them. She was the mother of fourteen children. She died at Mount Pleasant, Jefferson County, Tenn., at the age of sixty-four years.

John Cunnyingham Turnley was the first child of George and Charlotte Turnley. He was born September 27, 1792. He was a soldier in the war of 1812. On his return from the army he stopped with his uncle, Rev. John Winton, who resided some twenty miles southwest of Knoxville. He then and there entered into a contract to build a house for Mr. Winton, and completed it in eighteen months. He also built a house for his uncle, William Cunnyingham, who lived some ten miles east of Knoxville. He married Mahala Taylor, daughter of Parmenas Taylor, one of the first settlers in Taylor's Bend, removed to Dandridge, and established a hotel. This proving to be a financial failure, he removed to a point four miles east of Dandridge, established a wagon factory and blacksmith shop, and named the place Oak Grove, and it still retains the name. His first wife having died,

he married Mrs. Dorcas Hays, widow of James Hays, deceased.<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Dorcas J. Seahorn, a daughter of James and Dorcas Hays, and the widow of J. Ponder Seahorn, still lives at Oak Grove. Her husband was a successful farmer and a devout Methodist. As he was the principal contributor to the erection of the present Oak Grove Methodist Church, it was named for him Seahorn's Chapel. A son-in-law of Mrs. Seahorn, Dr. James Campbell Anderson, is a resident of Oak Grove, a Methodist, and a successful practitioner of medicine.

Having mentioned John Winton, a few additional items of history in regard to him and his direct and collateral posterity may not be out of place. Bishop Asbury mentions Mr. Winton occasionally in his journal; and, as he was one of the first settlers in the French Broad country, it is interesting to know something of his connections. John Winton was the great-grandfather of the Rev. George B. Winton, D.D., the present editor of the Nashville *Christian Advocate*. His son William married Mary Mitchell, daughter of Rev. Morris Mitchell, and emigrated from Roane County, Tenn., to the Osage settlements in Southwest Missouri, in the year 1837. William Winton's son, George Mitchell Winton, who was for more than forty years an itinerant preacher in the St. Louis, Southwest Missouri, and Pacific Conferences, was then sixteen years old. Another son of John Winton, James, married Rhoda Mitchell, a sister of Mary Mitchell. Wiley B. Winton, long a prominent member of the Holston Conference, was a son of this

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<sup>1</sup>"A Biography of the Turnleys," by Parmenas Turnley.

James Winton, and was, therefore, a double cousin to George Mitchell Winton. Jesse Cunyningham was first cousin to William Winton. Rebecca Mitchell, sister to Rhoda and Mary Mitchell, married Nathan Sullins, and gave to the Church Timothy and David Sullins. John A. Winton, a son of James Winton and brother to Wiley B. Winton, lived till within a few years near Winton's Chapel, in Roane County, Tenn., a few miles west of Kingston, and died there. The old Winton plantation, that of the Rev. John Winton, was about twenty miles southwest of Knoxville. The house was about one hundred yards from where Muddy Creek depot now stands. Muddy Creek Camp Ground was built on this farm, about two and a half miles up the creek from the house. The Winton home is now owned by Mr. Warham Easley, who came there from Grainger County, Tenn. Dr. Robert A. Young was brought up in the neighborhood of Muddy Creek Camp Ground, and used to tell of his boyhood recollections of John Winton, who was not only well known as a farmer and local preacher, but also as something of a physical prodigy, as he weighed about five hundred pounds. George Mitchell Winton had two brothers and several sisters. One brother still lives in Northwestern Arkansas. William Winton, grandfather of our George B. Winton, was a class leader, and three of George Mitchell Winton's sons became ministers. W. H. Winton, a presiding elder in the Southwest Missouri Conference, is one of the survivors, and the other occupies the tripod of the Nashville *Christian Advocate*.

E. C. Montgomery, who lived many years and died in the vicinity of Winton's Chapel, married a sister

of Wiley B. and John A. Winton. He reared an unusually interesting Methodist family. He was a working Methodist, and was often a delegate to District and Annual Conferences.

But to return to the thread of our story: At the organization of a Methodist Society in the above-mentioned French Broad settlement Amos Lewis was appointed class leader. William Cunnyingham afterwards married his daughter against the protest of her parents, whose only objection to the marriage was that Mr. Cunnyingham was not a professor of religion. The objections of the parents were, however, overruled, and the couple, accompanied by friends, rode some twenty miles to the fort in another settlement, exposed in their journey to serious danger from the Indians, and there a Baptist minister wove the mystic tie. The objection to Mr. Cunnyingham was soon removed by his happy conversion to God.

Jesse Cunnyingham was converted at a camp meeting in Jefferson County, Tenn., at the age of sixteen years. His was an old-fashioned Methodist conversion, clear and powerful, and he retained all through his Christian life a most comfortable assurance of his acceptance with God through Christ. He enjoyed the witness of the Spirit in a large degree, and was, therefore, a bright and happy Christian. Love and hope were dominant elements of his religious experience. At some period in his life he obtained the blessing of entire sanctification, and the power it brought made him uniformly cheerful and peculiarly powerful in preaching.

He entered the traveling connection in the Western Conference at about the age of twenty-two. He



REV. JESSE CUNNYNGHAM.

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was one of a class of twenty-three. Among his classmates were Jonathan Stamper, George Ekin, Thomas D. Porter, and William McMahan, men of prominence in their day.

Mr. Cunnyingham left in manuscript a short but very interesting account of his conversion and call to the ministry. The manuscript is before me. When he was about two years old, his father purchased a farm in Sevier County; but about that time the Cherokee Indians renewed hostilities, killed two of Jesse's cousins, and on the day of the burial they waylaid the road to the graveyard and killed his father's youngest brother. A few days after that they stole a valuable horse of his father's. These events led Mr. Cunnyingham to remove his family back to Jefferson County. Two or three years later he removed to Knox County. Mr. Cunnyingham embraced religion about the time of the birth of Jesse, and was to him one of the best of fathers. He was an exact and careful man in his business, and especially careful in the training of his children. He diligently taught them the fear of the Lord both by precept and example. He was a Methodist, and regulated his life by the Methodist Discipline. He corrected his children when they deserved it, but not cruelly. They feared and loved him. He was accustomed to take Jesse with him every day and pray with him in secret. He often told his children with tears in his eyes what would be their end if they feared and served the Lord, and also what would be their end if they did not. His mother heartily joined in this blessed work. In the absence of Mr. Cunnyingham, Mrs. Cunnyingham kept up the family devotions. Mr. Cunnyingham's house was a

preachers' home, and on religious occasions he entertained not only the preachers but others in great numbers. Jesse Cunyningham remembered that at a quarterly meeting in his father's neighborhood his father fed nearly a hundred horses with their riders, besides several persons who came on foot. The people said, "The Methodists will eat Cunyningham up;" but he had an abundance while he lived, and when he died he had property enough to settle his children comfortably. This looks somewhat like the ancient miracle of the barrel of meal and the cruse of oil. The preachers who stopped with him frequently talked with Jesse, and endeavored to lead him to Christ. The Methodist preachers of that day heartily believed the gospel which they preached, and they could not be at ease while men and women around them were living in sin. Jesse was deeply impressed from his earliest recollection with the necessity of religion. He dreaded an angry God and the hell into which he believed the wicked would be driven. After doing anything wrong he often feared the devil would come and carry him off, and sometimes feared to go to sleep lest he would have him before morning. He cried to God with the most fervent prayers, and resolved to reform. He dreamed of demons coming to carry him away, and again of huge Indians coming, seizing him, and carrying him off; and he regarded an Indian as no better than the devil. Then again he would dream that God had converted his soul, and when he awaked he felt sensibly the joys of which he had dreamed. When he attended meeting he would be deeply affected, and would vow to do better. He thought himself too young to join the Church,

