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HISTORY  
OF THE  
GREAT SECESSION

FROM THE  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH  
IN THE YEAR 1845,

Eventuating in the Organization of the New Church,

ENTITLED THE

“Methodist Episcopal Church, South.”

BY REV. CHARLES ELLIOTT, D. D.

Cincinnati:

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## PREFACE.

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ON the first day of June, 1848, the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal' Church, in the city of Pittsburg, adopted the following preamble and resolution :

“ *Whereas*, it is the sense of this General conference, that a history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, embracing the last four years, should be written by some competent person designated by this conference; therefore,

“ *Resolved*, That Dr. Elliott be, and he is hereby requested to write said history; and, in order thereto, he shall have access to all the journals and documents of the Church which may be necessary to the accomplishment of this important work.”

After surveying his historical field, at the close of the General conference of 1848, the author found the subject of slavery presented in every step of his progress. In preparing, therefore, for the accomplishment of his assigned work, he found it necessary to discuss the general subject of slavery, as it exists in the United States, as thoroughly as he could, in its moral characteristics principally; but referring to its civil or legal character as far as moral principles were concerned.

This led to the preparation of two volumes, duodecimo, on the “Sinfulness of American Slavery.” The evil nature of slavery is shown from its evil sources; its inherent injustice; its cruel wrongs; its opposition to many Scriptural commands, prohibitions, principles, and the Christian spirit; and from its evil effects on the slave, the master, and the community.

These two volumes were issued from the press of the Cincinnati Book Concern, on the first of January, 1850. In preparing the foregoing, the material for a single volume on *Service and Slavery* was collected. The purpose is to show that Scripture neither sanctions, approves, nor tolerates slavery proper; that the regulations of the Mosaic code referred to service, so as to prevent it from running into slavery. A digest of the Roman laws on slavery would be necessary as drawn from their great law codes, as found in the Theodosian Code, the Institutes of Justinian, the Pandects, and the other parts of the Corpus Juris Civilis. These sources will give the true, and the only true survey of Roman slavery, as well in its origin, its nature, and the practice of it. And here, too, is the true source of information in regard to Roman slavery, as it stands connected with the teachings of the New Testament, and the discipline of the primitive Church.

In this connection the discipline of the primitive Church would be introduced, as the ground-work of it was laid in the New Testament, connecting with the Old Testament, and recognizing what was delivered on the subject in the law of Moses. The apostolic canons on this subject will furnish the discipline of the early Church. The apostolical constitutions and the writings of the Greek

and Latin fathers, will supply very useful historical explanations of the moral discipline of the Church in regard to slavery; till at length slavery proper gradually perished under the antislavery discipline, spirit, and practice of Christianity. If life be spared this may be presented to the public. It will, however, be no very pleasant work. It will require much labor to prepare it, gathered, as it must be, out of a mass of untranslated original documents, which few have access to, and fewer still are disposed to bestow on this department the labor of preparing it. There are also two classes of persons whom the Christian discipline will not suit. Those who love slavery will see the system condemned by the Christian Church as incurably immoral and wrong. Those who condemn as sinners all legal slaveholders will be displeased at the facts which history will unfold on this subject. If we would elucidate how good men can be at all concerned with a wrong system, it might be made a plain case, such as when an honest man finds lost property, and keeps it safely till he learns who the owner is, and then restores it. Or the analogy is like a man who takes care of an estray till he finds an opportunity of restoring it. The treatise to which we refer, may be called **THE CHURCH AND SLAVERY**.

The author found the principal materials for his History proper spread over some eighty or one hundred unbound volumes of newspapers, published from 1844 and onward. In this form the materials were so scattered, that it was impossible to make them available. He was therefore compelled to cut the articles out of these papers, and place them in scrap-books, arranged in chronological order. The number of these scrap-books are eight, thirteen inches wide and fifteen inches long, with three columns pasted on each page, having margins for notes along side each column. The number of column-pages in the eight volumes, amount to 1127, 907, 943, 800, 834, 838, 778, and 500, respectively; making a total of 6,727 columns of fourteen inches long. This collection is called "Historical Scrap-Books." It contains all the matter on both sides of the subject, as published in the weekly newspapers from 1844 to the date of this preface. Each article is headed with the name and date of the paper in which it was published. In the composition of the History, while preserving the dates of articles, the volumes and pages of the scrap-books were inserted; and in order to have a ready reference the volume and page of the scrap-books are retained, in connection with the dates of the papers.

The following explanations will be necessary in order to understand clearly the references to the various newspapers:

C. is the initial for **Christian Advocate and Journal**.

W. for **Western Christian Advocate**.

Z. for **Zion's Herald**.

S. for **Southern Christian Advocate**.

R. for **Richmond Christian Advocate**.

N. for **Nashville, or South-Western Christian Advocate**.

P. for **Pittsburg Christian Advocate**.

N. A. for **Northern Advocate**.

SCRAPS, refers to the **Historical Scrap-Books**.

There are a few other papers quoted, the reference to which may be readily ascertained in the places where they are cited or quoted.

The writer has used also a collection of pamphlets consisting of over fifty volumes, comprising all the pamphlets treating on slavery that issued from the press in Europe and America for eighty years past, as far as they could be pro-

cured. This collection of pamphlets, partly literary and theological, but principally on slavery, comprises Rev. Richard Watson's collection of antislavery pamphlets, which he used as a member of the Executive Committee of the British Antislavery Society, during the whole controversy on West India emancipation. The Rev. James Dixon, D. D., son-in-law to Mr. Watson, made a present of this collection to the author in order to assist him in his work. The whole of this valuable collection comprises eleven thick volumes octavo.

These pamphlets are bound in volumes according to the size of the leaf; that is, the duodecimo pamphlets are bound in duodecimo volumes; the octavo, in octavo, etc. The largest pamphlet is usually placed first; and the paging of the first pamphlet is continued over all the other pamphlets in pencil marks, for the sake of easy reference. A general index is prefixed to the pamphlets, giving the name of the author of each, and the volume and page of the collection where each pamphlet begins and ends.

As these scrap-books and pamphlets contain much of the material of the History, they will be deposited in the Methodist Book Concern of Cincinnati, that reference may be made at any time either to correct our mistakes or confirm our statements, as the case may be. There is also a valuable collection of bound books and periodicals, which it is expected to dispose of and use for the same purposes. Among these will be found the Christian Advocate and Journal, the Western Christian Advocate, Zion's Herald, the True Wesleyan, the National Era, and a variety of others. It may be difficult to find a more ample collection any where on the subject of slavery. They have been in process of collection over thirty years; and it would be impossible to attempt such a collection at this time, as most of them are out of print. They are now preserved for the benefit of posterity, at no small expense, and at the cost of no ordinary share of care and forethought.

As a directory to any one desirous of examining the following work, the author has left three manuscript volumes as concomitants of his collection of books, scraps, and pamphlets. The first is a chronological outline, of 350 pages foolscap, of the heads and principal contents of the scrap-books, the pamphlets, and books. The second is an alphabetical index of the matter in the entire collection. The third is also an alphabetical index of persons, societies, etc. These three manuscript volumes will therefore serve as historical guides to the matter contained in the entire collection of books, pamphlets, and scrap-books.

The greater part of the History was prepared previous to May, 1852. The author, up to that time, had spent as many as six hours a day at an average, on the subject in which he was engaged. He had, during this time, the ordinary duties of a district or station to perform. And he was compelled to employ every minute that could be saved, denying himself of customary social privileges, in order to accomplish his work. The author, as editor since May, 1852, had but little time to finish his undertaking; and to do it at all, he was compelled to task himself to the utmost. Yet at no period since the Western Christian Advocate was first issued, has more labor been bestowed on its columns than during the past two years. The History has been finished for more than a year, except to keep pace with the passing events connected with the subject. With the final decision on the Methodist Book Concern by the Supreme Court of the United States, his historical period terminates. No time at the command of the writer has been lost in the preparation. And no haste was deemed proper in presenting a premature work. The utmost care has been taken in

sifting evidence and comparing facts. And whatever errors or mistakes may be found in this work, the author leaves behind him, for public scrutiny, ample materials for correction, in his collections of scrap-books, pamphlets, bound periodicals and books, to which all concerned may have access.

The present work was designed to embrace the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church for four years, or from 1844 to 1848. It is also presumed that the design was to confine it to the points connected with the southern secession, leaving all other matters to other hands. As the connection of Methodism with slavery interweaves with our historic period, it will be necessary to trace this connection, from the origin of the Church to 1844. Beside, Wesleyan Methodism, the ecclesiastical parent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has sustained to slavery both in principles and measures an important relation; a survey of this relation will be necessary in order to understand thoroughly the precise state of things in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The events that succeeded 1848, to the close of the lawsuits, stand inseparably connected with our period, and will properly be its sequel.

The first four chapters will be introductory, comprising the following topics: Wesleyan Methodism and slavery, Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church on slavery, abolition of the slave-trade, West India emancipation. The last two topics are considered only in reference to the Christian principles and conduct associated with them.

The next fifteen chapters will embrace the American abolition movements from 1834 to May, 1844. The principles and measures of the abolition societies, as they stood related to, and mingled with Church affairs, the course of the south in regard to them, and the position of the Methodist Episcopal Church in reference to these antagonistic, yet allied forces, in ultraism, are here considered.

Ten chapters then succeed on the General conference of 1844, comprising Harding's case, Bishop Andrew's case, the determined secession of the south, the Protest, the Reply to it, the events succeeding May, 1844, and the action of the northern and southern conferences.

The principal topics up to May, 1848, apart from other connected matter, are, the course of Bishop Andrew, the course and secession of Bishop Soule, the course of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Louisville convention, action of conferences, the Petersburg General conference, the property question.

The leading events following May, 1848, are, the southern General conference of 1850, the slavery question, the lawsuits, and the southern General conference of 1854, together with the miscellaneous matter connected with these.

Important documents to the number of seventy-eight, referred to in the narrative, will be placed at the end of the volume, regularly numbered for easy reference. Most of these documents are of great value, and inaccessible to most readers, as they are to be found scattered in books, pamphlets, and periodicals which are now mostly destroyed or are out of print; the preservation of which is deemed necessary for the value of their principles and historical facts.

As this work is designed not merely for general reading for those interested in its contents, but especially for a book of reference, no pains have been spared to make it such. The extended table of contents will readily bring before the reader any topic discussed in the chapters. The paging, too, refers

to the columns which are numbered, as if they were pages, and referred to as such for the table of contents as well as in the general index. This last, alphabetically arranged, will be found very convenient for the purpose for which it was designed. It was no small amount of labor to prepare the index and the table of contents; but it is believed that these aids will be prized by most readers.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in these pages is called "a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church," and the word secession is used in its plain, simple meaning, of a separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the sole act of the seceders themselves, without authority, sanction, or approval by the Methodist Episcopal Church. It can not be considered, we believe, other than a *violent* secession, originating without necessity or adequate cause, carried on by wrong measures, pleaded for by raising fallacious issues, and when completed comprising several dangerous elements. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, stands, therefore, in the same relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to the British Wesleyans, that the Methodist Protestant Church, and the followers of Mr. Scott in America, and other Methodist bodies in Europe do. The parent bodies do not stand in antagonism to these new bodies; though they do not become identified with them any more than with other Protestant Churches. Nevertheless, it is readily conceded, that a secession from a Church may be justifiable, when based on Scriptural principles, when conducted in a Christian manner, and when it is calculated to promote the salvation of souls. Our southern brethren attempt to make these pleas, and they maintain that their cause is just. Thus the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are now at issue. In the following pages we have endeavored to present the truth of history. Yet we do not forget that we are identified with the Methodist Episcopal Church so intimately that our version of the whole will admit of scrutiny. We expect this scrutiny, and intend to meet it, by admitting errors whenever clearly pointed out; and leaving all the means of detection in the materials which we have deposited in a safe place to be used for this, as well as for other purposes.

In our concluding chapter we have quoted Dr. Dixon in reference to the position of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Having had no means of information on the subject but the public papers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, he was led to view the side of the south with favor. Hence he expressed himself, when he wrote, in 1849, favorably of their course, though he deemed their position perilous. The Great London (Wesleyan) Quarterly for October, 1854, views the Southern Church in a state of rapid descent from the principles of Scripture and Methodism. Indeed, what Mr. Dixon said five years ago, would probably lead him now to corroborate the statement of the London Quarterly.

The reviewer, on the "Methodist Episcopal Church of America," states as follows, page 153, respecting the present position of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South: "We are pained to say that, from all the sources of information opened to us, we are obliged to conclude, that the course has been downward. It is very clear, that the Church, as a whole, is entirely pro-slavery; that many of the ministers are slaveholders; and that the General conference is fully committed to the system. The slave power in the Church has swamped the Christian power on this subject, and it now seems that the testimony so long borne against the evil has been superseded by earnest advocacy in its support." He adds in the

next page: "Thus, then, the matter stands in law, on this ominous question. The Church and slavery are one and identical; the amalgamation, after many years of struggle, is completed; the slave power has subdued the Church power; the worldly has swallowed up the spiritual; and cruelty, blood, and rapine, are all acknowledged as elements not inimical to the kingdom of God. How this conclusion has been arrived at, by men with the Bible in their hands, and, we hope, in most cases, with the faith of the Gospel in their hearts, we are at a loss to divine. With a perfect willingness to allow much for the difficulties of their position, we can not help perceiving that the pestiferous moral miasma surrounding them has perverted their sense of the real teaching of the word of God. To hold that one man is at liberty to steal, to enslave, to employ without wages, and, as his caprice may dictate, or his passions incite, to fashish, flog, 'work up,' at his pleasure, a fellow-man, is to brutalize himself; and, above all, to imagine that a Christian may enslave a fellow Christian, is an outrage on the truth and principles of the New Testament."

The reviewer, page 157, gives us the following cutting paragraph. We quote that those concerned may have an opportunity to avert the evil by retracing their steps: "In the mean time," says he, "we can have no doubt that there are tens of thousands of true Christians in the Southern Church. It is a merciful provision of God, that individual excellence can exist in the midst of general evil. The conglomerated corruption of the southern organization has simply followed in the wake of all the organizations recorded in history; only, possessing within its bosom a more vigorous element than is ordinarily found, the decomposition has been more rapid. To what extent this individual piety may be able to control the mad career of the Church as an organization, it is impossible to foresee; but it is to be feared, the counteraction can only be slight; and in that case, the descent may be progressive, from deep to deeper still in the abyss. One of the most powerful phases of this matter is, that these abettors of slavery have themselves become enslaved. This is no new thing in history. Ecclesiastical bodies have often sacrificed their own freedom, and imperiled the freedom of the Church, by surrendering themselves to the civil power. . . . To be the tools of crowned tyrants and of coroneted aristocrats is bad enough; but to be the menials of slaveholders is—but we want a term to describe the degradation. And this singular phenomenon always happens, that, when ecclesiastics become the vassals of despotism, they make greater proficiency than any body else, and invariably become the most expert tyrants in the world. So that, upon this principle, the slave power has secured for itself the best assistance to be found in nature; and henceforth the peans of slavery will be sung, and worship will be offered to its Moloch, with an ardor and an incense such as the old god of murder and blood never before received."

Some suppose the Methodist Episcopal Church itself is in rather a perilous condition in regard to slavery. A few persons in her pale are disposed to remedy the supposed evil by changing the General Rule on slavery, and make other changes to correspond to this. We are persuaded the principles of the Discipline on slavery can not be changed, and that the present Rule, which is the same in substance as that adopted in 1784, is preserved to this day by no material variation from the original type. For the temporary and inconsiderate essay at one time to exclude all slaveholders never was established; just because it attempted an impossibility, and fixed on an unjust standard under the circumstances. The only thing that could now be done would be to place in

the section on slavery a literal *explanation* of the General Rule. It is clear that the word *enslave*, in the Rule, does not mean to reduce free persons to slavery, just because neither buying nor selling, which the Rule includes, can take place till a person is first deprived of his liberty. Then in applying the Rule in any case of trial, there are two facts to be ascertained. The first, has the person bought or sold? This being ascertained, the next fact is, has liberty been accomplished by this act, either immediately or prospectively? If it has not, the person is guilty according to the Rule. The only exception to this is, in Methodist principles, where emancipation can not be secured, that humanity and mercy have been exercised, and cruelty and injustice avoided. Freedom, when possible, is the rule; and in all cases mercy, justice, and right. But no trading in slaves is allowed, except to free or emancipate. The various proposed amendments to the Rule, some of them vague or unmeaning, others of them impracticable or unjust, show clearly that the present Rule is the only one that can stand the test among all the candidates for its place. Whatever additional regulations could be added to the section on slavery, for the more efficient instruction of slaves religiously and intellectually, would also be in place. But those amendments that have been proposed, from the suggestions of the recent abolition school, have little in them calculated to benefit the slaves; while most of them would prove ruinous. Such amendments have, by way of contrast, a sort of offset in the course of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which has explained away the General Rule, and excluded the entire section. We barely throw out these suggestions, having but little faith in the amendments of the times; unless times would change, and the work would be undertaken with the spirit and prudence that guided those who formed our present Rules. We trust and pray, that in this the Methodist Episcopal Church will be so far guided as to fall nothing short of maintaining the highest standard of purity, and that no hasty or doubtful measures will be taken so as to mar the work of the holy men who were the fathers of Methodism in the United States. With these aspirations we present this volume to the members and ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to all others concerned; while we commit it at the same time to the providence of almighty God, through whose mercy we have been permitted to prepare it for the public good.

CHARLES ELLIOTT.

*Cincinnati, Ohio, November 1, 1854.*





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History of the Great Secession.



# HISTORY

OF THE

# GREAT SECESSION.

## CHAPTER I.

### WESLEYAN METHODISM AND SLAVERY.

1. THE period from 1844 to 1848, the one allotted to us for the range of our historical narrative, is the era in which the great contest in the Methodist Episcopal Church on slavery had its full development. As the connection of Methodism with slavery interweaves with our whole history, it seems proper to commence with the connection of the Church with slavery, and trace it down, in its various relations, from the origin of the Church to 1844. Besides, Wesleyan Methodism in Europe, the ecclesiastical parent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, sustained to slavery, both in principles and Discipline, a very important relation. An accurate survey of the relation of Wesleyan Methodism to slavery will be necessary in order to understand thoroughly the precise state of affairs in the United States. Furthermore, the events that succeeded 1848, connected with the subject on which we write, down to the present time, will properly belong to our theme, as its sequel or conclusion.

2. A brief survey of the singular circumstances by which divine Providence has been pleased to work, in introducing Methodism among the slaves and free people of color in the West Indies will be the theme of our first chapter.

Mr. Nathaniel Gilbert, Speaker of the House of Assembly in Antigua, about 1758, visited England for the benefit of his health. While on this visit he was truly converted to God through the instrumentality of Mr. Wesley. On his return to Antigua, in 1760, he commenced his religious services by collecting a few persons in his own home, with whom he first prayed, and then exhorted them. His hearers soon increased, as his singular conduct awakened the curiosity of the principal inhabitants through the island, to see and hear for themselves. The work soon extended to the slaves, so that two hundred were formed into Methodist societies in a short time. This was the first introduction of the Gospel, as taught by Mr. Wesley, among the inhabitants of the torrid zone. Mr. Gilbert's death left the society in a destitute condition. Some turned to their former evil ways; others grew weary in well-doing; some were satisfied with a name, while their souls were dead; but some continued steadfast. These were much aided by two black women, who met them regularly and prayed with them.