but kept up his secret devotions. The death of his father's mother about this time deepened his convictions. He was about fourteen years old. By the advice of his father he joined the Church, and now felt under increased obligations to serve God. But he soon fell into bad company, and became irregular in his life. At about the age of sixteen he attended a camp meeting. Here his religious concern was renewed, and under a powerful exhortation of the Rev. Thomas Wilkerson he kneeled at his seat for the prayers of God's people. In his distress he fancied he saw an opening in the earth near him, and the lurid flames of hell darting upward through it. He seemed to be so situated upon the verge of this opening that he would have slipped down into hell but for a local preacher who held him in his arms. Two devils seemed to be standing, one at one side of the opening and the other at the other, ready to seize him when he fell; but at that moment his burden fell off, his darkness fled away, and he hoped that the change was of the Lord. He wondered what was the matter; he felt very strange; he thought, "Perhaps this is religion," but he was not sure of it, although he was praising God. He had always thought that if he got religion he could pray; and attempting to pray, he found it to be the easiest thing in the world, and then he was sure that the work was of the Lord. He soon began to pray in public and to exhort, and often became happy and shouted aloud. He was profoundly impressed that it was his duty to preach; but, strange to say, his pious father, who had so earnestly encouraged him to seek God's pardoning love and was so rejoiced at his conversion, was opposed to his entering the



traveling connection. He wished him to be a local preacher. Accordingly by his father's advice he engaged himself to be married to a young lady of the community; but the Spirit of God in a measure forsook him, and he was very miserable; and he now promised God to do his duty, if he would show him what that was. The joys of the great salvation were then restored to him, and he began to hold meetings with great popularity and success; and under powerful divine impressions and by the advice of the preachers he took license to preach, and soon found himself in regular itinerant harness. This brief sketch of Mr. Cunnyingham's exercises before and after conversion, and especially his mental conflicts in view of his entrance upon the ministry, is a faint picture of the depth and intensity of the mental experiences which he depicts in detail in his journal. Even after his entrance upon his itinerant labors, he had awful apprehensions of his unfitness for the work, and dreadful fear lest he had run before he was called. But his clouds eventually lifted, and he had a ministerial career of great joy to himself and great usefulness to others.

One word about his dreams and visions: His profound religious exercises were naturally carried into dreamland, for the character of our dreams is generally indicative of our moral and spiritual condition. Also in the hour when sin was dying and new life was ready to spring up in him, his imagination assisted his faith. The subjective readily assumes the semblance of the objective in children and persons of limited education. It is one of the compensations of nature that the imagination often supplies the deficien-

cies of reason. For this cause the earlier history of any race is usually characterized by the gift of poetry and romance, and illiterate people are more likely to be favored with dreams and visions and bodily exercises than persons of greater intelligence. For a similar reason the introduction of the Jewish and Christian religions was accompanied by displays of miraculous power.

Mr. Cunnyingham's promotion to the presiding eldership in the fifth year of his ministry shows the confidence reposed by the authorities in his piety as a Christian and his ability as a preacher. His appointment to a district embracing his own home also shows that his reputation before he entered the ministry and that of his family worked no disadvantage to him. This was a hard district, embracing, as it did, the hilly and mountainous country of Southwest Virginia, Upper East Tennessee, and a small portion of North Carolina. His labors, though crowned with popularity and usefulness, were attended with exposure and suffering. His health was in a measure broken down, and this fact led to his superannuation in 1820.

On December 16, 1819, Mr. Cunnyingham was happily married to Miss Mary Etter, who was to him an angel of mercy. They reared a large family of children, brought them up in the fear of God, and they became ornaments of society and an honor to their parents. The Rev. William G. E. Cunnyingham, one of his sons, came to eminence. He was for a number of years missionary to China, and for a long time after was the Sunday School Secretary and Editor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Mr. Cunnyingham was remarkable for his meekness,

patience, and cheerfulness. His last days were attended with much suffering from a cancerous affection of his face. He belonged to the pioneer period of Holston Methodism, its heroic age. His character was peculiarly mild and amiable, wanting in the bold and rugged features which characterized many of his contemporaries. His mind was clear and active, with a fondness for abstract speculation. His literary opportunities were limited; but he was not without reading, and in some contributions of his to the *Methodist Episcopalian*, edited by Dr. Patton, he wielded the pen of a ready writer. A richness of fancy and tenderness of affection adorned all his newspaper contributions. As a preacher he ranked above mediocrity. He was "a son of consolation," winning souls to Christ by persuasion rather than by fulminating the terrors of the law. He loved his fellow-men, and was generally loved. When in his last hours he was asked what message he wished to send to his son in China, he replied: "Tell him my sky is clear." His dust sleeps in a quiet graveyard near Athens, Tenn. His devoted and faithful wife sleeps by his side. He died in 1857, and she in 1858.<sup>1</sup>

Mrs. Mary Cunnyngnam was born in Fincastle, Va., and was the oldest child of George Etter. Her parents were of the Presbyterian persuasion, and her mother was a member of the Presbyterian Church. They removed to Rogersville, Tenn., when she was small. The people of that town were mainly Presbyterians in sentiment, and were wealthy, aristocratic,

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., pp. 337-339; also "Methodism in Kentucky," Vol. II., pp. 364-368.

and worldly. In her early youth she knew nothing of "the people called Methodists," but she was taught that they were a people of very low character in every respect—poor, illiterate, and vicious.

On a visit to her uncle, a Mr. Wax, in Fincastle, Va., she became acquainted with the Methodists, and had the privilege of hearing them preach and attending class meetings; and under the powerful ministry of the word as then preached by Methodist preachers she became concerned for her soul. But to get her own consent to ask an interest in the prayers of the Methodists was to her a sore trial, for she had been reared in the spirit and maxims of the world. She dressed in the height of the fashions; and having been trained in dancing schools, she was fond of the fascinations and enchantments of the ballroom. To surrender dress, dancing, and the society and favor of the rich and great, and to cast in her lot with a people so austere in religion and so humble in station, was a trial that not only demanded zeal, but a heroism that rose to the morally sublime. But, by God's grace, she was equal to the emergency.

She occasionally presented herself at the mourners' bench. About that time the Rev. Frederick Stier held a quarterly meeting at Fincastle, and after the Lord's Supper penitents were called. As it happened, her aunt, who had accompanied her to the meeting, had attired her in her best costume, possibly for the purpose of deterring her from the altar. She wore what the Methodists called an "enormous bonnet," which was trimmed with eight yards of ribbon. She had a heavily embroidered sash around her waist, and her dress was ruffled according to the fashion. She de-



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sired to go forward, but was afraid the preachers and people would think that she had come forward to exhibit her clothes. At last she said within herself, "The Lord knows my heart;" and, in a crowded house, she went forward with fear and trembling. The Rev. Mr. Craven (uncle to Mr. Robert Craven, who for many years was a prominent citizen of Chattanooga, Tenn.) cried out: "That's right, sister; come to Jesus with all your finery!" This remark greatly relieved her embarrassment; she felt grateful to him for it, and she was much encouraged by it. Next day she ripped the ruffles from her dress, left her fine bonnet behind, and went to love feast. There she joined the Church. On learning of the step she had taken, her uncle asked her if she knew the responsibilities she had assumed; told her that the Methodists were very strict, and that in the Methodist Church she would have to give up dress and dancing. She replied that she had deliberately weighed the matter and had counted the cost. She was seventeen years old when she joined the Church. She probably did not receive the witness of the Spirit till sometime afterwards. On the death of her mother she was summoned home to take charge of the family. Her father was very much displeased at her having joined the Methodist Church; said to her that Methodist preachers were horse thieves, and that the Methodists were a degraded people. Satan was very diligent in endeavoring to seduce her from her steadfastness. She was ticketed to all the dancing parties in the community, and young men of good families often called upon her and asked the pleasure of her company to the house of mirth; but she had set her face Zion-

ward like flint, and was inexorable. She gave the devotees of pleasure to understand that all invitations of the kind were offensive to her, and they were accordingly, discontinued.

The Methodists at that time had no class in Rogersville; and when she attended Methodist meetings, she had to go about five miles into the country, where worship was mainly conducted in private houses. Her father made no provision to send her to these meetings. She often walked five miles to class and other meetings. The Methodists knew the opposition with which she met, took much interest in her, and encouraged her. They gave her assistance in going to and from meetings, as far as practicable. One night she returned at a late hour from a prayer meeting. The family had all retired. After she had gone to her room she heard her father struggling and groaning; and, hurrying to his room, she found him almost suffocated, his face swollen, his tongue swollen and hanging out of his mouth, and he was unable to speak. She sent for a physician; and, supposing that her father was dying, she fell upon her knees and prayed God to save his soul. The physician came and gave him relief. Afterwards her father told her that it was her religion that had saved his life; that if the prayer meeting had not been kept up to a late hour he probably would have failed to get help, and would have died. She replied that she hoped she had been the means of not only saving his life, but of saving his soul. After that he never hindered her in the service of God, but always provided a way for her to get to and from church. He often sent her as far as from fifteen to twenty miles to quarterly meetings.

What an apt illustration was this of the disciplinary character of affliction! The baptism of the Holy Ghost often follows the baptism of fire; afflictions break a way to the heart for God. The same God now confounds the wicked who in ancient times put a hook in the nose of the king of Assyria and a bridle in his mouth and turned him back by the way by which he came.

"Afflictions, though they seem severe,  
Are oft in mercy sent."

It was so in this case.

This pious lady was the means of the conversion of many of her relatives. Two of her sisters married Methodist preachers. One married the Rev. James Howell, and the other the Rev. Charles Miller. Her personal charms and deep piety had attracted the attention of Presiding Elder Cunnynggham, and she became his wife in 1819, while he was on the Holston District. It was a happy union.

Her son, William, used, when a boy, to write compositions and bring them to her to criticise. She would encourage him, saying: "That does very well. If you continue to improve, you may make a good writer some day." This gave him great encouragement, and stimulated him to industry and perseverance. She often remarked that she had gone through much trouble to be a Methodist, but that she was more than compensated for all her tribulations by having a son to hold up the cross before the world. She fell asleep in Jesus at the residence of her son-in-law, Robert Craven, on Lookout Mountain, near Chattanooga, May 28, 1868, in the seventy-seventh year of her age.



How true is it that godliness has the promise of the life which is, as well as of that which is to come! How true is it that those who forsake all for Christ find a hundredfold more of real blessedness even in this world, to say nothing of the blessedness of the world to come!

## CHAPTER XVI.

### GEORGE EKIN AND HIS TIMES.

GEORGE EKIN was born near Newtown-Stuart, Tyrone County, Ireland, May 22, 1782. His father, whose name he bore, was of Scotch ancestry, a stone mason by trade and also a farmer. His mother, whose maiden name was Margaret Ford, was of English extraction. His parents were members of the Presbyterian Church. His father had once been deeply convicted of sin under Methodist preaching and had joined Society, but opposition caused him to stop short in his pursuit of genuine regeneration. His early religious training was after the old, formal Presbyterian régime: close confinement in the house all day Sunday, with a faithful study of the Catechism, prayers in the evening, and none on any other day of the week. The religious exercises of the family took on a little extra diligence just before sacramental meetings. On Sundays the homiletic menu upon which the congregation was fed consisted of a dry, lifeless discourse upon some theme of theology or practical religion. At the age of seven he was taken by his mother one night to hear a Methodist preacher. The preacher's earnestness and zeal, so different from the preaching to which he was accustomed, had a powerful effect on him. He was alarmed and awakened; and if, as he afterwards believed, he had had proper instruction, he in all probability would have given

himself to God and found Jesus precious to his young, susceptible heart. He, however, never reflected upon his parents for his lack of appropriate guidance at this time; for, as he believed, they were living up to the teachings of their times. His convictions wore off, his mind was alienated from God by wicked associations, and he continued to grow up in sin till again arrested in his wild career by the death of a brother. The books which he read pointed to no sure and heartfelt relief. They did not teach that Christ died for all, and that all may be saved; nor did they teach the direct witness of the Spirit to the fact that the regenerate are born of God, which doctrine, though denounced as "unscriptural, false, fanatical, and of mischievous tendency," he afterwards, in a long life of consecration to the service of God, proved to be "a wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort." At the age of fifteen he attended a Methodist class meeting, and there he received a fresh awakening and such instruction in the way of salvation as proved to be of great spiritual advantage to him. At that class meeting he joined the Society as a seeker of religion, and a short time afterwards was appointed class leader. It was a case of the blind leading the blind, though both were mercifully saved from the ditch. After six months of deep conviction, day broke upon his long night of agony. One day he retired to a secret spot on his father's farm and pleaded earnestly for pardon and peace. In his struggle he caught, by faith, a glimpse of Jesus, the Man of Calvary, which sent a thrill of rapture through his soul, too sweet to be expressed and too well attested to be misunderstood. He had a clear and sat-

isfactory sense of pardoned sin which he never doubted to the day of his death. He soon began to exhort with power; and his exhortations having been followed by conversions, some of his friends urged him to ask for authority to preach. He began to preach without license on Newtown-Stuart Circuit; however, before the preacher left the circuit he gave him license to preach. He was then about twenty-two years old. But his pathway was not without thorns. His family opposed him, and spoke evil of the people with whom he had cast in his lot. His old playmates seemed driven of the devil to tempt and harass him. One in particular seemed resolved upon his ruin, but he said to him plainly: "If you will not go with me to heaven, be sure I will not go with you to hell." About this time it was reported that he had gone crazy; but he replied: "It is a mistake; I have just come to my right mind."

Ekin's father was a man of some property. After his son had become a Methodist preacher he said to him that in the division of his land among his children he would disinherit him if he did not abandon the Methodist ministry. He replied: "I feel it to be my duty to preach; and I intend to preach, land or no land." By industry and economy he became possessed of a house and a clever stock of goods. Meanwhile he had married a Miss Mary Steele. Not satisfied with secular pursuits, he resolved to devote his life to preaching, and by the consent of his wife he resolved to remove to America. After a six weeks' voyage he arrived in Baltimore May 1, 1810.

Mr. Ekin had strict views of law and order, and he did everything methodically and systematically. Ac-

cordingly, when he left Ireland for America he brought with him a certificate of his Church membership and his standing as a local preacher; for he had labored as a local preacher about six years. It was in the form of a letter addressed on the back "To the Leaders, Trustees, Stewards, Deacons, Ministers, and Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church in-America." It read as follows:

The bearer, George Ekins, and his spouse, Mary, are members of the Methodist society in this circuit, and have been since their childhood. Our brother has preached, and does preach, as a local preacher with acceptance among us even to this day. He and his dear partner have always conducted themselves prudently, religiously, and godly while with us, and I trust they will continue to keep themselves in the love of God unto the end. I believe they have a just cause for removing to America, and I do hereby recommend them, as above, to all our brethren wherever they shall come or settle in the Methodist Episcopal Church in North America.

Signed:

JOHN MCARTHUR,  
*Suprintendent of Newtown-Stuart Circuit;*  
WILLIAM FODE, *Helper.*

Newtown-Stuart, February 7th, 1810.