These two females mentioned above were the slaves of Mr. Gilbert; so that they and their masters were the principal instruments of introducing evangelical religion into the West

Indies, both among the slaves and their masters.

In the year 1778 Mr. John Baxter, a local preacher from England, who labored in the dock-yard, arrived in Antigua and preached with great success in the island. Mr. Gilbert devoted all the time he could spare to the work of the ministry. Amidst much difficulty he persevered, till in 1783 he succeeded in erecting the first Methodist chapel ever built in the torrid zone. New places were offered for preaching; but Mr. Baxter could only attend a few that were near his residence, as he had to work with his hands to sustain himself and family. Yet even in this contracted sphere nearly two thousand persons joined his society before Dr. Coke's arrival, in 1786, and before any regular missions were established in the West Indies. On the arrival of Dr. Coke, Mr. Baxter devoted himself entirely to the ministry, and continued in it with great success to his death, in the year 1805.

3. In the latter end of the year 1786 Dr. Coke sailed for Nova Scotia with three missionaries. But they were driven by stress of weather to the West Indies, and landed in Antigua December 25th, 1786. Mr. Warrener, one of the missionaries, remained in the island to assist Mr. Baxter, under whose ministry and that of their successors, between two and three thousand negroes, with a very few whites, were united in society. The effects of true religion were so great, that military law, which had been constantly enforced at Christmas, for fear of insurrection during the holidays, was now become a mere form, though at first it was a matter of necessity. The planters acknowledged that the religious negroes were the best servants, as they obeyed more faithfully without the whip than the others did with its use. The religious negroes improved rapidly in dress, cleanly habits, industry, and in morals. While Dr. Coke was in the island, the blacks gave up their chapel to the occupancy of the whites, while they stood around the house themselves. This they joyfully did for the spiritual benefit of the whites, though they had built it principally by their own voluntary contributions. The inhabitants of the island amounted to about 7,000 whites, and about 30,000 blacks. Two thousand, two hundred of the blacks belonged to the Methodists, and about two thousand to the Moravian Church.

From Antigua, Dr. Coke, with two or three missionaries, visited St. Vincent, where they were kindly received by the planters, who almost universally opened their plantations to

the missionaries. The inhabitants were about 1,000 whites, and 8,000 or 10,000 blacks. Between four and five hundred of the blacks were joined in societies.

Dr. Coke and the missionaries next visited St. Christopher's, where a society of about 1,500 was soon raised. The population was about the same with Antigua.

St. Eustatius, under the Dutch Government, was next visited. Notwithstanding great difficulties, and considerable persecution, a society of about two hundred was organized, who became devoted Christians.

4. In 1788 Mr. Wesley sent Dr. Coke, with several missionaries, to the West Indies. They commenced their labors in Barbadoes, but at first with little success. Population, about 25,000 whites, and about 70,000 blacks.

The planters in Nevis received Dr. Coke and the missionaries with great kindness. Four or five hundred negroes were united in society. Population, about 600 whites, and about 10,000 blacks.

In Tortola and the group of islands around it, about 1,500 were united in society.

In January, 1790, Dr. Coke visited Jamaica. Under great difficulties and persecutions, about 200 were united in society in Kingston. Population, about 25,000 whites, and about 30,000 blacks and mulattoes.

In 1790 Dr. Coke and Mr. Baxter visited Grenada, where a small society was formed in the town of St. George; but for want of missionaries to speak the French language, the work could not be extended.

In Dominica about 150 blacks were formed into a society.

Previous to the British conference of 1788 Dr. Coke devoted himself to the West Indies as his primary object. He undertook the cause of the poor negroes, traveled through the country, and solicited aid from door to door from all denominations to support the missions. Nothing was more repugnant to his natural feelings than to become an avowed mendicant; but, considering the object he had in view, he determined to overcome this repugnancy. Being polite in his manners, and deeply interested in his cause, no circumstance, however forbidding, could prevent his appeal. At the British conference of 1789, Dr. Coke pleaded the case of the negroes with such success that the necessity of sending missionaries among them was admitted. The progress of Methodism at this time in England and Ireland outran its pecuniary resources, without allowing room for a rival charity; but the case of the negroes in the West Indies was irresistible. Dr. Coke spent about sixteen months in soliciting aid for the West India missions, whose condition he described with great force and effect. Thus the Gospel, by a train of providential circumstances, small and motley in their character, was introduced into this vast archipelago by the indefatigable labors of Dr. Coke. In ten of the islands, containing about 260,000 souls, near four-fifths of whom were in heathenish darkness, the success was truly great; and though, in several, persecution and opposition were put forth, the word of God has run and has been glorified. Multitudes of living witnesses were raised up to declare to all the power and purity of true Christianity.

On the 9th of February, 1793, Dr. Coke held a conference at Antigua, which lasted five days. At this time there were twelve mission-

aries stationed on ten islands. The whole number in society was 6,570. In St. Eustatius persecution raged. Two women were severely flogged because they attended a prayer meeting; and liberty to preach could not be obtained. In St. Vincent Mr. Lumb was put into prison for preaching, under a law requiring all to have license except rectors of parishes. The first offense was fine or imprisonment; the second was discretionary corporeal punishment and banishment; and a return from banishment was death. But through the interposition of Dr. Coke, the cruel law of St. Vincent was repealed by the proper authority in England, and Mr. Lumb was set at liberty. His application to the Dutch Government was without effect, in regard to Eustatius, till the year 1804.

When the case of St. Vincent was brought before the king's council, this body sent dispatches to the several governors of the West India Islands, to inquire after the character of the missionaries. The reply went to say that the missionaries had conducted themselves in the most proper manner. This, indeed, was the highest compliment that could be paid to the utility of Methodism and to the good conduct of the missionaries. The door in St. Eustatius continued shut till 1804, but was then opened in a providential manner. A gentleman of high respectability in St. Eustatius, having noticed the beneficial effects of the missions in other islands, laid before the governor in 1804 such a clear statement as induced him to remove the prohibition, so that the missionaries again entered on their work in this island, and continued to prosecute it with success.

In the island of Tortola, when about to be invaded by the French, such was the confidence of the governor in the fidelity of the Methodist slaves, that they were armed for the public defense. They continued in arms, while necessary, and then laid them down without complaint. The religious negroes in Antigua and St. Christopher's were also armed by Government, and returned among the defenders of their respective islands. In Martinico, a regiment of blacks, principally composed of Methodists, behaved with the greatest bravery.

In the island of St. Vincent a plot had been laid among the negroes to rise in insurrection, and murder the whites. Before the plot could be carried into execution, a Methodist negro communicated the design to the missionary. Both immediately repaired to the governor, who took decisive measures, and prevented the insurrection. The good effects of religion on the negroes led several noblemen in England, holding high official stations under Government, to assist in forwarding missionaries to the West Indies free of expense.

In the West Indies the work had considerably increased in 1799, so that twelve additional missionaries were sent out in the space of eleven months. This had created considerable expense, which, Dr. Coke observes, "was estimated at £2,400. But God has given us about 11,000 souls in these islands, beside those who have been safely lodged in Abraham's bosom."

5. In 1800 a strange movement in the way of persecution took place in Bermuda. Mr. Stephenson, a missionary, had preached with great acceptance to the whites. But when he began to preach to the negroes, he gave great offense to the whites, who combined their influence, and on the 24th of May, 1800, procured



the passage of an act by the Legislature, entitled "an act to prevent persons pretending, or having pretended, to be ministers of the Gospel, or missionaries from any religious society whatever, and not invested with holy orders according to the rites of the Church of England or the Church of Scotland, from acting as preachers or schoolmasters." Under this law Mr. Stephenson was imprisoned for a year. But by the influence of Dr. Coke the law was not confirmed by the home Government. The health of Mr. Stephenson never recovered from the confinement in jail in the sultry climate of the West Indies.

In the year 1807 an act was passed in the Legislative Assembly in Jamaica, which exposed the missionaries to persecution. The law, after recommending to the proprietors of slaves to instruct them in the principles of Christianity, proceeds with its prohibitory and penal clauses in the following manner: "Provided, nevertheless, that the instruction of such slaves shall be confined to the doctrines of the Established Church in this island; and that no Methodist missionary, or other sectary or preacher, shall presume to instruct our slaves, or to receive them into their houses, chapels, or conventicles of any sort or description, under the penalty of twenty pounds for every slave proved to have been there, and to be recovered in a summary manner before any three justices of the peace; who, or the majority of whom, are hereby authorized and empowered to issue their warrant for recovery of the same, and on refusal of payment to commit the offender or offenders to the county jail, till payment of the said fine or fines, which shall be paid over to the churchwardens of the parish where the offense shall be committed, for the benefit of the poor of such parish."

The law, after its enactment, was withheld as long as the Constitution of Jamaica allowed, and not presented to the mother country for confirmation, that it might act in the interim without being ratified, and that the period of its repeal, which was anticipated, might be protracted as much as possible. But Dr. Coke, by urgent application to the authorities in England, procured its repeal. The following is the note which Dr. Coke received on the occasion:

"WHITEHALL, APRIL 25, 1809.

"Lord Bathurst presents his compliments to Dr. Coke, and acquaints him that the late act passed in Jamaica, in November, 1807, for the protection, subsisting, clothing, and for the better order and government of slaves, and for other purposes, was this day disallowed by his Majesty's council."

The repeal of this edict opened the door for preaching the Gospel in every part of Jamaica, except in Kingston, in which place the chapel was still shut by municipal law, which the repeal of the present edict could not reach. But the person who was chiefly concerned in making the penal law against the "Methodists and the sectaries," was himself, in 1808, in jail. Mr. Stephenson, the missionary, was imprisoned for not obeying the laws; this man was also imprisoned for disobeying the law, and was confined in the same room where the missionary was confined. Thus the retaliating providence of God was plainly manifest.

6. Up to 1813 the Wesleyan Methodist missions were mostly confined to the West Indies and the British settlements of America, but

especially to the former. They were carried on under the general superintendency of Dr. Coke, by whom the principal supplies for their support were raised by his solicitation, or contributed from his private purse. He crossed the Atlantic eighteen times for objects connected with religion. In 1813 he sailed for India, in the 67th year of his age, and found a grave in the Indian Ocean. But the spirit inculcated in the promotion of religion in the West Indies among the slaves, seems to have been that which gave the chief impulse to the great missionary cause of the British Wesleyans, which now benefits so large a portion of the heathen and irreligious world. Somewhat over six thousand pounds, through the means mentioned above, were yearly placed at the disposal of Dr. Coke, to be expended chiefly in negro instruction. The spiritual necessities and temporal sufferings of the slaves waked up a deep sympathy whenever pressed on the public attention.

When the personal efforts of Dr. Coke in making collections ceased, and an increase of expenditure on establishing the East India missions occurred, the Wesleyans were led to make greater exertions to procure funds: hence the organization of the Wesleyan missionary Society in 1814. Through the general intelligence arising from the success of missions circulated from the press and pulpit, the entire body of Wesleyan Methodists felt themselves allied to the converted negroes in the West Indies, and were therefore prepared to aid them in all lawful things that pertained to their instruction, their elevation, and, indeed, their emancipation.

The West India missions had been begun under circumstances strikingly providential, and were prosecuted under Dr. Coke with admirable zeal and effect, with the outlay of a vast expense of health, life, and money. Several of the planters were humane men, and encouraged the instruction of their slaves in the principles of religion; for they found that the converted negroes were honest, and from a sense of duty discharged their tasks with fidelity. Other slaveholders were decidedly hostile to all attempts at negro improvement, and desired no incentive to slave labor but the whip and its accompaniments. The enemies of missions were, however, the more numerous class, and were continually inventing tales of insurrection, in which they were careful to implicate the missionaries, and some of the local legislatures embarrassed them by persecuting enactments.

The object of the missionaries was purely spiritual. They taught the negroes Christianity, with reference to the salvation of their souls, and had no ulterior design whatever. When the slaves were impressed under the ministry of the word, the missionaries united them together in Christian societies, that they might watch over one another's religious conduct. The missionaries required the observance of marriage in the place of the promiscuous course of life then common in the West Indies. They also taught men the duties of contentment, submission, and diligence. But the missionaries never interfered with the civil condition of the slaves. The converted negroes became intelligent, thoughtful, industrious, and faithful in every domestic relation. Christianity prepared them to discharge the duties and enjoy the rights of civil liberty; it even taught them,

"if they might be made free, to use it rather;" and as its light and influence spread among the negro population slavery was seen in all its enormity. The true slaveholders, therefore, endeavored to arrest the progress of evangelical instruction, and to continue brutal ignorance, as best suited to perpetuate slavery. They mostly, however, professed to be friendly to negro instruction and conversion; they only wanted to get rid of the missionaries, well knowing that in their absence there was no man to care for the spiritual interests of the slave.

Mr. Barham, in June, 1816, stated, in the house of commons, that the Methodist missionaries in the West Indies, under the mask of religion, inculcated insubordination and insurrection. A committee of the Wesleyans requested him to supply them with the requisite names and facts, that they might call to an account the delinquent missionaries. But no information would be given by Mr. Barham, except in the house of commons. When Mr. Butterworth brought it up before the house the accuser had no other than common report to sustain him, and was heartily ashamed of his course. Mr. Butterworth withdrew his motion at the request of Lord Castlereagh, who declared, in behalf of the Government, that there lay no charge against the missionaries.

7. But a Mr. Marryat, a zealous coadjutor of Mr. Barham, attacked the character and ministrations of the missionaries in various pamphlets, assisted by anonymous writers in different periodical journals. To meet these attacks, Mr. Watson was induced to publish "A Defense of the Wesleyan Methodist Missions in the West Indies, including a refutation of the charges in Mr. Marryat's Thoughts on the Abolition of the Slave Trade, &c., and other publications; with Facts and Anecdotes illustrative of the Moral State of the Slaves, and of the Operation of Missions." The publication of this pamphlet was a reasonable antidote to the calumnies against the missionaries. Never was the defense of a righteous cause more complete. Mr. Watson obtained the proper information from the missionaries then in the West Indies, and from those in England who had been there in former years. He prepared various questions respecting the religious and moral condition of the slaves before they were brought under missionary instruction and influence; the effect of Christianity on their spirit and habits; the manner in which the missionaries had been treated in the different islands; and other subjects connected with these. Mr. Watson proved, that before the missionaries commenced their labors in the West Indies, the negroes in general had scarcely the slightest conception of religion in any form; that they had no Sabbath; that they were almost entire strangers to the married relation; that the clergy of the Established Church, in general, paid no attention to the instruction of negroes. But through the labors of the missionaries the slaves were instructed, and rendered moral and orderly. Mr. Watson's pamphlet was extensively read by members of Parliament and other public men. Mr. Wilberforce expressed his approbation of it in strong terms. It appeared in the spring of 1817, and was received with great applause among all the friends of liberty.

This publication had a far more important bearing than was anticipated by friend or foe. Up to that time the missionaries were only

upon promoting the spiritual interests of the negroes, had done little to show the people of England the real character of West India slavery. They had rather concealed the miseries of the slave, than declared his real condition; for they were unwilling to disoblige the planters, and thus shut up their access to the slaves. The gross attacks upon the missionaries, however, extorted from them disclosures respecting the degradation and oppression of the slaves, which had great effect upon the religious part of the community. But these disclosures were wrung from the missionaries by the violence of the West India body. This prepared the public mind, in a great degree, for the movement by which West India slavery was abolished. Thus the Almighty, by the wise and merciful arrangements of his providence, caused even "the wrath of man to praise him." The object, however, of the missionaries was purely spiritual. Their *design* was solely the salvation of souls. Yet it was to the operation of missions, as an *effect*, that the abolition of slavery is to be attributed in the West Indies, though nothing could be more remote from the views of the missionaries when they first entered their work. The missions became the principal means of bringing to light the real state of the slave; and the murderous violence with which some of the planters assailed the missionaries, ultimately roused the people of England to petition Parliament for the overthrow of the system.

Such was the estimation in which Mr. Watson's pamphlet was held, the British conference, which sat in July and August, 1817, adopted unanimously the following resolution, which was published in their Minutes: "That the warmest thanks of this body are eminently due to Mr. Watson for his able and triumphant defense of the Wesleyan Methodist missions in the West Indies, published during the past year at the request of the Missionary Committee."

The instructions to missionaries in general, and especially to that portion of them which concerns the missionaries in the West Indies, are worthy of special regard, as these instructions will show that it was the only work of a Wesleyan missionary to endeavor to bring the slaves to a knowledge of religion, but by no means to interfere, as missionaries, with their civil relations. These instructions are the substance of what was given, from time to time, to the missionaries, and finally revised and adopted, in 1817, by the Wesleyans. They were drawn up and revised by Mr. Watson.\* We have given a brief outline of them in chapter sixth, in connection with Dr. Capers's letter on Missions among the Slaves in the South. In comparing his letter with the instructions, it will be seen that he either copies them, or, from the nature of the case, he contends for about the same course which the instructions enjoin, and the most strict inquiry was instituted whether they were observed by every missionary. This will appear on consulting the three resolutions preparatory to the instructions comprised in Grinrod's Compend of Wesleyan Methodism,† but which are omitted in Watson's Life, by Jackson.‡

8. In the year 1820 the missionary report of the Wesleyans represents the missions in the West Indies as in a prosperous condition. The report says: "Let the means of increasing the

institutions and ordinances of religion but be afforded them by the charity of Christians, and in a few years the last dark gloom shall roll away from the beautiful islands which compose the Columbian archipelago, and the knowledge of the Gospel diffuse itself through every plantation, and spread peace, security, harmony, and the blessings of God throughout the whole.\*

In the course of the year 1822 a great excitement was produced by the agitation of measures in the British Parliament respecting the slave population of the West Indies. The insurrection in the colony of Demarara, through various unfounded reports, exposed the missionaries to temporary reflections and slanders. These have all been removed by the facts which the Missionary Committee were able to give to the world of the peaceable conduct both of the missionaries and members. The Committee met the indiscriminate charges made against the missionaries, as having excited the revolt by publishing the instructions under which the societies' missionaries are required to act. The slaves in the colony conducted themselves in a manner becoming their Christian profession. Not one out of 1,216 Church members, chiefly slaves, had been in the least concerned in the revolt. The slaves of Mr. Cheesewright not only refused to join the insurgents, but conducted their master to a vessel, by which he reached Georgetown in safety. Two of the religious slaves had, indeed, been suspected of taking part in the insurrection, but on strict examination they were found entirely innocent. Under the influence of mistaken views and misrepresentations, the Methodist chapel in Bridgetown, Barbadoes, was destroyed by a mob;† but this was only the ebullition of a moment, as the great cause of enlightening and moralizing the slaves, by means of religious instruction, gained daily new friends among those whose connection with the colonies is most intimate and influential.‡

The number of Church members in the Methodist societies in the West Indies in 1822, according to the British Minutes, was 880 whites, and 23,819 black and colored: total, 24,699.

10. From the speech of Sir George Rose, in the house of commons, on the 15th of May, 1823, we have important information concerning the Wesleyan missions. Having inherited estates in the West Indies, he turned his attention to their religious instruction. He first applied to his own Church—the Established one—for instructors; but in vain. He next solicited the aid of the Moravian Brethren, who were unable, though willing, to answer to his request. There then remained no other resource than the Wesleyan mission. This was the one he was most unwilling to address himself to, on account of the strong feelings against them in the minds of some. But the choice was between heathenism in its worst shape, and Christianity as preached by a Protestant sect. On one estate, where the negroes had been baptized by his own Church, they were in every other respect heathens. In a neighboring estate, under the Wesleyans, the black population became generally real and practical Christians. The attorney of this estate declared, that “this improvement is so decisive, and the

progressive discontinuation of punishment so marked, that he has a confident hope that punishment will die away and be extinguished at no distant period; and that the beneficial effects are to be attributed almost exclusively to the labors of the Wesleyan missionaries.” Mr. Rose maintained, that the power of Christianity alone, when it would become general, would end in emancipation; that slavery could not stand against real and universal Christianity; that obstacles to emancipation must vanish before it; that the improved religion of the slaves had already reflected a light upward, and acted on classes above them in society, producing new feelings and a new impulse; and that in an island where the greatest progress had been made in evangelizing the negroes, institutions were actually in progress, of which the West Indies would not have been regarded as susceptible a few years back. Mr. Rose supposed that about 80,000 adults and children were either Church members, or under instruction, among the Wesleyans alone; while he calculated that about 20,000 adults and children were under the care of all others, comprising Baptists, Moravians, the Scotch Church, and the Church of England.

Indeed, the intrinsic value of the labors of the Wesleyans in the West Indies can not be fully estimated. The self-denying exertions and sacrifices which they have made, in the face of obloquy and persecution, and even of bonds and imprisonment, for the salvation and best interests of the slaves, are beyond all praise. These missionaries may be ranked among the martyrs and confessors of old; for like them they have been ready to risk even life for the benefit of the slave; and their success, which has been great, has been achieved in the face of obstacles of most formidable and disheartening description.

11. In 1824 the British Antislavery Society published its first report. When the Society was founded Mr. Watson hesitated to connect himself with it, fearing it might assume ultra principles and measures. Mr. Bunting had connected himself with the Society at its first formation, and denounced West India slavery in the Wesleyan Magazine. When the first report of the Society was published, Mr. Watson was satisfied with its character, and united with it, and called it a “truly-patriotic and Christian society.” In some principles and measures the British Antislavery Society differed from the American Antislavery Society. The two societies differed much more in the character of their leaders. We seek in vain among the first leaders of the American society such men as Clarkson, Wilberforce, Buxton, Brougham, and many others. There was a soberness of manner, too, as well as distance from extravagant opinions in the society which Watson called Christian and patriotic, which could not be found in the society of which Mr. Garrison formed the principal leader.

The Committee of the Antislavery Society, in their report in 1824, state “that nothing can justify the making one man a slave, or even the retention of one man in slavery longer than the real benefit of the slave himself, incurred in all his circumstances and relations, may require.” On this noble declaration Mr. Watson comments as follows: “This passage,” says he, “appears to contain the only just principle which can be urged for the continuance of slavery for any period; and the principle, too,

\* See Watson's Life, pp. 245, 246, N. Y.

† See Document, No. 3. ‡ Watson's Life, pp. 284, 285.

by which alone it can be limited. The case is much the same as that of a stolen child among ourselves. No right was ever acquired in the child; but, supposing the party who has committed the theft to be brought to a sense of the evil of his crime and of the duty of restitution, he is not to abandon the child to starve, in order to put away his crime; for that would be to aggravate the injury. He is to support it, and to educate it, if able, till the parents can be found; and if not, to do his utmost that the child shall sustain no injury as to its future situation in life, which he can prevent. Slavery is a national violence, a national theft. The nation could never acquire a moral right of property in slaves, and could, therefore, never give it by any legislative act to any individuals whatever. National repentance of this evil has been announced, and what then follows, as 'fruits of repentance?' Not, we grant, emancipation *instantly*, if that, after calm investigation, can be proved injurious to the slaves, but emancipation as soon as ever it can be beneficial, and the honest and united efforts of Government to remove all present and real injuries, and to adopt instant means to prepare the slaves for as speedy a relief as possible, from the necessary evils of that bondage to which we have reduced them, in opposition to every law of God.\*

12. The agitation of the subject of slavery in England was very offensive to the advocates of slavery, especially in Jamaica. The situation of the missionaries in that island was trying. Some of them, driven by the force of circumstances, signed certain resolutions in favor of slavery, and censuring the British antislavery men. These resolutions pledged the Wesleyan body in England to the approval of slavery, and were reprinted in England. Hence, the managing Wesleyan Committee in England felt it their duty publicly to disavow the doctrine of the resolutions, and to declare that, in the estimation of the Wesleyan body, the holding of men in interminable bondage is inconsistent with the principles of Christianity. The resolutions of the Committee gave great uneasiness to Lord Bathurst, principal Secretary for the colonies. To a communication from Lord Bathurst, through Mr. Horton, Mr. Watson replied under date of February 11, 1825. We give the entire answer, except the mere introductory and concluding expressions of civility.

"1. That the sentiment expressed in that extract is nothing more than we have uniformly stated to gentlemen connected with the West Indies, whenever the subject has been mentioned. Our opinions, as a body, respecting slavery, as a *system*, have long been known throughout the West Indies; but as it is equally known by all persons who will do us justice, that our missionaries are restrained from agitating all abstract questions of this kind, both in public and private, and that we hold it as a most sacred Christian duty, that obedience should be paid by slaves to their owners, and that seditions and insurrections are crimes of the highest nature, no exceptions have ever been taken to our missions on that account.

"2. That though we, in common with the great body of people in this country, think that nothing can be more obvious than that slavery, in all its forms, is utterly inconsistent

with the Christian religion, yet the peaceable, resigned habits of our negro congregations, for near forty years, are sufficiently in proof that this opinion has never interfered with the enforcement of the Christian duty of submission by our society and its missionaries.

"3. That, as we never did hide this opinion on the general question of slavery, we could not shrink from its avowal when circumstances obliged us either to make it or tacitly to profess the contrary opinion. We hope we have pursued our course in perfect openness and sincerity. We can not surrender principles even to obtain that favor in the West Indies by which we might increase our opportunities of doing good. Wherever policy may be proper, we think it out of its place in the proceedings of a religious society, and wish it most clearly to be understood, that while we ask protection for our missions, on the ground of inculcating peace and good order in the colonies, and our missionaries being restrained from all interference with the civil concerns of the population, our society in this country is but of one sentiment on the subject of slavery as a system.\*

The chapel in Barbadoes had been standing about four years, when it was destroyed, in 1823. Its destruction was wholly by whites, except one colored man, who had been educated in England, and who thought he must imitate the whites; but after this act, not one of the colored people of the island would associate with him. The Missionary Committee, in 1825, took measures to rebuild the church and re-establish the mission. They did this in the spirit of perfect charity, not rendering evil for evil or railing for railing, but trusting in God, who could so dispose the hearts of men that the light and influence of the Gospel might finally prevail in the morally-necessitous island of Barbadoes. The inoffensiveness of Mr. Shrewsbury, the missionary, who was thrust out from his charge by violence, was attested by the Legislature of the island, although their hostility to the missions was very great. The persecuted society in Barbadoes, while deprived of the ordinances of religion by the banishment of their missionary and the destruction of their chapel, contributed regularly, as before, to the Missionary Society.

13. Mr. Buxton, without solicitation from the Wesleyans, brought a bill before Parliament condemning the transactions in Barbadoes and testifying to the good conduct of the missionary. By this act religious tolerance was established or reasserted in the colony. The Wesleyan conference, in 1825, unanimously adopted resolutions of thanks to Mr. Buxton, for introducing the bill, and to Messrs. Butterworth, Smith, Brougham, and Lushington for supporting it.

The conference also, this year, at Mr. Watson's suggestion, declared "that nothing is more contrary to the writings of our venerable founder, and to the views which our societies in general maintain to this day, than the notion that it is in any sense consistent with the spirit or the laws of Christianity to enslave our fellow-men, or to retain them in interminable bondage. The slavery of the negroes this conference considers to be one of the most heinous of our public offenses, the *principle* of which it becomes us as a nation instantly and heartily

\* Watson's Life, pp. 294, 295.

\* Life of Watson, pp. 296, 297.

to renounce, and the *practice* of which we are equally bound to discontinue, as speedily as a prudent and benevolent regard to the interests of those who are the subjects of the oppression will permit.\*

14. In 1826 the pro-slavery spirit broke out against the missionaries. On Christmas day the militia regiment was called out in the parish of St. Ann, Jamaica, to watch over the slaves. The regiment attended the Established Church, where they heard a sermon from the Rev. Mr. Bridges, replete with inflammatory language against the missionaries in the island, and exciting to acts of outrage and blood. The attack was made by a party of whites of the light company of the militia, by firing frequently into the house of the Rev. Mr. Ratcliffe, Wesleyan missionary.

15. In the year 1827 the number of members in the West Indies was 27,606 negroes and people of color. Persecution in various forms manifested itself. Mr. Grimsdall, for preaching in an unlicensed house, was twice cast into prison. His second imprisonment broke down his strong constitution, so that he died in consequence, December 15, 1827.

Dr. Lushington gives the following testimonial, March 13, 1827, in the British Parliament, in favor of the Methodists: "To the Wesleyan missionaries this country was indebted for the small portion of instruction and religious knowledge at present to be found among the lower classes and slave population of the West Indies. But for them, the whole black population of the West Indies would have continued in a state of idolatry and paganism."†

16. In 1828 the number of colored persons in the Wesleyan societies in the West Indies was 29,060, of whom 22,590 were slaves, and 6,470 were free blacks, showing a handsome increase during the year. After the demolition of the Methodist chapel at St. Ann's Bay, in Jamaica, after a violent attack on the Methodists from the pulpit by the Rev. George Bridges, and the impunity which followed that crime, various other outrages succeeded that. The Rev. Mr. Grimsdall first fell a victim to the persecuting magistracy of St. Ann's. On Sunday, August 10th, 1828, as the Rev. Mr. Whitehouse was on his way to preach at St. Ann's Bay, he was arrested, accused of having preached without a license; that is, of having a license in one parish, and having preached in another. He was flung into the dungeon, where Mr. Grimsdall had perished. The Rev. Mr. Orten received the intelligence of his persecuted brother's affliction, with a request that he would supply his place to his congregation. He did so, and was forthwith committed to the same jail. When it was found, after seventeen days' incarceration, that the unhealthy air of the dungeon would prove fatal, the missionaries were set at liberty by the chief justice, who declared their confinement to have been without the shadow of a pretense. But the intolerant spirit of slavery led to their imprisonment, regardless of law, justice, or mercy.

Indeed, from the events of this year—1828—we collect the most convincing testimonies to the fidelity of the missionaries and the great need of their services. Mr. Wilberforce, in his speech of May 3, 1828, before the Antislavery Society, after stating that in the island of Ja-

maica itself, according to the statement of its bishop, there was room in the churches of the Establishment only for 11,500 hearers, for a population of 400,000 souls, declares as follows: "And even if the poor slaves were to go to these churches, they are in far too low a state to receive instruction from men educated at Oxford and Cambridge. Ah, sir, the teaching they require is of a different kind; and there have been persons, blessed be God, who, to their honor, have gone forth to teach them—missionaries who have gone forth with the warmth of the true religion glowing in their hearts, and by whom benefits have been conferred which have been amply acknowledged by the planters themselves, in Antigua especially, and various other islands; and independently of all the spiritual benefits they have conferred, it has been further acknowledged that they have been of the greatest service in promoting the peace and order of the colonies. And so it ever will be; for that religion which comes from God, if cordially embraced, will not only carry people to a better world, but it will scatter blessings in profusion on the right hand and on the left, in all the lines of its progress."\*

On the same occasion on which Mr. Wilberforce spoke, the Rev. Baptist Noel declared as follows: "When I refer to the melancholy picture of the West Indies on the Sabbath day, I feel that, as a Christian minister, I shall be excused if I offer one or two observations. It was stated in the pamphlet to which Mr. Denman referred, that in Antigua Mr. Divarris, the author, was delighted at the spectacle of Sabbath happiness and Sabbath comfort which, in one instance, he there witnessed. I thank him for that illustration; for it tells powerfully upon the substantial truth and justice of our cause. Sir, Antigua has long enjoyed the privilege of Sunday schools and religious instruction under Christian missionaries; and it arose not from the benevolence of the West India planters that such a spectacle was exhibited to that gentleman; it arose from the active efforts of those men of God, who, though often proscribed and insulted, have nevertheless been the benefactors of their species, and who, on the showing of our opponents themselves, are admitted to have produced a mitigation of slavery by those efforts which they have made, in spite of the wills and wishes of the planters."†

17. In 1829 the mission in Jamaica was opposed with great violence. The House of Assembly appointed a committee to inquire into the operation and effects of missions conducted by "sectarians." The committee drew up a report very injurious to the missionaries, but wholly unsupported by evidence. The missionaries were imprisoned, and one—Mr. Grimsdall—died. Another—Mr. Orten—on his return to England, with impaired health, drew an affecting narrative of these iniquitous proceedings. In the mean time, the report of the Jamaica Sectarian Committee was reprinted in England, and every attempt was made, both in England and in Jamaica, to cover the mission with odium, and, if possible, to break it up. Under these circumstances, Mr. Watson published an appendix to the Missionary Report, consisting of Mr. Orten's Narrative and his own observations on it. This was undertaken

\* Watson's Life, pp. 301-305.

† London Antislavery Reporter, March 31, 1827, p. 326.

\* Antislavery Reporter, May, 1828, Vol. II, p. 216.

† Id., p. 232.

merely in self-defense, and was a complete justification of the missionaries, as well as a just exposure of the evil acts of their persecutors.\*

18. The year 1830 was a critical period in the history of the West India missions. The impotency of a merely worldly Christianity, in affecting slavery, was manifest. But when the pure morals of the Gospel came to be applied, the sinfulness of slavery could not be covered. From 1655 till about 1810, when the labors of missionaries began to be felt, a space of about one hundred and forty-five years, the West Indies were wholly given up to immorality. The promiscuous intercourse of the sexes was general; the Sabbath was nearly unknown as a day of rest and worship to the slave; no place was allotted in the churches to the slaves; catechetical instruction was wholly unknown. The principle of the Wesleys was to exclude from Church membership every individual whose manner of life was not strictly conformable to the Christian rule, not only in regard to marriage, but also in every other moral requirement. Such was the effect of this wholesome discipline, that the tone of morality was so raised among the slave population that no one thought of claiming discipleship till the prerequisites of a Christian life were faithfully adhered to. Nevertheless, the execution of the slave laws constantly interfered with the full exercise of discipline.

Indeed, the effect of Christian teaching on the slaves was of the most salutary kind. We can not present this better than by quoting the Rev. Mr. Trew, in his "Nine Letters to the Duke of Wellington on Colonial Slavery." Mr. Trew was a clergyman of the Established Church. "But in these days of light," says he, "it were impossible to preclude it from breaking in here and there upon the negro mind, although the utmost precautions were adopted for keeping it from him. Knowledge the slave will have, whether his master will or not; and, hence, it more deeply concerns the planter to see that he is instructed in right principles. There is a powerful evidence that may be adduced in order to prove the superiority of knowledge, when tempered by religious instruction, in preserving the peace and security of the colonies. It is a fact which can not be disputed, and that may be proved to the satisfaction of your Grace, that in no single instance, in the island of Jamaica, has a solitary case been known of treason or rebellion being charged against any of the negro slaves who have been in Church communion with the ministers of the Establishment, of the Moravian, of the Wesleyan, nor, as far as can be ascertained, of the Baptist persuasions; while it is notorious that, in those districts where rebellion has raised its antichristian arm, there has been either a want of fidelity on the part of the resident clergy, or the unhappy slaves, who have been deluded into the conspiracies, have been cut off from the means of religious instruction, as well as from a participation in those Christian privileges placed within the reach of their more fortunate brethren." "If the design of the missionaries had been to unsettle the negro mind, and to arouse him to avenge his wrongs, the die would long ere this have been cast in the British colonies, and a flame would have been kindled which not all

the artifice of man could have extinguished, and the chains that bind the slave would have fallen off forever. But, maligned as the missionaries have been, and misrepresented as their proceedings are, such is not their office, as the peaceful, and civilizing, and practical effects already produced through their instrumentality on the lives of so many thousands abundantly testify. If there were not a British bayonet within the whole confines of slavery, strange as the assertion may seem to be, the Christian missionaries alone, with free access to the objects of their benevolence, would stem the torrent of discord at the fountain, and prove to their country a protection against every internal commotion.\*\*

At the anniversary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, held May 3, 1830, Mr. Watson seconded the following resolution, which was moved by Dr. Steinkopff: "That the continued success of the missions to the negroes of the West India colonies, and the prudence, fidelity, and fortitude of those of the missionaries who have been exposed to unmerited reproach and persecution, afford additional reasons for the support and extension of a system of religious care and instruction, which at once conveys the direct blessings of Christianity to the slave population, and tends more fully to prepare them for all those ameliorations which it may be the purpose of a wise and benevolent Legislature to introduce and extend."

Mr. Watson supported this resolution by an able speech, in which he maintained that it was the sacred duty of every missionary in the West Indies to apply himself to his spiritual work, and to that alone; but as nothing could be done by the negro himself, it ought to be done by those of England; that true Christianity can not bear slavery; its fraternal principle forbids it; its mercy and its justice forbid it; and that it was the duty of Christians to petition Parliament to do away slavery. He also referred to the persecuted and imprisoned missionaries, who willingly resolved to suffer or die, if need be, in their glorious work; and concluded his admirable address with a just tribute of respect to the exertions and liberality of Dr. Coke, who was the father and founder of the West India missions.†

The Methodist mind of Britain was deeply impressed by the fierce and determined opposition to negro instruction, especially in Jamaica, and by the cases of cruelty which had occurred and were just published with all their details. The slave Henry Williams was almost flogged to death for being a Methodist, and praying to God. The Antislavery Society, too, by its active operations for several years, had succeeded in making a strong impression on the public mind respecting the evils of slavery and the duty of Parliament to terminate it as soon as possible. So powerful, however, was the West India body in the Legislature, that scarcely any member of the house of commons, except Mr. Brougham, was heard with ordinary patience and decency in favor of the slave, and against the incurable atrocities of the system. This period was, therefore, considered a crisis by the friends of emancipation, and an expression of the national will on that

\* See Appendix to Missionary Report for 1829, for Extracts. See Antislavery Reporter, Vol. III, pp. 354-356.

\*\* Nine Letters to the Duke of Wellington on Colonial Slavery, pp. 48-51. See Antislavery Reporter, Vol. IV, pp. 105-118.

† Watson's Life, pp. 369-371.

question was loudly called for at the approaching elections. Mr. Brougham was the candidate for the county of York. The entire influence of Mr. Watson and the Methodists was used in his favor. Mr. Wesley had declared his sentiments against slavery with great perspicuity and force. This had greatly aided Wilberforce and his friends in their long and severe struggle with the advocates of man-stealing. Mr. Watson and the leading Methodists thought that the time had now come when the conference should more publicly and distinctly bear testimony against slavery as existing in the British colonies. Accordingly a preamble and six resolutions were adopted with perfect cordiality by the Wesleyan Methodist conference, assembled at Leeds, on the 30th of July, 1830, the Rev. George Morley in the chair.