The above is a copy from the original letter which is in my possession. I have also in my possession the original certificate of his licensure to preach in America, and the following is a true copy:

"George Eakin applied to us for liberty to preach as a local preacher in our circuit; and after due inquiry concerning his gifts, grace, and usefulness, we judge he is a proper person to be licensed for this purpose, and accordingly authorize him to preach."

JONATHAN JACKSON, *Pres.*

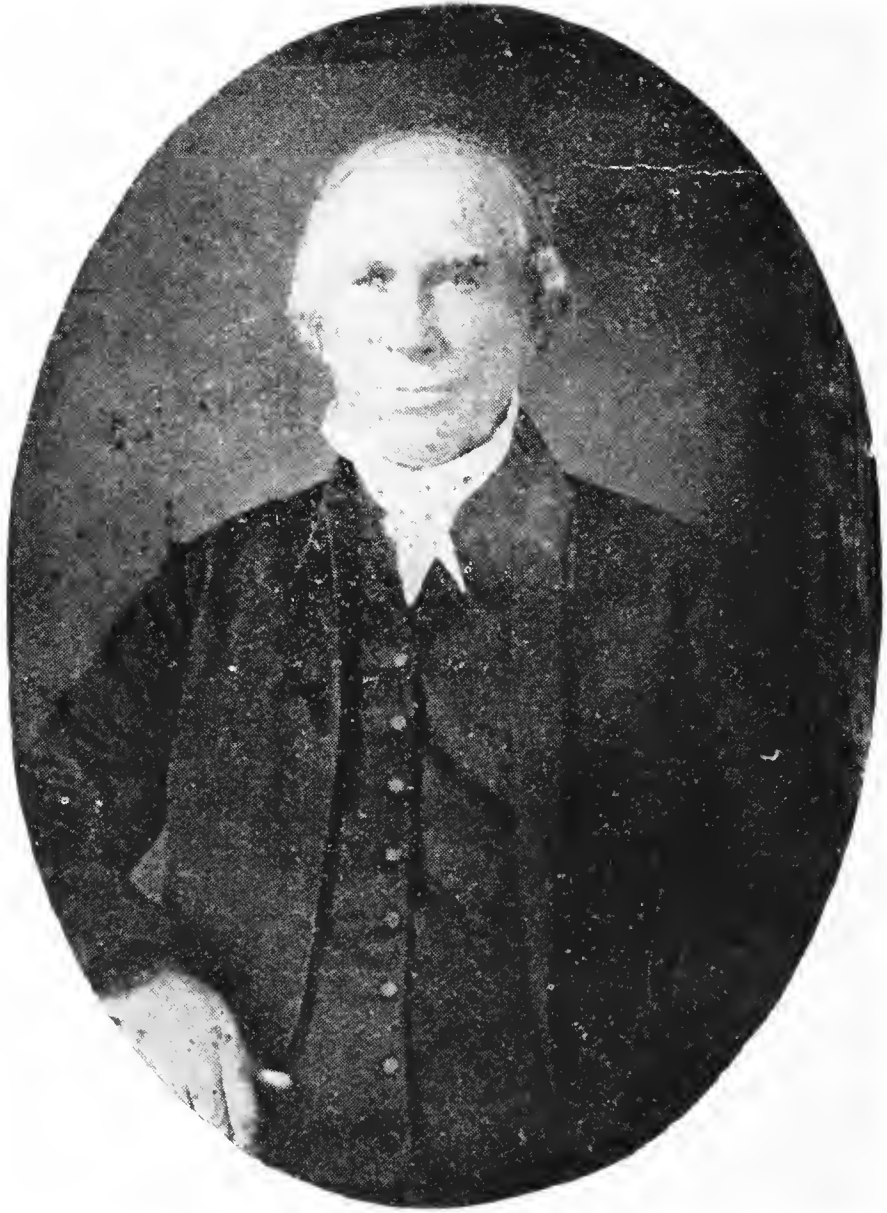
Union Circuit, August 26th, 1810.

The certificate was in quotation marks as above,

and was doubtless a quotation from the records of the Quarterly Conference which voted the license. Jackson was at that time presiding elder of the Catawba District, South Carolina Conference, and Union Circuit was in that district. He was recommended to the Western Conference at a quarterly meeting of the French Broad Circuit, held at Muddy Creek, in Roane County, Tenn., in August, 1811, and admitted into that Conference at its last session, in Cincinnati, in September of the same year. His first charge was French Broad Circuit. This circuit at that time embraced wholly or in part the counties of Roane, Blount, Sevier, Jefferson, Cocke, Knox, Anderson, and Campbell, and required him to travel about four hundred miles on each round.

At the division of the Western Conference in 1812 Mr. Ekin fell into the Tennessee Conference, and at the division of the Tennessee Conference in 1824 he fell into the Holston Conference, in which he spent the remainder of his useful life. He was eminently a Holston man, having never had a charge outside of the Holston country. He was never appointed to a town or city station, and was never promoted to the presiding eldership. He labored in all sections of the Conference, from New River to Lookout Mountain and from the Alleghanies to Cumberland Mountain. He filled with dignity, acceptability, and usefulness the best circuits in the Conference. Placed technically on the superannuate roll only a few years before his death, he continued to labor almost incessantly and with success.

I have before me an old document certifying to Mr. Ekin's authority to solemnize the rites of matri-



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mony in the State of Virginia, which reads as follows:

This is to certify to all whom it may concern that at a court held for Washington County, on the 21st day of December, in the year one thousand eight hundred and thirteen, George Ekins produced credentials of his ordination, and also of his being in regular communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, took the oath of allegiance to the commonwealth and the oath to support the Constitution of the United States, and entered into bond as required by "an act to regulate the solemnization of marriages, prohibiting such as are incestuous or otherwise unlawful, to prevent forcible and stolen marriages, and for punishment of the crime of bigamy;" and that he is thereby authorized to celebrate the rights of matrimony agreeably to the forms and customs of said Church between any persons to him regularly applying therefor within this State. Given under my hand and seal the day and year above written.

[Seal.]

JNO. HOUSTON.

The following is a copy of Mr. Ekin's naturalization papers:

Be it remembered that at a circuit court begun and held in the County of Hawkins, in the State of Tennessee, at the courthouse in Rodgersville on the first Monday in April, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty, present the Honorable Samuel Powell, Judge, the Rev. George Aiken of thirty-six or thirty-seven years old, a native of Ireland, this day came into open court, and makes known and declares his intention of becoming a citizen of the United States, and to renounce forever all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, State or sovereignty whatever, and particularly to the kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, of which he is a citizen.

*State of Tennessee.*

I, Willie B. Mitchell, clerk of the circuit court of Hawkins County, in the State aforesaid, do certify that the foregoing is a true and perfect copy from the records in my



office. In testimony whereof I have hereunto subscribed my name and affixed my private seal, having no seal of office, at office in Rogersville, this 26th July, 1823.

[L. S.]

W. B. MITCHELL, *Cl'k.*

Mr. Ekin was a thorough believer in the gospel which he preached. At all of his appointments, or at least at the most of them, he labored directly for the salvation of souls, and looked for immediate results. Preaching with him was not a mere profession; it was a call, a loud, unmodified, and irrevocable call, of God. Accordingly, he seldom preached without opening the door of the Church for the reception of members. He received seekers as well as professors; for, with the Methodists of his day, he held that the Church was the proper place to get religion in, as well as to enjoy and practice it. These facts will, in some measure, account for his extraordinary success in "edifying the body of Christ"—that is to say, in adding to the membership of the Church. A memorandum of his made about the year 1851 says:

I have received into the Church in America upward of ten thousand persons; and as near as I can ascertain, about eight thousand persons have been converted under my ministry. I have kept no account of the number I have baptized, though the number has, no doubt, amounted to several thousands. I have been a traveling preacher upward of forty years, and I believe I have almost averaged one sermon per day, or about fourteen thousand sermons in all. I have traveled about five thousand miles per year, and I do not believe that I have disappointed my congregations forty times in the forty years.

Mr. Ekin preached about five years after this note was made, and in that time must have added considerably to the figures above. He was appointed to the

Nollichucky Circuit in 1821, and served the charge two years. His success on this circuit was phenomenal. It embraced a large territory, comprising most of the appointments in Greene, Cocke, Sevier, and Jefferson Counties. Absalom Harris, a young and ardent preacher, was Ekin's helper; and James Axley, a giant in those days, was a supernumerary on the charge, though far from being, even at that time, a non-preaching prelate. In 1822 Mr. Ekin was returned to this circuit, with J. Rice and D. B. Cumming as helpers. When Mr. Ekin was first appointed to this large work, he found the state of religion rather low; there were on it what he called "very difficult cases," by which he meant cases of discipline, most of them growing out of the question of slavery. His predecessors had rigidly enforced the slavery rule, harassing local preachers and members, and refusing to license as preachers men of gifts and graces who happened to be entangled with the peculiar institution. Mr. Ekin, though himself stoutly antislavery, adopted a broad, liberal, and conciliatory policy, which tended to quiet the Church and to allow the attention of the people to be directed to purely spiritual things. His associates entered into his views, and heartily cooperated with him in revival work. Things took a favorable turn, the members began to deepen their diligence, and there was a noticeable increase in the numbers who attended divine service. Three camp meetings were held on the circuit in the fall of 1822, at which two hundred and sixty-three persons were added to the Church. At the camp meeting near Newport there were eighty persons at the altar at one time. Upward of five hundred and fifty persons

were added to the Church, most of them in possession of the evidence of pardoned sin, during Mr. Ekin's first year on that charge. In his second year, as he had two assistants, the charge was made a six weeks' circuit, and the revival influence continued and increased throughout the year. During these two years the membership on the circuit was raised from eight hundred to eighteen hundred. These, indeed, were years of great spiritual prosperity in Holston. Mr. Ekin attended a camp meeting near Jonesboro, in the Holston District, where two hundred and two persons joined the Church, and one held near Rutledge, at which seventy-four were added to the Church. During this remarkable season of grace a number of wealthy and respectable people joined the Methodist Church, from the General down to the poor African. A liberal policy toward slaveholders, coupled with a mighty outpouring of the Holy Spirit, swept many a good family into the Methodist Church that, but for such liberal policy, might have remained in the world or gone to other denominations.<sup>1</sup>

Father Ekin traveled the Abingdon Circuit in 1845-46. There he found that some of the less wise among his Calvinistic brethren were prophesying that the Methodist Church was going down and would soon be extinct. But he set on foot three new church buildings, and dedicated one of them, which he named Wesley Chapel. He also organized eleven Sunday schools, and received into the Church two hundred and eighty-five persons. At one place, Baker's Chapel, he had some trouble with his Presbyterian breth-

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<sup>1</sup>*Methodist Magazine* for January, 1824.

ren. The chapel was the joint property of the Methodists and Presbyterians. There Ekin organized a Sunday school without objection; but afterwards the Presbyterians objected, and some of them built a partition in the chapel on the line between what they claimed to be Presbyterian ground and Methodist ground; but, unfortunately for the Methodists, they had to climb over the partition to get into their part of the house, as the door was on the other side. Of course this awkward state of affairs did not last long, and a complete separation took place. Father Ekin did not think that he deserved this treatment from what he styled the "Calvin Church," as by his revival work he had, in his time, added to it many hundreds of people whom they never would have gotten otherwise. Among the many memoranda kept by him is to be found the following: "November 8, 1846. During the last four years I have on my list the names of one thousand one hundred and ninety-six persons who have joined the Methodist Episcopal Church under me on the Tazewell (Va.), Rogersville, Maryville, and Abingdon Circuits; add to this sixty names of persons who have thus far joined the Church on Blountville Circuit." And all this in the face of the oft-repeated assertion that the Methodist Church was going down! Father Ekin claimed to be the founder of Sunday schools in the Holston country. He claimed to have organized a Sunday school in 1813. From his manuscript I cannot make out the name of the place; but doubtless his claim was just.

It is well known in Methodist circles that for over three-quarters of a century the Holston Conference has been known abroad as "Little Holston." Father Ekin

has the honor of having originated this title. In a letter to the *New York Christian Advocate and Journal* giving an account of a great revival that had occurred on his work, possibly that of the Nollichucky Circuit mentioned above, he closed the account by saying: "I tell ye, Little Holston is looking up."

The early preachers in Holston were generally antislavery in their sentiments, while but few of them were abolitionists. This statement may seem to involve a contradiction. The antislavery men were in principle opposed to slavery, and favored all lawful and peaceable methods for its extermination; but they were opposed to violent measures. The abolitionists looked upon slavery as a sin *per se*, and therefore felt it to be their duty to denounce it and antagonize it as they would any other positive immorality. They could not recognize a slaveholder as a Christian, and hence were for excluding slaveholders from the pale of the Church and especially for excluding them from the offices of the Church. The Abolitionists, considered as a political party, were revolutionary. They regarded the Constitution of the United States as "a league with hell and a covenant with death," and declared a war of extermination not only against slavery but against the instrument by which the fathers bound together the several States in a great federal nationality. Ekin was emphatically antislavery, but equally emphatically antiabolition. He had the good sense to recognize the fact that in domestic slavery in the South he confronted a condition and not a theory. A similar fact had been recognized eighteen hundred years before by Jesus Christ and his apostles, who, no doubt,

while deploring the existence and manifest evils of slavery in the Roman Empire, did not denounce it in the pulpit nor outlaw, by ecclesiastical action, those whom they found to be connected with it.

But, while Father Ekin was broad and conservative anent the peculiar institution, he was not prepared to sympathize with the Southern party in the General Conference of 1844. When separation was determined upon by the Southern delegates and afterwards by the Southern Conferences, he resolved to adhere to what he called "the old Church." At the session of the Holston Conference in Athens, Tenn., which began October 8, 1845, the Conference almost unanimously approved of the action of the Louisville Convention, and resolved to adhere to the M. E. Church, South. But Father Ekin entered on the journal a solemn protest against this action, and signified his intention to adhere North. But such men as E. F. Sevier, William Hicks, and others advised with him, and convinced him of the impropriety of breaking with the great majority of his old friends and in his old age forming new friendships and new relationships. A few days of prayer and reflection showed him the wisdom of this advice, and, fortunately for him, he resolved to adhere South. This step he never had occasion to regret.

In a letter to his grandson, George Eakin Naff, who was then a student at Emory and Henry College, dated December 5, 1844, he wrote:

With regard to our doings in Conference, we did not do much. If I understood it, we are for peace. For my own part, I belong to the M. E. Church. I intend to stick to the old ship as long as I live. Bishop A. has brought upon the

Church a great calamity. Can we not do as we have done—serve God without a slaveholding bishop? The North have promised that they will not put on us an abolition bishop if we will not put on them a slaveholding bishop. This, I think, is fair, and I say let the Conferences regulate their own business among themselves.

In regard to the question of separation Father Ekin was not by himself; there were a number of preachers and laymen in the bounds of the Conference who sympathized with his views.