The preamble invited a general application to Parliament, by petition, that measures might be adopted to terminate slavery. The six resolutions of conference comprised respectively the six following leading views: 1. That slavery was in direct opposition to all the principles of natural right and the spirit of Christianity. 2. That West India slavery was marked with peculiar characters of severity and injustice. 3. That slavery was incompatible with a general diffusion of good morals and religion, and is necessarily associated with general ignorance, vice, and wretchedness. The particulars are detailed under this head. 4. The brotherhood between the British Wesleyans and 24,000 slave Church members, with their families, is urged as a reason for British Methodists to use their influence with the nation in favor of freedom. 5. The Wesleyans concur with other Christians on the evils of slavery, and urge their Irish and British members to unite in petitions against it. 6. They recommend their members who have votes to use them in favor of liberty.\*

Agreeably to the resolutions of conference, the Wesleyans were not idle. The subject was brought before their congregations in their circuits on week-day evenings, when the subject of slavery was stated by one or more speakers, and a petition was prepared and signed. At one of these meetings Mr. Watson delivered a powerful address on the subject. We give a very brief outline of the leading features of his address. He stated, if the case involved merely political considerations, this would not be the place to express their opinions; but the conference viewed it morally and religiously, and so did religious people generally; that the Wesleyans, both because they labored more than all others for the salvation of the slaves, and were more generally opposed, were peculiarly called on to act; that Mr. Wesley, in his able tract, had shown them the example; if it was wrong to steal men from Africa and make them slaves, it is wrong to retain them in slavery; it would be as just for the black man to enslave the white man as for the white man to enslave the black. He argued that it was a mere sophism to assume that West India slavery stands on the same ground as the servitude mentioned in the Old Testament; for these differ both in their circumstances and in their essence. And in regard to the New Testament argument insisted on by slaveholders, that the apostles did not condemn slavery, but enjoined

obedience to masters, he disposes of as follows: That the principles of Christianity are opposed to slavery; that Christianity did abolish it; that the counsel to submission was one and the same with counseling submission to any other wrong; that slaves should endeavor to become free if they lawfully could; and the plea of slaveholders generally, that Christianity would gradually do away slavery, proves that slavery and Christianity are in antagonism; and that the various professions of pro-slavery men in opposing the missionaries, while in general they favored a Christianity which suited them, showed that they were hypocritical as well as unfair in their reasoning.\*

19. From the Report of the Wesleyan Missionary Society for the year 1831, we collect the statistics and state of the Wesleyan Church in the West Indies. There were 24,499 slaves Church members, and 7,281 free negroes and persons of color; in all, 31,780 members. The number of children and adults in the mission schools was 25,420. Upward of three thousand of the children instructed in the schools were the children of slaves. Fifty-eight missionaries were employed. In Jamaica, where opposition to the missions was strongest and longer continued than elsewhere, much prosperity was enjoyed. There were upward of twelve thousand Church members in that island alone; and the call for spiritual instruction and pastoral labor from new places was greater than could be attended to. The habits of society were very much averse to pure Christianity, especially in regard to the Sabbath and the obligations of marriage. Still, through the influence of the missions, much progress was made in the observance of moral requirements.

These cheering statements were scarcely before the public, when the most appalling accounts were received from Jamaica. The home Government had sent out some new regulations tending to meliorate the condition of the slaves. This was resisted by the local authorities. Many of the negroes, impatient of slavery, and actuated by the persuasion that the king had given them their freedom, and that it was withheld by their masters, raised an extensive insurrection, in which many plantations were seriously injured. The blame was laid on the missionaries. The governor declared that no charge whatever lay against them; yet an association was formed called the Colonial Church Union, the professed object of which was the maintenance of the Church of England, but the real design of which was to prevent all future attempts to instruct and evangelize the slave population. The Union was composed of Episcopalians, Jews, Deists, Presbyterians, and libertines. In defiance of law they proceeded to destroy the mission chapels, and sought to murder the missionaries. A part of the press in England adopted and propagated the calumnies against the missionaries from the Jamaica papers. These outrages were overruled by divine Providence, so as to hasten the measure of emancipation, though for a season it was doubtful whereunto those things would grow. Mr. Watson defended the persecuted missionaries in the Wesleyan Magazine, and commended them and their injured flocks to the merciful protection of almighty God.

The agents of the West India slaveholders in England were not idle in their endeavors to

\* See Document, No. 2, for the resolutions of the British conference, and Watson's Life, p. 375.

\* See Watson's speech, in his Life, pp. 379-385.

support slavery. They prepared with great care a collection of abstracts in a paper of forty-six folio pages, and laid it on the table of the house of commons, which was ordered by the house to be printed on the 28th of March, 1831, entitled, "Slave Laws: West Indies." Notwithstanding its size, it was printed and in the hands of the members the following morning. This paper, though bearing on its exterior the usual marks of authority, was no official document, but a paper fabricated for the occasion. The paper, however, lost its intended effect; for Mr. Buxton's motion, which was expected to be decided on the 29th of March, was unexpectedly postponed to the 15th of April, so that there was time enough to expose the imposture, which was ably done in a pamphlet, dated April 10, 1831, entitled, "Exposure of an attempt recently made by certain West Indian Agents to mislead Parliament on the subject of Colonial Slavery."

In the spring of 1831 a dissolution of Parliament and another general election were expected. The Committee of the Antislavery Society called a public meeting at Exeter Hall, on the 23d of April, for the purpose of directing the attention of electors to the degradation and wrongs of slavery. Mr. Watson was induced to deliver a speech on the occasion. His thorough acquaintance with West India affairs qualified him eminently for the task. He was convinced that the rigor of West India slavery raised the most serious difficulties in the way of Christianity. Accordingly he felt himself at liberty to unite with such men as Buxton, Lushington, Sir James M'Inotsh, etc., in promoting emancipation.\*

Mr. Watson had determined, on his own responsibility, to publish an address to the Methodist connection on the exercise of the elective franchise, and had drawn it up for this purpose. He states that his object was not to instruct them as to the evils of slavery—for of these they were fully aware—but to caution them against being misled by the half-way measures of candidates for office; that the sin of slavery was a national sin; that Mr. Wesley led the way in condemning it; and that though Christianity had done much for the slaves, it was greatly impeded by slavery; in short, that unless slavery be done away by emancipation, it must, in the nature of the case, end in revolution and blood.†

Mr. Watson, however, did not publish his address which he had written, as he was induced to alter his mind in consequence of the course pursued by the Antislavery Society. At their general meeting, April 23d, 1831, they adopted an "Address to the people of Great Britain and Ireland," calling upon the electors to remember the enslaved negroes in returning members to Parliament. This address was signed by Messrs. Buxton, S. Gurney, Wilberforce, W. Smith, Z. Macaulay, D. Wilson, R. Watson, S. Lushington, and T. Clarkson. Its effect was great on the public mind.

The following action on colonial slavery was had by the British conference at its session begun July 27, 1831:

"2. Can the conference adopt any further measures in order to promote the early and entire abolition of colonial slavery?"

"A. Convinced that negro slavery is one of the foulest of our national sins, and ought, on

grounds strictly religious, to be strenuously opposed by all who fear God, the conference earnestly recommends to all our members and friends who now are, or hereafter shall be, possessed of the elective franchise, to pay a conscientious and paramount regard, in every future exercise of that franchise, to the slave question, and to support such candidates only as shall, in connection with other qualifications for a seat in the senate of a country professing Christianity, decidedly pledge themselves in favor of a speedy and effectual legislative enactment for the extinction of this most unchristian system."\*

The true principles of Christianity lead to freedom, both in regard to the light it imparts and the moral principles it enjoins. As the slave becomes enlightened his desire after freedom becomes more intense, though religion will enable him to control his passions and wait for the legitimate accomplishment of his wishes. This appeared clearly in the conduct of the Wesleyan slaves in the West Indies during the insurrections that took place. No religious slaves or missionaries took any part in these outrages.

20. The following is the explanation given by Rev. Mr. Barry, Wesleyan missionary in 1832, before the Committee of the house of commons, respecting the mode by which members were admitted into the Wesleyan societies: "There are," says Mr. Barry, "subordinate leaders in the society. If any of these should be applied to by an individual for admission, he states the fact to the missionary, who examines particularly whether, if a slave, his conduct, as far as known, is irreproachable, and whether he has been faithful to his master. If the examination be satisfactory, he is admitted for two or three months on trial. If, at the end of his probation, the leader can still recommend him for moral conduct, a ticket is then given him, which recognizes him as a member. At the weekly meeting of the leaders, the missionary further inquires of each as to the moral conduct of every member of his class during the week; and if a slave has been guilty of any act of immorality or dishonesty, or of running away, the slave is immediately called up and examined, and if proved to be guilty is expelled. This course is invariably pursued. He does not necessarily, however, become a leader; that requires higher qualifications. In fact there are not above five slave leaders in the island. The office of a leader requires that he should undertake the moral and religious instruction of a certain number of members; and before any such appointment he is brought to the leaders' meeting, and the missionary examines into his knowledge of Christianity, and his moral character, and whether he is in debt or any pecuniary embarrassment; and it is only when the missionary is satisfied on these points that he is appointed a leader. There would have probably been more slaves appointed leaders, but for the prejudices existing in the colony, which are so strong that it was always avoided as much as possible. But for this, vast numbers of slaves were as fit to be leaders and subordinate leaders as any free men in Jamaica. The negroes are not allowed to preach. Mr. Barry had often heard them pray and communicate religious instruction, but none of them are allowed to become public

\* Watson's Life, pp. 385-390. † Watson's Life, p. 392.

\* British Minutes for 1831, pp. 82, 83.



teachers for the same reason, that of avoiding prejudice."\*

In the year 1832 the great measure of negro emancipation was approaching its crisis. Committees of the two houses of Parliament had been previously appointed to inquire into the subject, and each of them produced such a body of evidence as proved that slavery generated evils, both moral and physical, of such magnitude as ought not to be continued longer than the safety of the parties required. At the elections for the present Parliament, only eleven proprietors of slaves had been returned as members of the house of commons. Many members of the house of peers were convinced of the evils of slavery by the testimony produced. The persecutions and outrages in Jamaica aroused the public. The intelligence, too, which the Antislavery Society diffused did much good.

In February, thirteen Baptist chapels and five Wesleyan chapels were destroyed by white mobs. Connected with this, persecution in various forms raged against the missionaries and their people, to the great injury of all concerned in them, and to the almost ruin of the island of Jamaica. The insurrection in Jamaica, in the winter of 1831-32, had not its origin in the rebellious spirit of the slaves, but in the rashness, imprudence, and impetuosity of the whole community, who actually drove the slaves into insubordination and resistance. This conclusion is confirmed by the papers afterward laid before Parliament. Meetings of the free colored persons were held in Jamaica, Trinidad, the Bahamas, etc., in which they expressed their strong attachment to the home Government.

Although the missionaries, whether Wesleyan, Baptist, or Moravian, had in view the salvation of slaves only, and had never interfered, in word or act, with their civil relations, yet the light and morals inculcated were antagonistic to slavery. Yet both missionaries and members had no act or part in the insurrection. Nevertheless, they were accused of being participants. Indeed, the Assembly of Jamaica adopted a report on the 26th of April, 1832, in which the "Baptists, Wesleyan Methodists, and Moravians were accused of producing revolt, by their recognizing gradations of rank among such of our slaves as had become converts to their doctrines, whereby the less ambitious were made the dupes of the artful and intelligent, who had been selected by the preachers of those particular sects to fill the higher offices in their chapels, under the denomination of rulers, elders, leaders, and helpers, and the preaching and teaching of the religious sects, which had the effect of producing in the mind of the slaves a belief that they could not serve a temporal and spiritual master."†

On the 8th of May, 1832, the Baptist missionaries of Jamaica published a spirited, a prompt, a Christian, and manly protest against the false charge of the Assembly, by their Rebellion Committee, as it was called. They pronounce the charges as unfounded and unjust; that the missionaries have inculcated on servants and slaves the duty of obedience to their masters; that bribery, perjury, and every spe-

cies of iniquity have been resorted to for the purpose of criminating the missionaries; that the missionaries have been found guilty on evidence with which they were never made acquainted; and that the Rebellion Committee have chosen the present occasion to express their determined and long-cherished hatred to religion and its propagators.\*

A meeting of the Wesleyan missionaries and leaders of Jamaica, convened by the Chairman of the District, on the 10th of May, uttered their protest in eight resolutions. The number of missionaries was seventeen, and four hundred and forty-six leaders. They state that nearly all the leaders were respectable free persons, the most of whom were owners of slaves; that the report is a gross calumny and falsehood.†

On the 24th of May, 1832, a select committee of the house of commons was "appointed to consider and report upon the measures which it might be expedient to adopt for the purpose of effecting the extinction of slavery throughout the British dominions at the earliest period compatible with the safety of all classes in the colonies, and in conformity with the resolutions of this house, of the 15th of May, 1823."

Two main points, arising out of the reference, were embraced in the two following propositions:

"1. That the slaves, if emancipated, would maintain themselves, would be industrious, and disposed to acquire property by labor.

"2. That the dangers of convulsion are greater from freedom withheld than from freedom granted to the slaves."

In the house of commons twelve witnesses were examined on the affirmative, and twenty-one on the negative side, conducted by the colonial party. The entire preponderance of testimony was on the affirmative side. A similar process was pursued in the house of lords, and with a like effect. The committee of the house of commons commenced its sittings on the 6th of June, and finished on the 11th of August. The committee of the house of lords commenced its sittings on the 13th of May, and finished on the 9th of August, 1832.‡

At the anniversary of the Wesleyan Missionary Society, held at the end of April, 1832, Mr. Watson delivered an address on the following resolution: "That this meeting gratefully acknowledges those assurances received by the committee from his Majesty's Government, that every means shall be employed in protecting the missionaries sent forth by this and other societies for the conversion of the negro slaves in the West Indies, and deeply sympathizes with a kindred society in the persecutions to which its excellent missionaries have been subjected in the island of Jamaica, and in the losses which it has sustained by a wanton and profane destruction of its chapels by mobs of whites, in the very presence of magistrates themselves; exhibiting another proof of that pitiable hostility to slave instruction which exists among many persons in that colony, and a disgraceful and mischievous example of an infatuated defiance of law and justice."

He referred to the absence of Mr. Buxton and Dr. Lushington, who were unavoidably detained. He also alluded to the absence of another class of persons who had not discov-

\* Report of Committee of House of Commons, p. 81.  
See Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, p. 345.

† See Document, No. 4.

\* See Document, No. 5.

† Document, No. 6.

‡ Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 213-564.

ered that Christian missions are not intended to perpetuate slavery; that these suppose Christianity was designed to render the slave contented with their bondage; to teach them to bear injury and oppression with patience; and to polish the chain, but then to rivet it on their necks forever. He said the Society laid restraints on missionaries—a total silence on the civil wrongs of the slaves—lest this would interfere with their salvation, which was more important than their freedom. But they of England had to do, not with the bondmen, but with the people of England, the Parliament, and Government. And even silence on their parts could not avail the colonists, as their slavery itself contained all those elements in itself inherently which must produce the greatest evils. He laments the insurrections, but affirms the cause is not in missions, but in slavery itself, and that the missionaries had no hand in these disorders. To the objection that the missionaries might have prevented the insurrections, he replies, that the missionaries were never placed in these colonies on Christian ground. The missionaries might preach to the slaves; but he may not preach to the master. He may teach the slave the duties of passive obedience and non-resistance; but he is not to inculcate on the master the duties of mercy, justice, and right; and that it is unreasonable to expect from missionaries to instruct slaves in the duty of submission to unalleviated, unconditional, and interminable slavery, as this is what true missionaries should shun. He adds, "But if it be expected from us, that we exhort the missionaries to discountenance all but legal means of carrying into effect the claims of justice and humanity, and to warn and beseech the slaves to patience; that we have done and shall do."\*

At the British conference, held July and August, 1832, three strong resolutions respecting slavery were drawn up by Mr. Watson, and passed the conference by a unanimous vote.† The first resolution reaffirms their former declarations on the moral evils of slavery, and exhorts the members of the Church to promote the cause of emancipation by their prayers, their influence, by spreading publications against slavery, and by their votes. The second resolution expresses sympathy for the persecuted missionaries of Jamaica, and in it "the conference gratefully records its testimony to the excellent conduct of the missionaries, in neither betraying the principles of eternal justice and morality as to the civil wrongs of the slaves, nor mixing themselves up, while employed in their mission, with such discussions on the case as might be dangerous. It exhorts them still to cultivate the same spirit, to exert the same zeal for the instruction and salvation of the population of the West India colonies, and to walk steadfastly by those excellent rules which are embodied in printed instructions." The third resolution thanked the Government for the relief furnished to the suffering missionaries in Jamaica.\*\*

While the subject of emancipation was before Parliament, Mr. Buxton addressed a letter to Mr. Watson, requesting his advice as to the plan to be adopted. Mr. Watson, though in feeble health, wrote, in December, 1832, a letter

to Mr. Buxton, in which he gave his views with all freedom.

In this important letter to Mr. Buxton, the leading principles are recognized which characterize the measure of emancipation which was adopted a few months afterward by the British Parliament. Mr. Watson required that a period should be fixed when slavery should cease; that the slave might look forward with confidence to this time, when he would enjoy the rights of humanity; and that the masters should have some motives to concur in such measures of amelioration as should be preparative to universal emancipation. Nor does he contend that the pecuniary loss should fall exclusively on the slaveholder, because the iniquitous system was carried on under the sanction of the British nation, which was, therefore, bound to bear its share of the loss. This principle was to do right, and to do it advisedly. He believed that all the smaller colonies, where missions had been longest in operation, are already ripe for such a change; that Jamaica, Barbadoes, and Trinidad, where not much comparatively had been done by missions, would require a strong police to preserve order; that the religious slaves were well prepared for emancipation, and the others would be very much influenced by them. He affirmed that religious preparation had greatly progressed; but as it had been carried on by the sectaries, more especially the Methodists, whom the orthodox statesmen called fools and fanatics, it was set down at naught. The effect of Christianity on the slaves was unjustly deprecated by the abolitionists, though with the good design of strengthening their argument—still, that the communication of education and religious instruction on a more extended scale was necessary. He affirmed that the professed zealous antislavery people had manifested but little care for the *souls* of the slaves; that they gave plenty of good speeches and plaudits, but few additional guineas to the missionary funds.\*

From the best information within our reach, we find that after emancipation in the West Indies, on August 1, 1834, by the act of January, 1833, the Wesleyan preachers were enabled to prosecute their work, not only without hindrance, but with considerable success. In 1835, the number in society was 32,796; in 1839, the number was 42,928; and in 1842, the number was 52,868. Our sources of information do not furnish us with complete data, or later than the foregoing. We, however, give the following as the best we have:

Year.	Members.	Catechumens.
1793.....	6,570.....	
1799.....	11,000.....	
1822.....	24,600.....	
1827.....	27,606.....	
1828.....	29,060.....	
1831.....	31,780.....	25,420
1835.....	32,796.....	
1839.....	42,923.....	
1842.....	52,868.....	

The great benefits arising from the labors of the Wesleyans in the West Indies, were duly acknowledged after the various exhibitions of mob violence had been spent, and the people began seriously to consider the matter impartially. The Legislature of Antigua, in an "act to give, grant, and convey a certain piece or parcel of land in the town of St. John, for the use of the Wesleyan mission," passed Septem-

\* Watson's Life, p. 408.

† Document, No. 7.

‡ Watson's Life, pp. 416, 417.