The Rev. Eli K. Hutsell, a Holston preacher of great piety, wrote to Father Ekin from Asheville, N. C., July 21, 1855:

My principal object in writing to you now is to know what we are going to do for a bishop. I see by the last *Advocate and Journal* that Bishop Morris will not be here, and I write to you because you are an old man, and I know that you, like myself, do not believe in Church division nor in the Southern organization. I have no doubt but that you still consider yourself a member of the Holston Conference of the M. E. Church. You ought, as I believe, to write to the *Advocate and Journal* and inform our brethren that there is still a Holston Conference of the M. E. Church, that there are still a few of us who claim membership in the old Church, and that we want a bishop and want to be recognized by the M. E. Church as heretofore. We do not believe that the General Conference did anything in the case of Bishop Andrew but what was its prerogative to do. We do not believe in a slaveholding bishop under the circumstances.

Mark the expression *under the circumstances*. This expression of this good man showed that, while he was antislavery, he was not what was then termed an abolitionist. In another letter to Father Ekin, written from Asheville, N. C., and dated September 18, 1845:

Mr. Hutsell, speaking of the Conference which was to assemble in Athens, says :

Let me know what is done, who goes South and who North. I am told that Brother Hicks holds with the old Church; if so, you can have a Conference. Brother Fanning, I am told, holds with the North. . . . If you write to one of the bishops of the M. E. Church to hold Conference, let me know.

It is due to Mr. Hutsell to remark at this point that he was neither a disorganizer nor a kicker, and that when he found that his Conference had almost unanimously adhered to the Southern organization he quietly acquiesced in the new order of things and lived and died in the Church, South. He was a holy man, very useful and much loved while he lived, and sincerely lamented when he died.

In a letter to Father Ekin written from Wytheville, Va., September 22, 1845, Mr. James St. Clair, a pious layman, wrote :

I was surprised to hear by one of the preachers that you are going with the Southern organization; if so, I would like to hear it from yourself, as I was confident that you would stand firm to the old ship. Is it possible that you too have gone off in a cruise in another ship? As for me and my house, we are determined to stay in the old ship till she lands on the other shore. Your old friends here are firm. I know not one here of the lay or official members who is willing to change his position except Brother James C. Walker. Our preacher, C. D. Smith, will probably make application to Conference to have it meet here next year; but I have made inquiry of most of the members of the Church here, and I can find none who say they desire it. I assure you that if the Conference is determined to go to the Southern organization very few of the members here are willing to go with them. It is my opinion that the preachers



who have visited us lately think that having the Conference to meet here is the only chance of bringing us into measures. But I think that this will fail to have the effect they desire. Brother Absalom Fisher has taken the voice of several societies on Cripple Creek, and the people are unanimous for staying as they always were. I pray earnestly that God may heal the wounds of our distracted Zion, that peace may yet reign in all her borders. I and my poor wife are cast off by all the preachers, those who have eaten at our table and been sheltered from the storms under our roof. Our names are cast out as evil; we are called abolitionists, Bondites, etc.

Father Ekin probably received many such letters as the above. These letters show the reluctance with which many of our people consented to the division of the Church, a thing, however, which was, no doubt, providential, and just as inevitable as was afterwards the War between the States and the forcible abolition of slavery by military power. God, as I believe, saw that the conservation of Methodism North and South was more important than the preservation of ecclesiastical organic unity. The Church was split that Methodism might be saved; and it seems to me plain that the split has fallen out to the furtherance of the gospel as preached by Methodists. The result shows that, whoever may have meant the division for evil, God meant it for good.

It matters not whether or not the people wanted the Conference in Wytheville, it sat there all the same in 1846. It is due to Mr. St. Clair and Mr. Fisher to say that they were swept by the irresistible tide into the warm bosom of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, where they were happy and useful till God said to them: "Come up higher." In the letter of Mr. St. Clair it is worthy of note that he regarded

the term "abolitionist" as a term of reproach—a fact which shows that he was not far from the kingdom.

The letters to Ekin also show the tremendous pressure which was brought to bear on him to induce him to break with his lifelong friends and brethren, and to go with the Northern division; but common sense, the grace of God, and the continuous and affectionate interposition of his brethren soon determined him upon a course which he never had reason to regret. As a specimen of some of the influences brought to bear on him to hold him to Southern Methodism, I have before me a letter addressed to Father Ekin by the Rev. William Hicks from Speedwell, Va., July 10, 1845. The main object of this letter evidently was to conciliate Father Ekin to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The letter shows that the writer knew something of human nature, and at least of an imperfectly fortified point in Ekin's character. He begins by asking permission to write his biography. All men have their weaknesses; and not the least of Father Ekin's weaknesses was something more than "a decent respect for the opinions of mankind." Thus having disarmed his venerable brother, Mr. Hicks, seemingly as by an afterthought, introduces the question of separation, and says:

I will now say a word on another subject. The Church is divided. This has brought upon us a solemn and trying era. In my district matters are in a very unsettled state, but every day brings new light on this subject. Dear brother, I am sorry that, while we agree on almost everything else, we cannot see alike on the question of Church separation. I suppose you are unwilling to go with the South. I am firmly of the opinion that the South could have done no better. Hence I am Southern in my feelings. I go not as a seceder,

but as a member of the M. E. Church (South), and shall try to demean myself as such. If you permit me to have the honor of writing your memoir, I would like to have it to say: "Brother Ekin went with his brethren against Northern encroachments, and *in the day of trial*, stood by those with whom he had fought so many years." Nevertheless, if you cannot go with us, whatever course you may take shall not injure you in my estimation while you labor as you have done for years. In all things I shall prove faithful to you, whether we go together or separate.

This letter doubtless had a fine influence on Father Ekin. Suffice it to say that the breezes that blew Southward were stronger than those that blew Northward, and Ekin was carried with the stronger current.

Father Ekin was not a man of great intellect, and his education was limited. His gifts were moral rather than intellectual. As a preacher, he should be set down at mediocrity; as an exhorter, above; and to his gifts as an exhorter may be ascribed, in a large measure, his remarkable success in bringing people into the Church. His sermons were not incoherent and scattering; there was method in his development of a subject, and his sermons reasonably preserved the unities; but he had no great insight into the depths of his themes, and no great powers of analysis. He neither digged deeply nor soared loftily. His sermons were plain and practical, and their power lay mainly in the single aim in them of bringing sinners to Christ and edifying believers at once. He preached for immediate results. He had as brave a heart as ever beat in the bosom of an Irishman. His courage, however, was of the moral rather than of the physical type. It manifested itself in great candor and plainness of speech, but not in abusive epithets and bully-

ing insolence. The principal cause of his success as a preacher and pastor was his singleness of purpose; all his faculties were brought to bear in focal power upon the one object of saving souls. He was naturally narrow and intense, and his singleness of purpose made him narrower. He was a man of decision, never on the fence. You always knew where to find him. He was too strong a Methodist to be as tolerant of other Churches as he might have been. He knew but little of politics; but he called himself a Democrat, and he had a great abhorrence of Whiggery. He wrote to his grandson, George E. Naff, in December, 1844: "I have been sorry about one thing that I did: I advised a young man, Mr. Waterson, to go to E. & H. College last summer. He was a Democrat, and he told me himself that the Whigs at the college treated him so that he could not stay there. I was once going to write to Mr. Collins on the subject; but I let it pass. I want you, my son, to have nothing to do with Whiggery!" He preached in Sullivan County, Tenn., once, and at the close of his sermon called on a Sister Cox, who sat near the pulpit, to pray. In his sermon he had occasion to say that he hoped the Lord would put down the devil and Whiggery, or words to that effect. In the prayer Mrs. Cox prayed for the Lord to deliver us from political preachers. As soon as the prayer was ended he was on his feet, and as Sister Cox arose he tapped her on the shoulder and said: "Ye ded wrong, sester, and so ye ded."

He had a very kind heart, but there was occasionally a little sarcasm in his public and private reproofs. In preaching once in the chapel of Emory and Henry

College, he said: "Boys, bear in mind that many of your parents have no money to throw away, and you ought to put in your time to the best advantage. You ought to stay here, if your parents will allow it, until you get a good education, and not do like that man Austin, who went over into Tazewell County and married and disgraced himself." There was nothing in that matter, except that a student by that name had paid a visit to Tazewell County and, falling in love with an excellent young lady, had married her and withdrawn from college.

In passing from one appointment to another, if there was a family on his route with which he was not acquainted, he would, if time permitted, stop, go in, and inquire after this style, "Will ye please tell me who lives here?" and on being informed, the next question would likely be, "Do ye have prayers in your family?" If the answer was in the negative, something like the following would be heard: "Ye ought to be ashamed of yourselves, living here like heathen, living upon the bounty of the Lord and giving him no thanks, and never asking his blessings upon you. Get down upon your knees till I pray for you." This and much more of the same character would, at first, often give offense to many; but likely as not they would be converted and join the Church before the end of the year.

The Rev. Andrew Hunter, at one time a member of the Holston Conference, was once on a journey with Father Ekin. Hunter, who was a dyspeptic, was finikin about his diet, and many things were brought to the table which he could not eat with safety. Ekin, discovering this, occasionally nagged

him with the Scripture injunction: "Eat, asking no question for conscience' sake." On one occasion they requested an early breakfast of the landlady. That the breakfast might not be delayed, Father Ekin had requested the lady to prepare hasty pudding (commonly called mush) for their breakfast. Dipping the water from the spring before daylight, she had unfortunately scooped a frog, which was cooked with the mush. When Ekin had helped himself to the mush, he discovered to his dismay that a frog had been set before him, and as he pushed the plate back in disgust Hunter said: "Father Ekin, eat asking no question for conscience' sake." "What!" replied the indignant clergyman; "eat a frog for conscience' sake?"

This anecdote shows that Father Ekin understood the maxim that "Circumstances alter cases," and realized that much depended on whose ox had been gored.

To the same purpose is the following anecdote: Father Ekin used to rebuke his friend, William G. Brownlow, for carrying a pistol, saying to him: "Brother Brownlow, you ought not to carry a pistol; you ought to trust in the Lord." But it happened that on one occasion Ekin, Brownlow, and other preachers were on their way to Conference in a stagecoach. They were passing at night through a stretch of wilderness country, where there had been a hold-up and a robbery a few nights previously. Ekin with all his trust in the Lord began to feel a little nervous, and, turning to Brownlow, said: "Billy, have you got your pistol?" On receiving an affirmative reply he said: "That's right, Billy."

Brownlow used to tell that while Father Ekin was spending a few days at his house in Jonesboro a

Whig torchlight procession marched along the street one night, with shouts and groans. Ekin, when requested to go out upon the portico to witness it, refused, saying: "It's blasphemy!" But a few nights afterwards a Democratic torchlight procession passed the house; and Ekin, going out from the portico and witnessing the pageant, remarked: "It's perfectly magnificent!"

In a letter to the *Holston Methodist* published in 1874 the Rev. Samuel D. Gaines says:

Father Ekin possessed in an eminent degree the art of conducting camp meetings. He knew when and where to strike, and he was always ready to reprove sin whether in high or low places. Such was his blunt manner of rebuking that he was a terror to evil doers. I have often heard him say that he felt that he had not accomplished much in preaching if he had not caused some one either to be angry or to weep. At one time he met at my house with one of my neighbors, who was laboring for me. Family prayers being announced, the neighbor was invited to engage in the service with us. He declined to do so for the reason that he could not spare the time and that it was a useless exercise. At the breakfast table Ekin, looking him in the face, said: "Brother, you could not take time to pray? Remember, you have to take time to die. Do you ever pray with your children?" The man replied in the negative, and left the table with oaths and threats. That day there was circuit preaching, and as Ekin passed the man at his work he hallooed at him and said: "Brother, get in a good humor and come out to-night to hear a preacher who is all the way from Ireland." Night came on, the man attended, was smitten with conviction of sin, happily converted the same night, and returned to his family praising God. That man made a useful member of the Church, and was ever afterwards one of Father Ekin's best friends. His family was soon afterwards received into the Church.

Father Ekin was not opposed to shouting, but he despised hypocrisy. At one of his camp meetings, in the midst of an excitement, a woman came into the altar making a great deal of noise, throwing her arms about rather awkwardly, when he said to her in a kind tone: "Stop, sester, ye shout badly."

One of his years on Maryville Circuit was a year of great spiritual prosperity. At one of his meetings he notified three brethren that he intended to call upon all of them to pray at one kneeling—alternately, of course. The first prayed, as he should have done, a short prayer; the second was quite long-winded, so that Father Ekin became impatient, arose, and began to sing before the prayer was ended:

"Show pity, Lord; O Lord, forgive;  
Let a repenting rebel live."

The congregation having arisen, he said to the offending brother: "Brother, ye prayed too long, and so ye ded; ye would wear out the patience of your God!" He then resumed the hymn, and after singing another couplet he remarked very kindly to the third brother: "Brother, I treated ye badly, not allowing ye to pray; but never mind it, I will give ye a chance yet before the meeting is over."

A number of men by name of Cumming at one time belonged to the Conference. They were estimable men, but by no means favorites with Father Ekin. At one of the Conferences another of the Cummings was presented for admission on trial, when Father Ekin promptly arose to his feet and inquired: "Bishop, I want to know *ef* the Lord is going to call all the Cummings to *prache!*" Of course, the remark only



provoked an audible smile, in which the Cummings, no doubt, heartily joined.

At one of Father Ekin's revival meetings a drunken man was hired by his comrades to go to the mourners' bench. The preachers, having been privately informed of the scheme, were at a loss how to get rid of the unwelcome mourner. Father Ekin said to them: "Never mind, I'll manage him." He stopped the singing and called the congregation to prayer, and then began confessing the sins of the mourner somewhat after this fashion, "O Lord, here is another poor sinner, who has come forward to seek religion. We pray thee to have mercy on him, for he is a hard case. He has drunk barrels of mean whisky in his time, and he is now drunk as a *batle*; he has sworn many an oath and told many a lie; he has robbed many a henroost and"—here the prayer was interrupted by the flight of the sinner.

While the "New Version" controversy was raging, Father Ekin in a sermon at an East Tennessee camp meeting broached the question, saying: "The Baptists, not being able to prove immersion by the old Bible, have gotten up a new Bible to suit their notion, in which they have *immerse* in the place of *baptize*." There was a Baptist preacher in the audience, Elder Cate. After the sermon he arose and asked the privilege of correcting a mistake into which Father Ekin had fallen. He said the Baptists, as such, had not published a new version; that Father Ekin was simply mistaken. Ekin replied: "I am not mistaken, sir; and if ye will give me time, sir, I'll prove that I have told the truth." Accordingly he wrote to Mrs. Governor Floyd, who then lived in Richmond, Va., re-

questing her to procure and send to him a copy of the new version, and she did so. At the next camp meeting at that place Father Ekin and Mr. Cate were both present. Near the close of one of the services, Father Ekin requested the preacher to allow him to speak a few words, and the permission was granted. Said he: "Ye remember that a year ago I stated that the Baptists had gotten up a new Bible, and Brother Cate had the assurance to contradict me, as much as to give me the lie; and I want the people to know who the liar is, if a lie is out. I have sent all the way to the good wife of Governor Floyd, in Virginia, for a copy of the Baptist Bible, and now I ask that some brother take the new Bible in his hand and let me hold the old Bible, and let us read publicly and compare." The comparison was accordingly made, whereupon Elder Cate arose to explain. He said that the new version which Father Ekin had was, no doubt, a publication made by men of Baptist sentiments, by a Baptist Union, or something of that kind; but that it had not been authorized by the Baptist Church as a whole or by the Baptist Churches generally. Father Ekin replied: "A year ago ye contradicted me publicly, as much as to make me out a liar; now I have proved that I told the truth. Now be honest about it, Brother Cate, and acknowledge that ye told a big fib!"