\* Watson's Life, pp. 432-439.

ber, 1836, contains, in its preamble, a valuable testimony to the benefits of missionary labors: "Whereas, the increase of the number of members in connection with the Wesleyan mission, renders an enlarged accommodation necessary, and the great usefulness of that religious body makes it desirable to grant the same," etc.\*

Sir Lionel Smith, governor of Jamaica, in the Colonial Parliament, on November 1, 1836, speaks in the highest terms of the utility of the missions. This testimony is the more valuable because of the long experience which Sir Lionel has had in West Indian affairs. After speaking of a variety of grievances and difficulties in the island, he proceeds to say:

"There is, indeed, one most important subject which I can not resist submitting to your grave consideration. It is the religious and moral condition of the negroes. No man has had such opportunities of such enlarged observation among this class as I have had, either in the immediate government of, or eventual control over seven colonies; and I am sorry to proclaim that they are in this island in a more deplorable and backward state than in any other. Yet, gentlemen, they must be taught to fear God before they can be made to respect the laws. It is physically impossible for the ministers of the Established Church, few in number, with an extended surface of population, to do more than they have done. The first object is to instill the doctrines of Christianity, and not to insist on any particular Church Discipline. I firmly believe the assistance of the missionaries is most necessary to this end. Gentlemen, we have hardly four years more to watch over the experiment of apprenticeship. Give every facility you can to the missionaries' labors. Banish from your minds the idea that they are your enemies. I will answer with my head for their loyalty and fidelity. Encourage their peaceable settlement among your people; let every four or five contiguous estates combine for the erection of chapel schools; and knowing, as you well do, the attachment of the negro to the place of his birth, and the burial-place of his parents, you may, I sincerely believe, by these means, finally locate on your estates a contented peasantry. The example in Antigua forcibly impresses the advantage of this course of improvement."†

21. In 1837 religion prospered much in Jamaica, so that there was an increase of 3,000 to the Methodist societies in that island. A fine feeling prevailed in favor of Methodism. Every week witnessed accessions to the Church, and the tone of piety was deepening among the members. The House of Assembly granted \$500 currency to assist in building a new Methodist chapel in Kingston. The Wesleyan Missionary Society received five thousand pounds out of the Parliamentary grants for the erection of negro school-houses in the West Indies, on the condition that the Society would raise half of that sum. This offer was accepted, and the

work of erecting the school-houses was carried on with vigor.\*

22. A few concluding remarks, comprising elementary historical facts, will close the narrative on the connection of Wesleyan Methodism with slavery.

1. Before the Wesleyans commenced their labors in the West Indies, the negroes in general had scarcely the slightest conception of religion in any form. They had no Sabbath; were almost entire strangers to the married relation. The clergy of the Established Church in general paid no attention to the instruction of the negroes.

2. Through the instrumentality of the missionaries, the slaves were instructed in the principles of the Christian religion, and were governed by its morals.

3. Governed as they were by the morals of the Gospel, they became obedient to their masters, and rendered their services without constraint or the use of the whip.

4. The instructions of Christianity improved their minds so as to lead them to think and reason, learn to read and instruct their children.

5. Their knowledge of the principles of right and wrong, and the requirements of moral duty, led them to understand this Scripture text: "If thou mayest be free, use it rather." Their desire after freedom became intense as their knowledge increased, and their moral conduct was regulated, though religion enabled them to control evil passions and wait for a lawful and peaceable freedom.

6. Hence the religious slaves never united in insurrections of any kind, but rather opposed them, and waited patiently till their day of deliverance came.

7. The influence of Christianity among the emancipated slaves was such as to enable them to enjoy their freedom to advantage.

8. The salvation of the slaves was the only object at which the missionaries aimed. In all their labors they took no step in interfering with the civil relations of the slaves either in public or private.

9. The Wesleyans never made non-slaveholders a term of membership. They had slaveholders in communion with the Church all along till the day of general emancipation. Of the 446 leaders in Jamaica in May, 1832, most of them were owners of slaves. While they considered the *system* of slavery as incurably wrong, they believed men might, nevertheless, hold the legal relation under certain circumstances without guilt.

10. The missionaries possessed and exercised the true martyr spirit. They endured obloquy, persecution even to bonds, imprisonment, and death for the salvation and best interests of the slave. They may, therefore, be ranked among the confessors and martyrs of old, who loved not their lives. They even produced a mitigation of slavery, on the showing of their persecutors, by the efforts they have made in spite of the wills and wishes of the slaveholders.

\* Wesleyan Magazine for 1837, pp. 72, 73.

† Ibid., pp. 144, 145.

\* Wesleyan Magazine for 1837, pp. 374-385.

## CHAPTER II.

## DISCIPLINE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH ON SLAVERY.

1. At this stage of our narrative it will be proper to lay before our readers the disciplinary principles and regulations of the Methodist Episcopal Church on slavery. This we will do in the following order:

*First.* The views of Mr. Wesley on slavery.  
*Secondly.* The sentiments of the early preachers.

*Thirdly.* The official declarations of the conferences previous to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in December, 1784.

*Fourthly.* The disciplinary principles and regulations of the Church, as contained in the Discipline from the first edition, in 1784, to the last enactment on the subject in 1832. And,

*Fifthly.* A general survey of the characteristics of slavery according to the Discipline, comprising both the fundamental principles as well as the statutory regulations enacted from time to time in reference to practice.

2. A question arises here: *What is American slavery?*

In South Carolina slaves are thus defined:

"Slaves shall be deemed sold, taken, reputed, and adjudged in law to be chattels personal, in the hands of their owners and possessors, and their executors, administrators, and assigns, to all intents, constructions, and purposes whatsoever."

The law of Louisiana declares:

"A slave is one who is in the power of the master to whom he belongs. The master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry, and labor; he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire any thing but what must belong to his master." . . . "Slaves shall always be reputed and considered real estate; shall be, as such, subject to be mortgaged according to the rules prescribed by law, and they shall be seized and sold as real estate."

The civil law defines slavery thus:

"Slavery is an institution, by the laws of nations, by which one is subjected to another man, as master, contrary to nature."\* Chief Justice Marshall, expounding this, says, "That slavery is contrary to the law of nature will scarcely be denied; that every man has a right to the fruits of his own labor is generally admitted; and that no other person can rightfully deprive him of these fruits, and appropriate them to his will, seems the necessary result of that admission."

3. We may next bring to view the sentiments of Mr. Wesley on the subject of slavery.

As early as 1736, while in South Carolina and Georgia, Mr. Wesley was very much affected at the ignorance of the colored people with whom he was acquainted. At that time it appears they were generally complete heathens, with no idea of the true nature of religion.†

During the years 1755, 1756, and 1757, Mr.

Wesley corresponded with Rev. Samuel Davis, a pious and able Presbyterian minister of Virginia, on the state of the colored people. Mr. Davis represents the negroes generally as in a state of gross ignorance, and were as rank Pagans then as when they were in the wilds of Africa. Through the ministry of Mr. Davis many of them were instructed in the principles of Christianity, and became true Christians. Mr. Wesley sent Mr. Davis a present of books, which were distributed among the colored people to great advantage. The interest which these two eminent men took in the salvation of the colored people is worthy of all praise.\*

In the year 1758 Mr. Wesley had an opportunity of witnessing the effect of religion on a few slaves. Mr. Gilbert, from the island of Antigua, and Speaker of its House of Assembly, visited England, in company with three servants, two blacks and a mulatto. Mr. Gilbert was savingly changed in heart through the instrumentality of Mr. Wesley. The slaves of Mr. Gilbert were awakened under Mr. Wesley's preaching, February 17, 1758.† On December 29, 1758, Mr. Wesley says: "I rode to Wadsworth, and baptized two negroes belonging to Mr. Gilbert, a gentleman lately come from Antigua. One of these is deeply convinced of sin; the other rejoices in God her Savior, and is the first African Christian I have known. But shall not our Lord, in due time, have these heathens also for his inheritance?"‡ Mr. Gilbert and his slaves became the first-fruits of a rich harvest of souls in the West Indies, as we have already seen in the preceding chapter; and probably these female slaves were the same persons who maintained the institution of religion among their colored friends after Mr. Gilbert's death, and till his successor was appointed.

In 1772, February 12, Mr. Wesley read a book on the slave-trade, concerning which he says: "I read a book, published by an honest Quaker, on that execrable sum of all villainies, commonly called the slave-trade. I read of nothing like it in the heathen world, whether ancient or modern; and it infinitely exceeds, in every instance of barbarity, whatever Christian slaves suffer in Mohammedan countries."|| The reading of this book brought the subject of slavery particularly under Mr. Wesley's consideration, which led him to do his utmost against both the traffic and the system of slavery. For the African slave-trade in his day, the same trade now continued in spite of the British and American navies, and the trade of enslaving 100,000 free-born children annually in the United States, are perfectly identical in moral characteristics; and all of these are merely the result of slavery, and the very means of sustaining it; and though the influence of Christianity has been great in our country, our system of slavery is identical in moral principles with the slave-trade.

\* Servitus est constitutio juris gentium qua quis Dominio alieno, contra naturam, subijcitur. Corp. Jur. Civ. Dig. Lib. 1. Tit. 8, cap. 4, sec. 1.

† Wesley's Works, Vol. III, pp. 30, 36, 37.

\* Wesley's Works, Vol. III, pp. 584, 585, 621.

† Id., Vol. III, p. 649.

‡ Id., Vol. IV, p. 12.

|| Id., Vol. IV, p. 316.

Mr. Wesley in his "Thoughts upon Slavery," defines slavery to be an obligation of perpetual service, which only the consent of the master can dissolve; and in some countries the master can not emancipate without the consent of the civil authority. It gives the master an arbitrary power of any correction not affecting life or limb, and these are slightly protected. The slave can not acquire any thing except for the master's benefit. The master can sell the slave the same as any other property; and slavery is hereditary, descending to the children of mothers to the latest posterity. Mr. Wesley next proceeds to describe the country of Africa and its inhabitants. He then goes on to show how slaves are generally procured in Africa, carried to, and treated in America.

Mr. Wesley proceeds, in the fourth place, to inquire whether these things can be defended on the principles of even heathen honesty; whether they can be reconciled—setting the Bible out of the question—with any degree of either justice or mercy. To the plea that slavery is authorized by law, he argues that human law can not change the nature of things; for right is right and wrong is wrong. To "strike at the root of this complicated villainy," as he calls the slave-trade, he denies slaveholding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice, and quotes Blackstone to prove that the three origins of the right of slavery are built on false foundation. The three origins are, captivity in war, one man's selling himself to another, and being the children of slave mothers. That slavery is inconsistent with mercy, he shows that gain or pride may originate slavery, but mercy never does and never can. To the plea from necessity, he replies with overwhelming arguments.

In the fifth place, Mr. Wesley applies his subject. He addresses the captains employed in the trade with the power of convincing truth. The merchant engaged in the traffic is next addressed. He then addresses the planters, every gentleman that has an estate in American plantations. He declares that men-buyers are exactly on a level with men-stealers. He lastly concludes this inimitable tract with a devout prayer to almighty God in behalf of the slave.\*

When the British Abolition Committee was formed, in the year 1787, of whom Mr. Clarkson was the principal actor, Mr. Wesley entered heartily with them in favor of abolishing the slave-trade, an event that occurred finally in 1808, in respect to Great Britain and the United States. Mr. Clarkson† speaks thus of Mr. Wesley: "In the year 1774, John Wesley, the celebrated divine, to whose pious labors the religious world will be long indebted, undertook the cause of the poor Africans. He had been in America, and had seen and pitied their hard condition. The work which he gave to the world in consequence was entitled, 'Thoughts upon Slavery.' Mr. Wesley had this cause much at heart, and frequently recommended it to the support of those who attended his useful ministry."

On the 27th of August, 1787, Mr. Clarkson reported to the Abolition Committee the reception of several letters, one of which was

recently received from Mr. Wesley, on which Mr. Clarkson remarks:\* "Mr. Wesley, whose letter was read next, informed the Committee of the great satisfaction which he also had experienced, when he heard of their formation. He conceived that their design, while it would destroy the slave-trade, would also strike at the root of the shocking abomination of slavery also. He desired to forewarn them that they must expect difficulties and great opposition from those who were interested in the system, that these were a powerful body, and that they would raise all their forces, when they perceived their craft to be in danger. They would employ hireling writers, who would have neither justice nor mercy. But the Committee were not to be dismayed by such treatment, nor even if some of those who professed good will toward them should turn against them. As for himself, he would do all he could to promote the object of their institution. He would reprint a new and large edition of his 'Thoughts upon Slavery,' and circulate it among his friends in England and Ireland, to whom he would add a few words in favor of their design. And then he concluded in these words: 'I commend you to Him who is able to carry you through all opposition and support you under all discouragements.'"

"On the 30th of October, [1787,] a second letter was read from John Wesley. He said that he had now read the publications which the Committee had sent him, and that he took, if possible, a still deeper interest in their cause. He exhorted them to more than ordinary diligence and perseverance—to be prepared for opposition—to be cautious about the manner of procuring information and evidence that no stain might fall upon their character, and to take care that the question should be argued as well upon the consideration of interest as of humanity and justice, the former of which he feared would have more weight than the latter; and he recommended them and their glorious concern, as before, to the protection of Him who was able to support them.†"

Mr. Wesley also writes as follows:‡

TO MR. THOMAS FUNNELL.

NOVEMBER 24, 1787.

"My Dear Brother,—Whatever assistance I can give those generous men who join to oppose that execrable trade, I certainly shall give. I have printed a large edition of the 'Thoughts upon Slavery,' and dispersed them to every part of England. But there will be vehement opposition made, both by slave merchants and slaveholders; and they are mighty men; but our comfort is, He that dwelleth on high is mightier. I am

"Your affectionate brother,

"JOHN WESLEY."

The following letter is supposed to have been addressed to Mr. Wilberforce, and, as its date shows, was written by Mr. Wesley only four days before his death:

LONDON, FEBRUARY 26, 1791.

"Dear Sir,—Unless the Divine power has raised you up to be as *Athanasius contra mundum*—Athanasius against the world—I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise in opposing that execrable villainy, which is

\* See extracts from Wesley's tract in Sunderland's Appeal, in Document, No. 16. See Wesley's Works, Vol. VI, pp. 278-283, for the original.

† History of the Abolition of the Slave-Trade, London, 8vo., 1829, p. 74.

\* Clarkson's History, p. 250.

† Ib., p. 261.

‡ Wesley's Works, Vol. VII, p. 134.

the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But 'if God be for you, who can be against you?' Are all of them together stronger than God? O, 'be not weary in well-doing!' Go on, in the name of God, and in the power of his might, till even American slavery—the vilest that ever saw the sun—shall vanish away before it.

"Reading this morning a tract, written by a poor African, I was particularly struck by that circumstance—that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress, it being a law in all our colonies that the oath of a black against a white goes for nothing. What villainy is this!

"That He who has guided you from your youth up may continue to strengthen you in this and all things, is the prayer of, dear sir,

"Your affectionate servant,

"JOHN WESLEY."\*

The tract referred to was probably written by a colored man of Baltimore, under the signature of "Othello," and is entitled, "Essay on Negro Slavery," Philadelphia, 1789. Of this Abbè Grégoire remarks: "Few works can be compared with this of Othello for force of reasoning and fire of eloquence." It is bound with another work on negro slavery, written by Rev. James O'Kelly, and printed at the same time and place in Philadelphia.

Mr. Wesley, as we would expect, opposed slavery and the slave-trade with all his might. His *Thoughts on Slavery*, in 1774, did much to rouse opposition to the trade. Several editions were published in and of the cause of abolition in 1787, and subsequently. This tract was sown broadcast over England, Scotland, and Ireland during the contest for emancipation between 1823 and 1833. In the United States it has been published in Wesley's Works, has been republished by the antislavery men, and is now in constant requisition every-where. Perhaps no publication ever did more against slavery and the slave-trade than this tract, and its work will be done only when slavery shall cease to exist.

Considering the relation of Mr. Wesley to American Methodists, it is not marvelous that the first Methodists were deeply imbued with his sentiments in regard to slavery and the slave-trade; and this opposition to slavery must continue while they are genuine Methodists, or till their minds are infected with false or unsound principles.

4. We will now consider the sentiments of the early Methodist preachers in their official character, in their conference resolutions and acts, before the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784.

The first enactment on the subject of slavery was by the Baltimore conference which sat in Baltimore, April 24, 1780, when the entire membership was only 8,504, and the traveling preachers 42 in number.

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

"Answer. Yes.

"Q. 17. Does this conference acknowledge that slavery is contrary to the law of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society? con-

trary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion, and doing that which we would not that others should do to us and ours? Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom?"

"A. Yes.

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

"A. Yes."

As this enactment was by the Baltimore conference, it was not considered as binding on the Virginia conference, except indirectly. Rev. Jesse Lee\* thinks the Baltimore conference went too far in their censures, and their language in their resolves was calculated to irritate the minds of the people, and by no means to convince them of their errors. Dr. Bangs† agrees with Mr. Lee, and says, after quoting him, "Of this the conferences were subsequently convinced, as they found it necessary to relax in their measures against slaveholders, without, however, attempting to justify the system of slavery itself."

The Methodists of these times were strongly opposed to slavery; for, 1. They considered it contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, hurtful to society, and contrary to the dictates of conscience, pure religion, and the law of love. 2. They disapprove of Church members having slaves, and advise freedom. 3. They require traveling preachers having slaves to emancipate them. 4. They paid special attention to the spiritual wants of the colored people. Nevertheless, the conference, while they disapprove of having slaves, only *advise* freedom, from which we gather, that, in all cases, they did not require emancipation.

The following minute was made in the year 1783; concerning local preachers:

"Q. 10. What shall be done with our local preachers who hold slaves contrary to the laws which authorize their freedom in any of the United States?"

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

In the conference "begun at Ellis's preaching-house, Virginia, April 30, 1784, and ended at Baltimore, May 28th following," these minutes were passed concerning slavery:

"Q. 12. What shall we do with our friends that will buy and sell slaves?"

"A. If they buy with no other design than to hold them as slaves, and have been previously warned, they shall be expelled, and permitted to sell on no consideration.

"Q. 13. What shall we do with our local preachers who will not emancipate their slaves in the states where the laws admit it?"

"A. Try those in Virginia another year, and suspend the preachers in Maryland, Delaware, Pennsylvania, and New Jersey.

"Q. 22. What shall be done with our traveling preachers that now are, or hereafter shall be, possessed of slaves, and refuse to manumit them where the law permits?"

"A. Employ them no more."‡

\* Lee's History, p. 72.

† History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Vol. I, p. 135.

‡ See Minutes for the year 1784.

Such were the regulations on slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church previous to the General conference of 1784, called the Christmas conference.

No purchase of slaves among Church members was deemed right, except for freedom.

No sales were allowed on any consideration among Church members.

All local preachers were required to emancipate where the laws allowed it.

And it was the rule to employ no more any traveling preacher possessed of slaves, unless he promised to manumit, where the law admits of manumission.

Indeed, any purchase of slaves was counted wrong, among preachers and people, except to manumit them. And any sale of any kind was judged to be unmethodistic.

This brings us down to the General conference of 1784, or the Christmas conference, at which time the Methodist Episcopal Church was organized.

#### 5. Discipline of 1784.

At the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in December, 1784, a rule on slavery was introduced into the great moral code of Methodism; namely, the General Rules. In the original rules adopted by Mr. Wesley, in the year 1743, there was no general rule on slavery, for the obvious reason that the societies under the care of Mr. Wesley at that time were not concerned with slavery. But the American Church introduced the following rule into the General Rules of Mr. Wesley, to remedy, as they believed, the deficiency. The rule, as it was at first, was in the following words:

"The buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or children, with an intention to enslave them."