Elder Cate was an honest and pious minister, greatly loved and respected by those who knew him. The difference after all was only a question of opinion, and not of fact. Neither had lied.

A number of preachers, the writer among them, were on their return from a Conference at Wytheville,

Va., in the fall of 1853. Father Ekin was also one of the number. They stopped to spend the Sabbath at Sulphur Spring Church, an old log house in Smyth County. Father Gannaway, who lived in the neighborhood, was that day master of ceremonies. After a sermon by one of the brethren, Gannaway made the announcements, and was about to call for the benediction when Father Ekin said: "Ain't ye goin' to *left* a collection?" "What for?" said Gannaway. "Why," said Ekin, "to put glass in these windows!" And the glass was needed, for the sharp winds were pouring in through the open spaces in the sash. "Ah!" said Gannaway kindly, "I reckon we can attend to our own business." Father Ekin did not really expect a collection; his object, which was accomplished, was to lodge a timely suggestion.

Solomon says, "The righteous man regardeth the life of his beast," and Father Ekin possessed this mark of righteousness in a high degree. He always owned a good horse, and he personally saw to it that he was well bedded, well fed, and curried. He had a tender care for his "Nellie." When one day she had fallen into a well he was much distressed, and while his friends were extricating her he frequently retired to pray that the work of rescue might be successful.

Dr. Tadlock, of the Presbyterian Church, used to tell the following anecdote on Father Ekin. At a religious service in Greene County, Tenn., near Rheatown, he said to the people: "I am going to preach, take up a collection to carry the gospel to the heathen, and then call for mourners; and I will guarantee that we shall have a conversion for every dollar you contribute." The meeting was one of power; six white

persons and one negro professed conversion. On counting the money that was contributed the preacher discovered that he had six dollars and seventy cents. He exclaimed: "Just as I predicted: we have a dollar for every white person saved, and seventy cents for the negro."

These are only samples of the large number of anecdotes that have been told of Father Ekin. While they may amuse the reader, they also serve to bring out some of his peculiarities and, I might say, weaknesses. Many other anecdotes of Father Ekin that might be repeated in this connection are either apocryphal or distorted.

After measuring the man by the above sketch, the reader may wonder at his remarkable success as a preacher, and especially at his high standing and widespread fame. You may be sure that there must be both intellectual and moral worth in a man that can accomplish what Father Ekin accomplished. Among his elements of success you may set down a strict congenital and cultivated honesty and integrity of character, a courage that never quailed in the face of danger, an unwavering belief in the gospel, a deep and genuine experience of grace, a persistent prayerfulness, an unflagging activity, a studious neatness in person and dress, good business ideas, and a ready conformity, as a rule, to the amenities of good society.

To show that I have not overrated Father Ekin, I give here a few statements from the pens of other men:

In a letter to the *Holston Methodist* from Bradford,

Coosa County, Ala., dated September 1, 1873, the Rev. William Garrett says:

I can never forget George Ekin—his warm, generous heart; his attention and kindness to young people; his cheerful disposition; his deep, unaffected piety; his entire devotion to the one business of preaching and saving souls; his patience in prosecuting his work through a long life, the work he came to America to do. He had some eccentricities and, it may be, defects of character, and who has them not? But in the scale against his usefulness they were as nothing.

The Rev. C. D. Smith, D.D., in an article in the *Holston Methodist*, says:

There were some traits in the character of George Ekin worthy of special note. He was scrupulously cleanly in his person. This habit of cleanliness was not only regarded by him as a physical and sanitary obligation, but he cherished and cultivated it as a religious duty. He was a firm believer in cold water. As an illustration, I give the substance of an impromptu temperance speech which I heard him make when unexpectedly called out at a temperance mass meeting at a Conference in Knoxville. The call was started and rang out into a swell in the hall. It was like a thunderclap to him, and, springing to his feet, he said: "Mr. President, I'm a cold-water man. It's my drink, and I always shave with cold water. Mr. President, I'll tell ye a story of a countryman of mine. He was a great drunkard, but he was rich and had a servant to wait on him. One time he got down drunk and lay stretched upon a sofa in his parlor, and his nose was very red. It was warm, and he had his servant to keep the flies off of him. The servant was brushing first one way and then another, but a little fly dodged in and lit on the old man's nose. The servant stopped brushing and, looking at the fly, said: 'Ye had better take care, *me* lad, how *ye* light there, or ye'll burn your feet.'" This was enough, and instead of the accustomed applause there went up a general shout from the audience.

Dr. McFerrin says: "Mr. Ekin was eccentric, and

had attached to him some peculiarities that could not have been gracefully worn by others; but in his case these idiosyncrasies were not only allowed, but were often mentioned with pleasure by those who knew him well and rightly appreciated his character and temper."<sup>1</sup>

Father Ekin was a great favorite even with wealthy and aristocratic families, not only of the Methodist Church, but of other Churches and of the world. I have in my possession a letter addressed to Father Ekin by the Hon. William C. Preston, of South Carolina. It is dated Abingdon, Va., October 23d, 1824. In that letter he says:

My family and I desire that the Elizabeth Church at the Saltworks may be dedicated on Sunday, the 6th of next month (November), and that you shall be present on that occasion. We wish this not only on account of our personal respect for you, but also on account of your long and intimate connection with my grandmother, whose name it bears and a pious regard for whose memory has been associated with the other now obvious motives that led to its erection. The family have thought that, while it was endeavoring to extend the means of Christian instruction, it was not altogether inappropriate to associate them with her, who was so eminent an example of Christian piety, whose house was a church, and whose life was a worship. As one who lived with her in that house and shared with her in that worship, I desire your attendance, and feel assured that you will bear witness for us that a church dedicated to the service of God as a Methodist Church is not unfitly designated by her name.

It is hardly necessary to inform the reader that this Church was named after Mrs. Elizabeth Russell,

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<sup>1</sup>"Methodism in Tennessee," Vol. II., p. 343.

sister to Patrick Henry, honorable mention of whom was made in Volume I. of this work.

I have in my possession a letter written by the Rev. James W. Dickey, and addressed to the Rev. George E. Naff, informing him of the death of his grandfather. He died at the residence of Dr. Milton Y. Heiskell, in Abingdon, Va., August 2, 1856. He came to Dr. Heiskell's a few days before in feeble health, but seemed to be improving all the time, and on the day of his death to be decidedly better. His death was sudden, probably occasioned by apoplexy. For his last two or three days he joined heartily in family worship, though unable to lead. Dr. Heiskell and wife were always great favorites with Father Ekin; he was always easily pleased by them, and especially so on this visit. He desired them to be at no trouble on his account. Every day and every time when he was spoken to as to how he felt, he would give thanks to God that he felt better and felt God to be with him. The day after his death his funeral sermon was preached by Rev. William P. Bishop, and his remains were interred by the side of those of Father Wilkerson at the rear of the old Methodist Church in Abingdon. A short time after his burial his grandson, the Rev. George E. Naff, exhumed his remains and reinterred them in the graveyard of Uriel church, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, some four miles south of Jonesboro, where his wife and the Rev. George Ekin, his son, had been buried, and where since that the Rev. G. E. Naff and wife have been buried.

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