In the Discipline of 1784,\* entitled, "Minutes of several conversations between the Rev. Thomas Coke, LL. D., the Rev. Francis Asbury, and others, at a conference begun in Baltimore, in the state of Maryland, on Monday, 27th of December, in the year 1784, composing a form of Discipline for ministers, preachers, and other members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America," we have the following regulations concerning slavery, in addition to the new General Rule inserted into the original rules of Mr. Wesley:†

"Q. 41. Are there any directions to be given concerning the negroes?"

"A. Let every preacher, as often as possible, meet them in class. And let the assistant always appoint a proper white person as their leader. Let the assistants also make a regular return to the conference of the number of negroes in society in their respective circuits.

"Q. 42. What methods can we take to extirpate slavery?"

"A. We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established, excepting on the most pressing occasion; and such we esteem the practice of holding our fellow-creatures in slavery. We view it as contrary to the golden law of God, on which hang all the law and the prophets, and the unalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution, to hold in the deepest debasement, in a more abject slavery than is perhaps to be found in any part of the world

except America, so many souls that are all capable of the image of God.

"We, therefore, think it our most bounden duty to take immediately some effectual method to extirpate this abomination from among us; and for that purpose we add the following to the rules of our society, namely:

"1. Every member of our society who has slaves in his possession, shall, within twelve months after notice given to him by the assistant—which notice the assistants are required immediately, and without any delay, to give in their respective circuits—legally execute and record an instrument, whereby he emancipates and sets free every slave in his possession who is between the ages of forty and forty-five immediately, or, at farthest, when they arrive at the age of forty-five.

"And every slave who is between the ages of twenty-five and forty immediately, or, at farthest, at the expiration of five years from the date of the said instrument.

"And every slave who is between the ages of twenty and twenty-five immediately, or, at farthest, when they arrive at the age of thirty.

"And every slave under the age of twenty, as soon as they arrive at the age of twenty-five at farthest.

"And every infant born in slavery after the above-mentioned rules are complied with, immediately on its birth.

"2. Every assistant shall keep a journal, in which he shall regularly minute down the names and ages of all the slaves belonging to all the masters in his respective circuit, and also the date of every instrument executed and recorded for the manumission of the slaves, with the name of the court, book, and folio, in which the said instruments respectively shall have been recorded; which journal shall be handed down in each circuit to the succeeding assistants.

"3. In consideration that these rules form a new term of communion, every person concerned, who will not comply with them, shall have liberty quietly to withdraw himself from our society within the twelve months succeeding the notice given as aforesaid; otherwise the assistant shall exclude him in the society.

"4. No person so voluntarily withdrawn, or so excluded, shall ever partake of the supper of the Lord with the Methodists, till he complies with the above requisitions.

"5. No person holding slaves shall, in future, be admitted into society or to the Lord's supper, till he previously complies with these rules concerning slavery.

"N. B. These rules are to affect the members of our society no farther than as they are consistent with the laws of the states in which they reside.

"And respecting our brethren in Virginia that are concerned, and after due consideration of their peculiar circumstances, we allow them two years from the notice given, to consider the expedience of compliance or non-compliance with these rules.

"Question 43. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away?"

"Answer. They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on purpose to free them."

From the foregoing we learn that the following were the views, concerning slavery, of those who organized the Methodist Episcopal Church:

\*History of Discipline, p. 25.

†Id., p. 42.

(1.) As to the nature of slavery. It was an abomination—the deepest debasement—the slavery of America was more abject than any other.

(2.) They considered slavery to be contrary to the golden law of love, on which hang all the law and the prophets—contrary to the unalienable rights of mankind—contrary to every principle of the Revolution.

(3.) Every one possessing slaves, whether by inheritance or otherwise, was required to emancipate them, if it could be done; and no person holding slaves for the future was to be admitted into the Church, unless he previously promised to emancipate them.

(4.) These rules were to affect the members of the Church only so far as they were consistent with the laws of the states in which they resided.

(5.) But those who bought or sold slaves, or gave them away, were immediately to be expelled, unless they bought them in order to free them.

#### 6. Discipline from 1785 to 1792.

In the annual conferences that sat after the General conference of 1784, the following recommendation and nota bene were passed, as we learn from the printed Minutes of 1785:

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

“N. B. We do hold in the deepest abhorrence the practice of slavery, and shall not cease to seek its destruction by all wise and prudent means.”

At this stage of the question concerning slavery, we give the opinions of two historians, Lee and Bangs.

Mr. Lee, in his History of the Methodists, in the year 1784, when commenting on the foregoing rules, makes the following observations. We can not agree with all his views on this topic; nevertheless, we quote him entire:

“These rules were but short-lived, and were offensive to most of our southern friends; and were so much opposed by many of our private members, local preachers, and some of the traveling preachers, that the execution of them was suspended at the conference held in June following, about six months after they were formed, and they were never afterward carried into full force. However, some parts of them have been retained among us; but they have been changed and altered till the last General conference in 1808, at which time the greater part of the rule against slavery was abolished, and no part of it was retained respecting private members.”

Dr. Bangs observes as follows:\*

“As these rules were modified from time to time, it will not be necessary to take any further notice of them than simply to say, that though those who framed them ‘abhorred the practice of slavery,’ they could not have considered it such a sin ‘as to exclude a man from the kingdom of grace and glory,’ else they never would, as honest men, have suspended their execution, as they did about six months after they were passed; nor did they, as some have seemed to suppose, insist on *immediate* and *unconditional* emancipation; for even the rule

itself, had it not been suspended, provided only for a *gradual* emancipation, at farthest in five years from a certain age, where circumstances forbade it to be done immediately. But, finding that even this gradual process could not be carried forward, without producing a greater evil than it was designed to remove, the rule itself, mild and forbearing as it was in comparison to measures recently proposed, was suspended at the succeeding conference, in favor of those more wise and prudent means which the Church has ever since used, and is now ready to use, for the extirpation of slavery.”

The Methodists in America have always taken an active part in behalf of the salvation and welfare of the colored people. The quotations already given prove this. In the annual Minutes of 1785 we find the following:

“Q. 17. What directions shall we give for the promotion of the spiritual welfare of the colored people?

“A. We conjure all our ministers and preachers, by the love of God and the salvation of souls, and do require them, by all the authority that is invested in us, to leave nothing undone for the spiritual benefit and salvation of them, within their respective circuits or districts; and for this purpose to embrace every opportunity of inquiring into the state of their souls, and to unite in society those who appear to have a real desire of fleeing from the wrath to come, to meet such in class, and to exercise the whole Methodist Discipline among them.”

The instruction of poor children, both white and colored, occupied the attention of the Church in 1790. On this we cite Bangs,\* who informs us that the following question and answer are found in the Minutes for 1790, though it is not in the copy in our possession:

“Q. What can be done in order to instruct poor children, white and black, to read?

“A. Let us labor, as the heart of one man, to establish Sunday schools in or near the place of public worship. Let persons be appointed by the bishops, elders, deacons, or preachers, to teach gratis all that will attend and have a capacity to learn, from six o’clock in the morning till ten, and from two o’clock in the afternoon till six, where it does not interfere with public worship. The council shall compile a proper school book, to teach them learning and piety.”

This is the first account we have of Sunday schools in the United States, and they appear to have been principally designed for the instruction of colored children.

About six months after the adoption of the rules on slavery in 1784, they were suspended, rather informally, by the annual conferences; and there was nothing retained in the Discipline of 1786, except the General Rule and the following:

“Q. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away?

“A. They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on purpose to free them.”

From the foregoing we learn that those who bought or sold, except to emancipate, were held in execration, and were immediately to be expelled; but those who possessed slaves by inheritance, were allowed to retain them without rebuke, where the laws did not admit of freedom.

#### 7. Discipline of 1792.

In the Discipline of 1792 nothing remains

\* History, Vol. I, p. 217.

\* History, Vol. I, p. 309.



concerning slavery, except the General Rule, and no other mention is made of it in the Discipline till 1796.

We find, however, that the cause of freedom was not forgotten. For, in the recommendation by the general traveling ministry, of a general fast, to be held on the first Friday of March, 1796, we have the devout wish expressed, "That Africans and Indians may help to fill the pure Church of God." And, in the recommendation for "general thanksgiving," to be observed the last Thursday of October, 1796, the prayer of thanksgiving is to extend to, "And for African liberty; we feel gratitude that many thousands of these poor people are free and pious."\*

#### 8. Discipline of 1796.

The Discipline of 1796 is distinguished from all others, by containing notes prepared by the bishops. The origin and design of these are thus stated in the "advertisement to the reader:" "The last General conference desired the bishops to draw up annotations on the form of Discipline, and to publish them in the present edition. The bishops have, accordingly, complied, and have proved or illustrated every thing by quotations from the word of God, agreeably, also, to the advice of the conference; and they sincerely pray that their labors of love may be made a blessing to many. 1797."

In this edition of the Discipline we have, on page 133, the General Rule with *or* in the reading; on page 138 we have the note of the bishops on the General Rule on slavery; and on page 169 we have the section entitled, "Of Slavery." The title and imprint of this Discipline read as follows: "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, with explanatory notes, by Thomas Coke and Francis Asbury. The tenth edition: Philadelphia: printed by Henry Tuckness. 1798."

The General Rule in the Discipline of 1796 has *or* instead of *and*, as the true reading. In their introduction to the notes on the General Rules, the bishops say:

"The present section forms, perhaps, one of the completest systems of Christian ethics or morals, for its size, which ever was published by an uninspired writer. We speak this the more readily, because it was the work of the first divine, we believe, since the time of the apostles, the late Mr. Wesley, after mature experience, with only a small addition, which the circumstances of these states required. The rules are so clear, and so obviously approve themselves to every candid mind, that we need only touch briefly upon them, proving them by quotations from the sacred writings."

In their notes the bishops say: "The buying and selling the souls and bodies of men—for what is the body without the soul but a dead carcass?—is a complicated crime. It was, indeed, in *some measure*, overlooked in the Jews, by reason of the wonderful hardness of their hearts, as was the keeping of concubines and the divorcing of wives at pleasure; but it is totally opposite the whole spirit of the Gospel. It has the immediate tendency to fill the mind with pride and tyranny, and is frequently productive of almost every act of lust and cruelty which can disgrace the human species. Even the moral philosopher will candidly confess that, if there be a God, every perfection he pos-

sesses must be opposed to a practice so contrary to every moral idea which can influence the human mind. Nehemiah v, 8, 9: 'I said unto them, We, after our ability, have redeemed our brethren, the Jews which were sold unto the heathen; and will ye even sell your brethren? or shall they be sold unto us?' Then held they their peace, and found nothing to answer. Also I said, It is not good that ye do; ought ye not to walk in the fear of our God, because of the reproach of the heathen, our enemies? Isaiah lviii, 6: 'Is not this the fast that I have chosen? to loose the bands of wickedness, to undo the heavy burdens, and to let the oppressed go free, and that ye break every yoke.' Ezekiel xxvii, 13—this chapter is written on the destruction of Tyrus and the causes of it—'Javan, Tubal, and Meshech, they were thy merchants: they traded the persons of men.' Acts xvii, 24-26: 'God—hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth.' 1 Timothy i, 9, 10: 'Knowing this, that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the ungodly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for man-slayers, for men-stealers,' etc. Revelation xiii, 10: 'He that leadeth into captivity shall go into captivity.' Revelation xviii—on the fall of Babylon and the causes of it—v, 11-13: 'No man buyeth their merchandise any more: the merchandise of gold and silver, and slaves, and souls of men.'"

The section "Of Slavery," in the Discipline of 1796, reads as follows:

"Q. What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of African slavery?"

"A. 1. We declare that we are more than ever convinced of the great evil of the African slavery which still exists in these United States; and do most earnestly recommend to the yearly conferences, quarterly meetings, and to those who have the oversight of districts and circuits, to be exceedingly cautious what persons they admit to official stations in our Church; and in the case of future admission to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them, immediately or gradually, as the laws of the states respectively, and the circumstances of the case will admit; and we do fully authorize all the yearly conferences to make whatever regulations they judge proper, in the present case, respecting the admission of persons to official stations in our Church.

"2. No slaveholder shall be received into society, till the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit has spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery.

"3. Every member of the society who sells a slave, shall immediately, after full proof, be excluded the society. And if any member of our society purchase a slave, the ensuing quarterly meeting shall determine on the number of years in which the slave so purchased would work out the price of his purchase. And the person so purchasing shall, immediately after such determination, execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave, at the expiration of the term determined by the quarterly meeting. And, in default of his executing such instrument of manumission, or on his refusal to submit his case to the judgment of the quarterly meeting, such member shall be excluded the society. *Provided, also,* That in the case of a female slave, it shall be inserted

\* See Minutes for 1795.

in the aforesaid instrument of manumission, that all her children who shall be born during the years of her servitude shall be free at the following times; namely, every female child at the age of twenty-one, and every male child at the age of twenty-five. *Nevertheless*, if the member of our society, executing the said instrument of manumission, judge it proper, he may fix the times of manumission of the children of the female slaves before mentioned, at an earlier age than that prescribed above.

"4. The preachers and other members of our society are requested to consider the subject of negro slavery with deep attention, till the ensuing General conference, and that they impart to the General conference, through the medium of the yearly conferences, or otherwise, any important thoughts upon the subject, that the conference may have full light, in order to take further steps toward the eradicating this enormous evil from that part of the Church of God to which they are united."

#### 9. Discipline of 1800.

In the year 1800 two additional paragraphs were added to the section on slavery, while the whole of what was enacted in 1796 was retained. At the General conference of 1800 Dr. Coke and Bishop Asbury presided. The following are the additional paragraphs. We quote from the "Minutes" of the General conference, printed and appended to the Discipline of 1796. At page 12 of these Minutes we have the additions:

"Q. 13. Shall any further steps be taken for the promoting of the emancipation of the slaves?"

"A. 1. The annual conferences are directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves, to the legislatures of those states in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose. These addresses shall urge, in the most respectful but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of the slaves; proper committees shall be appointed, by the annual conferences, out of the most respectable of our friends, for the conducting of the business; and the presiding elders, elders, deacons, and traveling preachers shall procure as many proper signatures as possible to the addresses, and give all the assistance in their power, in every respect, to aid the committees, and to further this blessed undertaking. And this shall be continued from year to year, till the desired end be fully accomplished.

"2. When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in the Methodist Episcopal Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal instrument of emancipation of such slave or slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives."

At the General conference of 1800 an address was sent to their brethren and friends in the United States, signed by Bishops Coke, Asbury, and Whatcoat, and by Ezekiel Cooper, William M'Kendree, and Jesse Lee. This address urged all the members and friends of the Church to do their utmost to bring slavery to an end in a lawful way.\*

#### 10. Discipline of 1804.

The General conference of 1804 so altered the section on slavery as to read thus:

"Q. What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?"

"A. 1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery, and do most earnestly recommend to the yearly conferences, quarterly meeting conferences, and to those who have the oversight of the districts, circuits, and stations, to be exceedingly cautious what persons they admit to official stations in our Church; and in the case of future admission to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them, immediately or gradually, as the laws of the state respectively and the circumstances of the case will admit; and we do fully authorize all the yearly conferences to make whatever regulations they may judge proper in the present case, respecting the admission of persons to official stations in our Church.

"2. When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.

"3. No slaveholder shall be received into full membership in our society till the preacher who has the oversight of the circuit has spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery.

"4. Every member of the society who sells a slave, except at the request of the slave, in cases of mercy and humanity, agreeably to the judgment of a committee of the male members of the society, appointed by the preacher who has charge of the circuit, shall immediately, after full proof, be expelled the society. And if any member of our society purchase a slave, the ensuing quarterly meeting conference shall determine on the number of years which the slave so purchased shall serve to work out the price of his purchase. And the person so purchasing shall, immediately after such determination, execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave, at the expiration of the term determined by the quarterly meeting conference. And, in default of his executing such instrument of manumission, or on his refusal to submit his case to the judgment of the quarterly meeting conference, such member shall be excluded the society. *Provided*, That in the case of a female slave, it shall be inserted in the aforesaid instrument of manumission, that all her children who shall be born during the years of her servitude, shall be free at the following times; namely, every female child at the age of twenty-one, and every male child at the age of twenty-five. *Provided, also*, That if a member of our society shall buy a slave with a certificate of future emancipation, the terms of emancipation shall, notwithstanding, be subject to the decision of the quarterly meeting conference. *Nevertheless*, The members of our societies in the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, shall be exempted from the operation of the above rules.

"5. Let our preachers, from time to time, as occasion serves, admonish and exhort all slaves to render due respect and obedience to the commands and interests of their respective masters."

#### 11. Discipline of 1808.

In the year 1808 the section on slavery reads as follows:

"Q. What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?"

"A. 1. We declare that we are as much as

\* See Document, No. 8.

ever convinced of the great evil of slavery, and do most earnestly recommend to the yearly conferences, quarterly meeting conferences, and to those who have the oversight of the districts, circuits, and stations, to be exceedingly cautious what persons they admit to official stations in our Church; and in the case of future admissions to official stations, to require such security of those who hold slaves, for the emancipation of them, immediately or gradually, as the laws of the state respectively, and the circumstances of the case will admit; and we do fully authorize all the yearly conferences to make whatever regulations they judge proper, in the present case, respecting the admission of persons to official stations in our Church.

"2. When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.

"3. The General conference authorizes each annual conference to form their own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves."

In comparing the Discipline of 1808 with that of 1796, the General conference of 1808 left the regulations concerning private members in the purchase or sale of slaves to the several annual conferences. The General conference did not, as some suppose, omit all legislation on this subject concerning private members, because, 1. The General Rule forbidding the purchase or sale of slaves, except to free them, was still retained. 2. The regulations concerning this were referred to the several annual conferences respectively. 3. The extirpation of slavery is still avowed with the wonted earnestness formerly expressed on this subject. 4. And this reference to the annual conferences of the purchase and sale of slaves, is continued in the Discipline down to the General conference of 1820, at which time this clause is omitted.

#### 12. Discipline of 1812.

In 1812 the section on slavery remains the same as in 1808, except that paragraph three reads as follows:

"3. Whereas, the laws of some of the states do not admit of emancipating of slaves, without a special act of the legislature; the General conference authorizes each annual conference to form their own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves."

A clause was also added to the requisites for ordaining local elders, which is as follows:

"Provided, nevertheless, that no slaveholder shall be eligible to the office of an elder, where the laws will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom."\*

#### 13. Discipline of 1816.

In the Discipline of this year, paragraph one of the Discipline of 1796 was altered, so that the whole section reads as follows:

"Q. What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?

"A. 1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.

"2. When any traveling preacher becomes

an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives."

"3. Whereas, the laws of some of the states do not admit of emancipating of slaves, without a special act of the legislature; the General conference authorizes each annual conference to form their own regulations relative to buying and selling slaves."

#### 14. Discipline of 1820.

The Discipline of this year is the same with 1816, except paragraph three, leaving it to the annual conferences, "to form their own regulations about buying and selling slaves," was struck out. The entire section, therefore, reads:

"Q. What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?

"A. 1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.

"2. When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives."

#### 15. Discipline of 1824.

At the conference held this year, three new paragraphs were added to the Discipline of 1820, one concerning the religious instruction of slaves, and two concerning colored local preachers. The whole section reads:

"Q. What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?

"A. 1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.

"2. When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives.

"3. All our preachers shall prudently enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the word of God, and to allow them time to attend upon the public worship of God on our regular days of divine service.

"4. Our colored preachers and official members shall have all the privileges which are usual to others in the district and quarterly conferences, where the usages of the country do not forbid it. And the presiding elder may hold for them a separate district conference, where the number of colored local preachers will justify it.

"5. The annual conferences may employ colored preachers to travel and preach where their services are judged necessary; provided that no one shall be so employed without having been recommended according to the form of Discipline."

Since 1824 no change in the section on slavery has been made by the General conference.

\* Discipline of 1812, p. 76.

16. Some observations on the General Rule may now be made.

(1.) As to the true reading of the rule.

In the Discipline from 1784 to 1792 the General Rule reads:

"The buying or selling the bodies and souls of men, women, or children, with an intention to enslave them."

From 1792 to 1808 the authorized reading was:

"The buying or selling of men, women, or children, with an intention to enslave them."

In the Discipline printed in 1804, just after General conference, the above reading was inserted. In an edition printed in 1805, in our possession, *and* was inserted in the place of *or*; and consequently it was a typographical error, and this error was, no doubt, without noticing it, continued in 1808 and in the future editions. From 1784 to 1808, or during twenty-four years, the General Rule was enforced by the disciplinary regulations of General conference. From 1808 to 1820, or during twelve years, this was placed in the hands of the annual conferences. From 1820 to the present time there have existed no special regulations on the General Rule, affecting Church members, either by the General or annual conferences. Hence the General Rule has been very much overlooked, although its obligation still remains in full force against all purchases and sales of human beings under any pretense whatever, except to free them, or in the exercise of humanity or mercy to the slave.

(2.) The import of the rule.

It was not inserted in Wesley's original rules, but was inserted at the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In 1784 the Discipline says, "We are deeply conscious of the impropriety of making new terms of communion for a religious society already established, excepting on the most pressing occasion; and such we deem the practice of holding our fellow-creatures in slavery." And when, in 1785, a temporary suspension of the minute was recommended by the annual conferences, for the purpose of deliberation, it was declared, "We do hold in the utmost abhorrence the practice of slavery."

The rule was not made in reference to those engaged in the African slave-trade, because these were not within reach of Methodism; much less can we suppose it was made to restrain the class of persons called traders, who buy and sell as merchants. It was obviously made to do away with all sales and purchases, which did not contemplate freedom in the issue, or at least the exercise of humanity and mercy. When the intention or act is to originate, continue, or perpetuate slavery, the rule is violated.

The note of Bishops Asbury and Coke on this rule is, "The buying and selling the souls and bodies of men—for what is the body without the soul but a dead carcass?—is a complicated crime."\* These words certainly apply as much to the common domestic traffic as to the African slave-trade. It avails nothing to say that the meaning of the word *enslave* is to *reduce to a state of slavery*; for it is certain that the General conference did not use the word in this sense. In 1784 the following was the Discipline:

"Q. 43. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away?

"A. They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on purpose to free them."

In 1796 we find the following:

"Every member of the society who sells a slave, shall immediately, after full proof, be excluded the society."\*

Observe, this rule was made seven years after the first General Rule on slavery, and while it was yet in the Discipline in nearly its present form; for the General Rule was never stricken out. The recent interpretation of the South—namely, that the General Rule referred to the African slave-trade—directly contradicts the letter of the rule itself, and the cotemporaneous statutes made in carrying it out. This is so plain to any unprejudiced mind that we need not say a word more on the subject.

(3.) The rule is a moral one.

It relates to a moral subject, or to a subject in its moral character. The General Rules form the moral code of Methodism as the Articles form the doctrinal standard. So Bishops Coke and Asbury, in their introduction to the notes on the General Rules say, "The present section forms, perhaps, one of the completest systems of Christian ethics or morals, for its size, which ever was published by an uninspired author." They call the rule on slavery "a small addition" to Wesley's Rules, "which the circumstances of these states required."

The rule is placed among the leading moral prohibitions, such as the taking the name of God in vain, profaning the day of the Lord, drunkenness, fighting, etc. It relates also to the purchase or sale of human beings, which never can be resorted to without wrong, except to free from slavery. It is called an *evil*, just in the same sense in which drunkenness and swearing are evils or sins. That is, to enslave men with intent to do so is sinful and willful sin; and if the malignity and evil of different sins are to be compared, surely it may well challenge magnitude with any of the sins with which it is classed. Observe, too, that this rule does not embrace or apply to all who may have slaves, or to such as have slaves by mere legal acts, such as inheritance; it applies only to those who have slaves by their own act and will, or who dispose of them for gain. Slaveholding, in the sense of the rule, is sinful, as certainly as swearing or drunkenness are sins, when slaveholding is as much the act and will of the slaveholder, as swearing and drunkenness are sinful when they are done by the act and will of those who perpetrate them. The system of slaveholding is as truly sinful in itself as any other sinful course is. And those are the sinners who are the authors and supporters of it, whoever they be; but not those who are involuntarily entangled in it. Wherever there is slavery there is sin to be charged somewhere, to some person or persons. In the nature of things it must be so, and can not be otherwise.

(4.) The General Rule represents slavery voluntarily entered into or continued in, as contrary to Scripture. The expositors of the General Rules, Coke and Asbury, in their introductory note, say, "The Rules are so clear, and so obviously approve themselves to every candid mind, that we need only touch briefly upon them, proving them by quotations from the sacred writings." They then proceed to fortify

\*History of Discipline, p. 320.

\*History of Discipline, p. 275.

these declarations by numerous passages of Scripture, which our limits will not allow us to recite.

Besides, the Scriptural authority of the rule is asserted in the conclusion to the Rules themselves, which says, "All which we are taught of God to observe in his written word, which is the only rule, and the sufficient rule both of our faith and practice."

(5.) What the General Rule on slavery forbids is contrary to the sentiments and feelings of genuine Christians, when unvitiated with the evil communications connected with slaveholding. The same conclusion of the General Rules says, "And all these things his Spirit writes on truly-awakened hearts."

17. As to the *evils of slavery*, this is always kept in view in the Discipline. Slavery is pronounced to be contrary to the law of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society—contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion—contrary to the law of love. It is a crying evil—an enormous evil.

The conviction of the evil of slavery and an acknowledgment of that evil have been unceasingly declared in every Discipline since 1784.

The extirpation of slavery, too, has always been an object of solicitude in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The word extirpate is one of the strongest in the English language, and means an entire *eradication*, or pulling up every vital root, so as to have no germ of growth or reproduction left.

But the *means* of extirpation, although they may not be such as to have answered the object heretofore, have been such as good and wise men have been able to devise under the circumstances. The means may be divided into two classes; namely, 1. Such *legal or civil measures* as belong of right to all Christian citizens. 2. And such *moral means* as Christianity or the word of God bestows on all men. The legal or civil means resorted to have been merely petitioning legislatures. The moral means have been a testimonial declaration of the morally-evil nature and unscriptural character of slavery, and the exercise of Scriptural discipline.

18. The civil laws on slavery have placed great obstacles in the way of exercising moral discipline. Ever since the organization of the Church the Twenty-third Article calls for submission to the civil power.

In 1783, before the Church was organized, this legal hindrance to emancipation in the case of local preachers was to be respected and submitted to, according to the Minutes or the Discipline of the time.

In the Discipline of 1784, at which time great strictness was observed concerning slavery, the following exception was made in reference to the execution of the rules on slavery.

"N. B. These rules are to affect the members of our society no farther than as they are consistent with the laws of the states in which they reside."

The same principle has been ever retained in our Discipline. And although the civil laws of the slave states have been very much in the way of emancipation, the Church has always submitted to this, both by teaching and example.

As the *means* of civil emancipation, in 1800 petitions were resorted to for the purpose of procuring more favorable laws. The right of petition belongs to all, and to have recourse to it is consistent with the character of every good citizen and Christian.

The Methodists have never yet taken any measures to bring their views to bear on the elections of the country, although this is their *privilege* whenever they may see fit to exercise it; and it would seem now to be their *duty* to exercise the elective franchise constitutionally and legally against slavery, and in favor of freedom.

19. The Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church has all along been decidedly antislavery. Our fathers commenced with strong opposition to slavery, both in the ministry and membership, and, on the organization of the Church in 1784, took measures to eradicate it from the Church. But finding the laws of several states did not admit of emancipation, they judged it right to make exceptions. The antislavery character of the Discipline remains, the holding of slaves not being tolerated in a traveling preacher, if the laws allow of freedom; and private members are not, by the law of the Church, allowed to buy or sell slaves, except to free them. The General conference, too, has kept a steady eye to the moral and intellectual improvement of the slaves, as far as the laws allowed them.

Nor has the antislavery action of the Church been confined to the north. The committees which reported the offensive measures in 1800 and 1804, number among their members Jesse Lee, William M'Kendree, George Dougherty, Philip Bruce, William Burke, Henry Willis—all of them southern men. The Baltimore conference has always been antislavery. The Tennessee conference up to 1821 had the greater part of them antislavery men or as Mr. Bascom calls them, abolitionists.

## CHAPTER III.

### ABOLITION OF THE SLAVE-TRADE.

1. BEFORE we proceed to portray the movements of the Methodist Episcopal Church in connection with abolitionism as it existed in America, it will be necessary first to give a brief survey of the abolition of the slave-trade by Great Britain and the United States, as well as the abolition of slavery in the West Indies. A brief chapter on each of these will comprise all that will be of any use to our purpose.

2. Slavery had been annihilated by Christianity, in the west of Europe, at the close of the twelfth century. But while men slept, the enemy came and sowed tares. In the year 1503 a few slaves had been sent from the Portuguese settlements of Africa to the Spanish colonies of America. In 1511 Ferdinand V, King of Spain, permitted the Africans to be carried in great numbers to his American pos-

sessions. In 1562 Sir John Hawkins, having deceived Elizabeth, commenced the trade under the British flag. Yet the body of the British mind never fully entered into the spirit of the trade. The British merchants, however, fully prosecuted the commerce as a profitable business. In the British West Indies the slave-trade was introduced in the island of St. Kitts in the year 1623. In Virginia it was introduced in 1619. For nearly two hundred years this trade continued in the British colonies without remorse or restraint.

In 1729 slavery had reached such a height in the British colonies that colonial influence was enabled to get it legalized in England, abhorrent as it was to the British character and contrary as it was to British law.

3. It will be proper, as a preparatory aid to our inquiries, to mention those who favored the cause of the injured Africans from the year 1516 to the year 1787, at which latter period a number of persons associated themselves in England for the abolition of the slave-trade.

The forerunners in opposition to the slave-trade composed Cardinal Ximenes, the Emperor Charles V, Pope Leo X, Elizabeth Queen of England, Louis XIII of France, etc.\* These may justly be called the forerunners of the abolition of the slave-trade, as those who came after them were enabled to state the great authority of their opinions and their example. By their opinions and example, the friends of freedom have been enabled to show that falsehoods were employed, under the mask of religion, to deceive those who had the power to prevent or suppress the trade, which began in piracy and was continued on the principles of force. This class comprises the leading forerunners in this great cause, only up to about the year 1640. Mr. Clarkson has divided those who have lived between 1649 to 1787 into four classes, and he gives to each class a distinct consideration by itself.

4. The first class, according to Clarkson,† consists of persons in England of various descriptions, who took a part in this cause from 1640 to 1680. Our limits would not allow us to detail their various proceedings and writings. In this list we find Milton, Bishop Sanderson, Rev. Morgan Godwyn, Richard Baxter, Southern, Dr. Primatt, Hutcheson, Foster, Steele, Atkins, Pope, Thomson, Savage, Wallis, Hughes, Burke, Shenstone, Dr. Hayter, Dyer, Postlethwaite, Thomas Jeffrey, Sterne, Bishop Warburton.

Previous to 1700, planters, merchants, and others, resident in the West Indies, brought their slaves with them to England, on their visits, and when they ran away, they seized them by force. They also procured, through York and Talbot, the Attorney and Solicitor General, an opinion that those who were slaves in the colonies were also slaves in England. Hence, slaves absconding in England were advertised in the London papers as runaways, and rewards offered for their apprehension as in slave countries. Mr. Granville Sharp, in the case of Somerset, procured the legal decision of Lord Mansfield, in 1772, "that as soon as ever any slave set his foot upon English territory, he became free."

In 1774 Mr. Wesley wrote his *Thoughts on Slavery*. In 1759 Dr. A. Smith wrote his the-

ory of moral sentiments, and treats of the dishonorable course of slaveholders. Between the year 1776 and 1782 Dr. Robertson, the Abbé Raynal, and Dr. Paley, pleaded incidentally in their works the cause of the oppressed. After these, Bishop Porteus, Dr. Gregory, Gilbert Wakefield, James Ramsay, Monsieur Necker, pleaded the cause of freedom. When a petition was presented to Parliament, in 1785, to suppress the trade, the general response to it was, that it would convulse the West Indies, and soon complete their utter ruin.

5. The second class of the forerunners and coadjutors in this great cause, up to May, 1787, comprises the Quakers of England.\* George Fox, the founder of the benevolent society of Quakers, strongly pleaded against the trade. The yearly meeting in London, in 1727, declare, "It is the sense of this meeting that the importing of negroes from their native country and relations, by Friends, is not a commendable nor allowed practice, and is, therefore, censured by this meeting."† In the year 1758 the Quakers passed similar resolutions. In these two resolutions the Quakers did nothing more than warn and advise their people. But in the year 1761 they came to a resolution that any of their members having a concern in the trade should be disowned. And in 1763 they attached criminality to any who would aid and abet the trade in any manner. Thus the Quakers held in proper estimation those outcasts of society who have been often overlooked by some others. In 1783 they petitioned Parliament to suppress the trade. In the year 1783 the Quakers formed an association to enable them to carry on their operations against the slave-trade with greater effect. In 1784 they began to print books and to circulate them. In the year 1785 the Quaker association continued their exertions. Indeed, the Quaker association, formed in 1783, was the first ever formed in England to promote the abolition of the slave-trade. Every Quaker, born since 1727, was nourished, as it were, with a fixed hatred against the trade. He was taught that any concern in it was a sin; and his testimony against it was a test of unity with his brethren. The discipline of the Quakers was a school for bringing them up as advocates against the trade. Besides, they knew more about the trade and slavery than other Churches. Their visits to America, and their intercourse with the American Quakers became a source of general information on the subject.

6. The third class of forerunners and coadjutors, up to 1787, will consist of the American Quakers, and those who united with them, such as Franklin, Rush, and others.

The Quakers in America at first became owners of slaves, like others. Yet their treatment of them was always mild. In the year 1696 the yearly meeting of Pennsylvania advised their members to guard against future importations of Africans, and to treat with kindness those in their possession. In 1711 the same yearly meeting confirmed and renewed their former advice. In 1754 the same advice was given, with the addition respecting the trade to the respective monthly meetings, to "treat with those who bought or imported slaves as they might be directed in the wisdom of truth." In 1774 the regulations were more stringent. But in 1776 it was enacted "that the

\* See Clarkson's *History of the Abolition of the Slave-Trade*, London, 1829, pp. 47-53.

† *Id.*, pp. 54-87.

\* Clarkson's *History*, pp. 88-93.

† *Id.*, p. 89.

owners of slaves who refused to execute proper instruments for giving them their freedom, were to be disowned." The subject was pursued from year to year by the Quakers, till finally they ceased as individuals to own slaves. Several of their members, as John Woolman, William Burling, Ralph Sandiford, Benjamin Lay, etc., were personally active in opposition to slavery. Anthony Benezet wrote several very excellent treatises both against the trade and slavery, among which was an address to the Queen. He corresponded with Wesley and Whitefield on the subject.

The Methodist preachers, who commenced their labors in America in 1762, and their members, contributed toward exercising a friendly feeling to the African race. The example of the Moravians, too, had its influence. About the year 1770 others united with the Quakers in encouraging manumissions. In 1772 the Legislature of Virginia petitioned the British Government in vain to suppress the slave-trade; and this was afterward enumerated among the public reasons for separating from the mother country. In 1774 a society was formed in Philadelphia of persons of different religious persuasions, the object of which was the suppression of the trade, and finally of slavery. This was the first ever formed in America. Different societies, of a similar character, were formed in New York, Connecticut, New Jersey, Maryland, and other states. These societies corresponded with each other, and cooperated together in their common work.\*

7. In each of these three classes there were individuals, in the year 1787, who seem to be peculiarly fitted to cooperate for the promotion of the abolition of the slave-trade; yet these acted on their own principles, distinctly and independently of each other. Nevertheless, by means of circumstances which they had neither foreseen nor contrived, a junction between them was rendered easily practical, and was beginning to take place at the period assigned. Two of them were more conspicuous than the rest; namely, Granville Sharp, the first laborer, and Mr. Ramsay, the first controversial writer in the cause. The second class consisted of the Quakers in England: first of George Fox, then of the Quakers as a body, then of individuals belonging to that body, who formed themselves into a committee, independently of it, for the promotion of the object in question. The third class comprised the Quakers of America, and others who joined with them. The principal individuals were James Pemberton and Dr. Rush. The individuals in each of these three classes were, by education and other qualifications, well fitted to act together in this great cause; and by circumstances which they had neither foreseen nor contrived, as stated above, a union between them actually took place.

8. The fourth class of coadjutors, up to 1787, was composed of distinguished men.

The first of these was Dr. Peckard, of Cambridge University, who denounced, in a sermon preached in 1784, the slave-trade. When chancellor of the University, Dr. Peckard, in 1785, gave out to the Senior Bachelor of Arts the following subject: "*Anne liceat invito in servitutem dare?*" or, "Is it right to make slaves of others against their will?" Mr. Thomas Clarkson obtained the prize for the best essay on the

thesis, and the study of the subject led him to devote himself solemnly for life to the cause of freedom. His essay on slavery was translated into English, and published in June, 1786. Mr. Clarkson devoted himself solely to his great work, and made use of all means within his power to become well informed on the subject of the slave-trade and slavery. He became acquainted with Wilberforce, who readily entered into his views and measures.

On the 22d of May, 1787, a committee was formed for the abolition of the slave-trade, consisting of Granville Sharp, William Dillwyn, Samuel Hoare, George Harrison, John Lloyd, Joseph Woocs, Thomas Clarkson, Richard Phillips, John Barton, Joseph Hooper, James Phillips, and Philip Sanson. All the members of the committee were Quakers except Messrs. Sharp, Sanson, and Clarkson. This committee, laboring with Mr. Wilberforce as a Parliamentary head, did, under God, in the space of twenty years, succeed in putting an end to the African slave-trade.

9. In the year 1789 William Pitt introduced a bill into Parliament, and William Wilberforce pursued it with ardor for several years. The slave power fought a desperate battle, as all such sinners generally do. Constant and repeated postponements were resorted to, and the failure of the bill gave them fresh encouragement. Besides, the Government, or head of department, were, as is usual, on the side of the oppressors. But truth and right finally prevailed.

The friends of the trade pleaded their cause with just such arguments as their predecessors had done, from Nimrod, the brethren of Joseph, Pharaoh, and such like, down to that time; and indeed the apologists for slavery in America seem to have learned and used their very words and arguments these last twenty years. They pleaded that the negroes were an inferior race; that the condition of slaves in Africa was exceedingly miserable. They told of the African despots; that the slaves would be cruelly murdered if not purchased. They said the stock could not be kept up without new importations; that the commerce in slaves was necessary for the prosperity of the nation; that, should it be abolished, ruin would follow. They insisted on the impossibility of its abolition by England alone, since other nations would continue it. They predicted disaffection and insurrection in the colonies. They dwelt on the distress to which it would expose the planters. Mr. Stanley, agent for the islands, stated that it appeared to be the intention of Providence that one set of men should always be slaves to another. Alderman Watson's plea was, that if there were not slaves in the West Indies, the inferior kind of codfish supplied in the Newfoundland fishery could not be disposed of; and if the codfish could not be sold, the fishery could not be sustained; and if the fishery were to fail, the nation would be ruined. Lord Sheffield foretold a civil war on the day on which the bill should pass into a law. The danger of discussing the subject in Parliament was urged, as well as the incapacity of Parliament to act. The critical situation of the nation, and the peculiar difficulties of the present time, were stated. Amelioration would be sufficient. Liverpool was bewailed, and the loyal people who would fly to America, should the slave-trade be abolished. Lord Castlereagh foretold the certainty of smuggling, and censured the

\* Clarkson's History, pp. 98-120.

imprudence of abolitionists for not doing things in a more business-like manner, and for going into extremes. He wished to see some fair, intelligible, practicable mode laid before the house. General Gascoigne quoted Scripture to support the trade, and declared that the length of its continuance ought to perpetuate it; but should it be abolished, he insisted on compensation. Sir William Young objected to the bill because he anticipated the emancipation of the slaves as an inevitable consequence, and he reminded the abolitionists of the charity which they owed to the slave-dealers and the slaveholders. Mr. Rose declared his reprobation of the trade, but lamented the necessity of opposing its abolition from the manner in which it had been brought forward. Lord Sidmouth admitted that the slave-trade was unjust and inhuman; but insisted that it was neither unjust nor inhuman to continue it. He would permit the slave-trade to continue for a while, in order to mitigate its horrors, that being, as he conceived, the most likely to accelerate its final abolition. Humanity to Africa was earnestly urged, and love to the slaves. These, and many other like difficulties, were brought forward between 1789 and 1807, and were finally met and fully answered in both houses.

10. The motion in 1806, which appeared so obscure to Lord Castlereagh, was, "That the house, considering the African slave-trade to be contrary to the principles of justice, humanity, and sacred policy, will, with all practicable expedition, take effectual measures for the abolition of the said trade, in such manner and at such period as may be deemed advisable." Early in 1807 Lord Glenville introduced into the house of lords "A bill for the abolition of the slave-trade." Counsel was heard against it for four days, and it was then amply discussed. It passed, and being sent to the house of commons, obtained their sanction on the 10th of February. In the house of lords the ayes were 100 and the noes 36, and in the house of commons the ayes were 283, and the noes 16. The assent of the King, through the particular exertions of Lord Glenville, was obtained on March 25th. Thus fell the British legality of the African slave-trade, and the law pronounced it felony.

But the African slave-trade was not abolished, much less the slave-trade itself. For several years a contraband commerce in African slaves was notoriously carried on, and very probably continued to the abolition of slavery. When apparently extinguished in the West Indies, its place was supplied by the inter-colonial slave-trade, the older and less fertile colonies selling and transporting slaves to the recently-acquired and less fertile. The slave-trade consists fundamentally in buying and selling men, women, and children as merchandise, wherever and by whomsoever, and not in the locality where the crime is perpetuated. The difficulties and the distresses of the trade may differ, but the nature of the trade is the same. As it is contrary to the nature of justice and humanity to buy and sell accountable beings as merchandise, it must be as truly so whether the trade be between Africa and America, between Virginia and Louisiana, or between two adjoining estates in Maryland. The degree of the crime may differ, but the nature of it is the same in both cases.

11. The following just reflections on the abolition of the slave-trade are taken from Clark-

son's History of its abolition. The reader will be pleased to read it in this place:

"Thus ended one of the most glorious contests, after a continuance for twenty years, of any ever carried on in any age or country—a contest, not of brutal violence, but of reason—a contest between those who felt deeply for the happiness and the honor of their fellow-creatures, and those who, through vicious custom and the impulse of avarice, had trampled under foot the sacred rights of their nature, and had even attempted to efface all title to the divine image from their minds.

"Of the immense advantages of this contest I know not how to speak; indeed, the very agitation of the question which it involved has been highly important. Never was the heart of man so expanded; never were its generous sympathies so generally and so perseveringly excited. These sympathies, thus called into existence, have been useful in the preservation of a national virtue. For any thing we know, they may have contributed greatly to form a counteracting balance against the malignant spirit, generated by our almost incessant wars during this period, so as to have preserved us from barbarism.

"It has been useful also in the discrimination of moral character; in private life it has enabled us to distinguish the virtuous from the more vicious part of the community. It has shown the general philanthropist; it has unmasked the vicious in spite of his pretension to virtue. It has afforded us the same knowledge in public life; it has separated the moral statesman from the wicked politician. It has shown us who, in the legislative and executive offices of our country, are fit to save, and who to destroy, a nation.

"It has furnished us also with important lessons. It has proved what a creature man is! how devoted he is to his own interest! to what a length of atrocity he can go, unless fortified by religious principle! But as if this part of the prospect would be too afflicting, it has proved to us, on the other hand, what a glorious instrument he may become in the hands of his Maker; and that a little virtue, when properly leavened, is made capable of counteracting the effects of a mass of vice!

"With respect to the end obtained by this contest, or the great measure of the abolition of the slave-trade as it has now passed, I know not how to appreciate its importance; to our own country, indeed, it is invaluable. We have lived, in consequence of it, to see the day, when it has been recorded as a principle in our legislation, that commerce itself shall have its moral boundaries. We have lived to see the day when we are likely to be delivered from the contagion of the most barbarous opinions. They who supported this wicked traffic, virtually denied that man was a moral being; they substituted the law of force for the law of reason; but the great act now under our consideration has banished the impious doctrine, and restored the rational creature to his moral rights. Nor is it a matter of less pleasing consideration, that, at this awful crisis, when the constitutions of kingdoms are on the point of dissolution, the stain of the blood of Africa is no longer upon us, or that we have been freed—alas, if it be not too late!—from a load of guilt, which has long hung, like a millstone, about our necks, ready to sink us to perdition.



"In tracing the measure still further, or as it will affect other lands, we become only the more sensible of its importance; for can we pass over to Africa; can we pass over to the numerous islands, the receptacles of miserable beings from thence; and can we call to mind the scenes of misery which have been passing in each of these regions of the earth, without acknowledging that one of the greatest sources of suffering to the human race has, as far as our own power extends, been done away? Can we pass over to these regions again, and contemplate the multitude of crimes which the agency necessary for keeping up the barbarous system produced, without acknowledging that a source of the most monstrous and extensive wickedness has been removed also? But here, indeed, it becomes us peculiarly to rejoice; for though nature shrinks from pain, and compassion is engendered in us when we see it become the portion of others, yet what is physical suffering compared with moral guilt? The misery of the oppressed is, in the first place, not contagious like the crime of the oppressor; nor is the mischief which it generates either so frightful or so pernicious. The body, though under affliction, may retain its shape; and, if it even perish, what is the loss of it but of worthless dust? But when the moral springs of the mind are poisoned, we lose the most excellent part of the constitution of our nature, and the Divine image is no longer perceptible in us; nor are the two evils of similar duration. By a decree of Providence, for which we can not be too thankful, we are made mortal. Hence, the torments of the oppressor are but temporary; whereas the immortal part of us, when once corrupted, may carry its pollutions with it into another world.

"But, independently of the quantity of physical suffering, and the innumerable avenues to vice, in more than a quarter of the globe, which this great measure will cut off, there are yet blessings, which we have reason to consider as likely to flow from it. Among these we can not overlook the great probability that Africa, now freed from the vicious and barbarous effects of this traffic, may be in a better state to comprehend and receive the sublime truths of the Christian religion. Nor can we overlook the probability that, a new system of treatment necessarily springing up in our islands, the same bright sun of consolation may visit her children there. But here a new hope rises to our view. Who knows but that emancipation, like a beautiful plant, may, in its due season, rise out of the ashes of the abolition of the slave-trade, and that, when its own intrinsic value shall be known, the seed of it may be planted in other lands? And, looking at the subject in this point of view, we can not but be struck with the wonderful concurrence of events as previously necessary for this purpose;

namely, that two nations, England and America, the mother and the child, should, in the same month of the same year, have abolished this impious traffic; nations, which at this moment have more than a million of subjects within their jurisdiction to partake of the blessing; and one of which, on account of her local situation and increasing power, is likely in time to give, if not law, at least a tone to the manners and customs of the great continent on which she is situated.

"Reader, thou art now acquainted with the history of this contest. Rejoice in the manner of its termination! And, if thou feelest grateful for the event, retire within thy closet, and pour out thy thanksgivings to the Almighty for this his unspeakable act of mercy to thy oppressed fellow-creatures."\*

12. The abolition of the African slave-trade in the United States was almost simultaneous with its abolition by Britain. On this we need not enlarge, as the just reflections of Mr. Clarkson are applicable to the one as well as the other.

13. But though the foreign trade in the United States ceased, the internal or domestic trade continued, and still continues. This trade is as extensive as slavery. Multitudes of slaves change hands continually in the vicinities where they are owned. The slave-growing states transfer their surplus sale to the more southern states. Slave-gangs, in some form or other, are continually on their way to distant parts of the country. Parents and children, husbands and wives, are continually separated by the operations of slave laws, whether the owners will or not. The moral evils in the African trade are, in their essential characters, the same with the domestic trade at home. Slave merchants, by wholesale and retail, are continually employed in their *lawful business* of advertising in the public papers, purchasing at sheriffs' sales, ranging the country to select likely negroes, and all the other appliances of the slave-trade. The African trade has, it is true, more cruel means of carrying on the traffic; but as we carry it on at home by law, aided by the strong arm of the civil power, there are some of the evil deeds that are done in a less cruel manner in the home than in the African trade. But in all moral characteristics, our home trade, sanctioned and enforced by compulsion, when necessary, is identical with the African trade.

14. Now, as we have slavery, we have, and must have, the domestic slave-trade. Slavery is the parent of the slave-trade; and as we have the one, we must have the other. Destroy slavery, and the trade dies. Sustain slavery, and you sustain the slave-trade at home, identical in morals with the African commerce.

\* Clarkson's History, pp. 612-615.

## CHAPTER IV.

## WEST INDIA EMANCIPATION.

1. THE abolition of slavery in the West Indies so connects with the antislavery agitation and discussion in this country, and the latter so mingles with ecclesiastical affairs among us, that a chapter on West India emancipation seems to be called for; and this is the more especially so, as the Churches of Britain took a special interest in the matter, making it a moral and even a religious question, which called for their interference, so far as it was moral, and which also led them to the use of lawful, civil measures to promote a moral and religious benefit.

Hence, the antislavery men, or abolitionists, of Great Britain did not rest from their labors when the triumph of 1807 took place under Wilberforce, Clarkson, and others. There remained four most important objects to which the attentions of antislavery men were directed.

(1.) It was necessary to keep a watchful eye over the execution of the law, as it had been forced upon the planters, the traders, and Parliament by the voice of the people.

(2.) To extend the abolition of the slave-trade to other nations.

(3.) To civilize and Christianize Africa, as some compensation for the wrongs inflicted on her through slavery and the slave-trade.

(4.) To hasten the emancipation of the Africans in the West Indies, who had, by fraud and violence, been torn from their country, as well as the yet enslaved descendants of those who formerly had been forced from Africa.

In order to promote these four great objects, a society was formed, in May, 1807, called the "African Institution;" and though its labors were first directed to the affairs of Africa, by degrees, its care was chiefly bestowed on West India matters, which were more within the power of England than the slave traffic, still carried on by other nations.\*

Mr. James Stephen principally, and some others also, believed the act of March, 1807, would be a dead letter, as the enormous profits would induce many to continue in the slave-trade. This was accordingly realized. In 1810 Mr. Brougham gave notice of bringing in a bill into the house of commons, declaring the traffic to be felony, punishable by transportation. This act was passed in 1811. But though this stopped the trade by Britains, yet other countries carried it on with increased activity. All the efforts of England to abolish the slave-trade proved ineffectual. Owing to the efforts to capture slave-ships, the horrors of the slave-trade increased. Thrice the number of slaves were torn annually from Africa, because two-thirds of those taken were murdered on the high seas, or in the holds of vessels, in avoiding the vigilance of the cruisers appointed to seize the slave-ships.

2. Movements in the year 1823.

The African Institution turned their attention to the West Indies. They very soon learned that little or nothing could be expected

from the planters, either by way of amelioration or preparation for freedom. Therefore the abolitionists were ready to unite in efforts to obtain negro emancipation.

Hence a society was formed, which held its first meeting on the 31st of January, 1823, the objects of which are clearly expressed in the following resolutions, which were unanimously adopted at its first meeting; namely:

"That the individuals comprising the present meeting are deeply impressed with the magnitude and number of the evils attached to the system of slavery, which prevails in many of the colonies of Great Britain; a system which appears to be opposed to the spirit and precepts of Christianity, as well as repugnant to every dictate of natural humanity and justice.

"That they have indulged a hope that the great measure of the abolition of the slave-trade, for which an act of the Legislature was passed in 1807, after a struggle of twenty years, would have tended rapidly to the mitigation and gradual extinction of negro bondage in the British colonies; but that in this hope they have been painfully disappointed; and, after a lapse of sixteen years, they have still to deplore the almost undiminished prevalence of the very evils which it was one great object of the abolition to remedy.

"That under these circumstances they feel themselves called upon, by the most binding consideration of their duty as Christians, by their best sympathies as men, and by their solicitude, to maintain unimpaired the high reputation and the solid prosperity of their country; to exert themselves, in their separate and collective capacity, in furthering this most important object, and in endeavoring, by all prudent and lawful means, to mitigate, and eventually to abolish, the slavery existing in our colonial possessions.

"That an association be now formed, to be called 'The Society for mitigating and gradually abolishing the state of slavery throughout the British dominions;' and that a subscription be entered into for that purpose."

The patron and protector of the Society was "His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester." Among the twenty-six vice-presidents of the Society, we find several of the peers of England, as well as the names of Brougham, Buxton, Clarkson, Lushington, Stephen, and Wilberforce. Among the forty members of the Executive Committee of the Society, we find the names of Bunting, Gurney, Z. Macaulay, T. B. Macaulay, B. W. Noel, Sturge, Wilberforce. With their President, these twenty-six Vice-Presidents, and forty members of the Committee, the Society was composed of a list of the most intelligent, philanthropic, Christian, and influential men in England.

The Executive Committee proceeded immediately to diffuse, as widely as possible, information respecting the nature and effects of colonial bondage. Mr. Wilberforce's "Appeal in behalf of the negro slaves in the West In-

\* Clarkon's History, pp. 1-3.

dies," and Clarkson's "Thoughts on the necessity of improving their condition with a view to emancipation," were circulated to a large extent. Mr. Clarkson was again in the field. He renewed his committees of correspondence all over the country, aided by the Society of Friends, his first and steady coadjutors. He also traveled through England, Scotland, and Wales, encouraging and interesting the friends of humanity wherever he went, and forming local societies and committees for furthering the common object. Clarkson's Thoughts were admirably adapted to enlighten the public mind. The title of it is explanatory of its character. It is entitled, "Thoughts on the Necessity of Improving the Condition of the Slaves in the British Colonies, with a view to their ultimate Emancipation, and the practicability, the safety, and the advantages of the latter measure." The contents of this noble treatise of fifty-seven close pages octavo, are, Views of the Abolitionists respecting Slavery; West India Laws; Liability of Slaves to ill-treatment; Necessity of better Laws; Necessity of Parliamentary Interference; Rights of Slaves to Freedom; Slavery opposed to Justice, Reason, and Christianity; Not sanctioned by Grants, Charters, or English Law; Emancipation Practicable and Safe; Seven Safe Examples of Emancipation; Profitable to Planters. Wilberforce's Appeal, comprising seventy-four pages octavo, was a very able production, and adapted to its object. Hodgson on Free and Slave Labor, Cropper on West India Sugar, Negro Slavery, Watson's Defense of the West India Methodist Missions, and a multitude of other publications, were scattered broadcast over the country. The effect of these publications was more extensive than could be expected; for, though the session of Parliament was already considerably advanced before the public attention was engaged, no fewer than about two hundred and thirty petitions were spontaneously addressed to Parliament, from all parts of the country, praying for the mitigation and gradual extinction of slavery; and the multiplication of petitions was only prevented by the Parliamentary discussion of the question, which took place on the 15th of May, 1823.

The Society, or, rather, their Executive Committee, issued a Prospectus of their Views and purposed Future Proceedings, in March, 1823, and circulated it extensively. The Prospectus affirms that slavery inflicts on its subjects almost every injury which law, even in its rudest state, was intended to prevent; that the slave can not possess moral obligation to any great extent; that slavery is not merely the effect, but the cause of the slave-trade; that the object of the Society was not to exhibit special acts of cruelty, but the injustice and wrongs of the entire system; and though Christian nations were led to sustain and protect slavery, it was no plea for slavery any more than the slave-trade, which was pronounced first to be felony and then piracy; and that the Society places itself on the immovable ground of Christian principle, while they invoke the interference of Parliament and the country at large.

The Committee of the Society, understanding that a general desire for information prevailed in the country, published, in April, 1823, "A brief view of the nature and effects of negro slavery as it exists in the colonies of Great Britain." This brief view states that

there are 800,000 human beings in the West Indies, the victims of the slave-trade, or descended from its victims, are still detained in a state of brutal oppression. They are driven to their labor by the lash; are exposed to severe and arbitrary punishments; are bought and sold as merchandise; are denied the blessings of marriage and the Christian Sabbath; are degraded and deprived of civil and religious privileges. They affirmed that the system was contrary to the will of God, and therefore could not prove a permanent advantage either to nations or individuals; in short, that it was repugnant to the principles of justice and humanity, and to the whole Christian spirit.

On the 15th of May, 1823, Mr. Buxton brought the following bill before Parliament:

"That the state of slavery is repugnant to the principles of the British Constitution and of the Christian religion, and that it ought to be gradually abolished throughout the British dominions with as much expedition as may be consistent with a due regard to the well-being of the parties concerned."

Had this motion been agreed to, it was the purpose of Mr. Buxton to ask leave to bring in a bill, or bills, to embrace the following specific objects; namely:

(1.) The removal of obstructions to manumission.

(2.) The cessation of the chattel principle in the eye of the law.

(3.) The attachment of the slave to the soil.

(4.) The abolition of markets and labor on the Sabbath.

(5.) The protection of property of the slaves.

(6.) That the slave might purchase his freedom.

(7.) That his testimony should be admitted as far as it was worthy of credit.

(8.) To relieve persons of color from proving they were not slaves.

(9.) To provide the means of religious instruction for them and their children.

(10.) To institute marriage among them.

(11.) To disuse the whip.

(12.) And arbitrary punishment.

(13.) That the children born after a certain age should be free.

(14.) And that no governor, judge, or attorney-general should be a slave-owner.

After an animated debate in Parliament, in which Buxton, Canning, Wilberforce, Ellis, W. Smith, Rose, Bright, Sykes, Marryat, Brougham, Bernal, Baring, and Lord Althorp took part, the following was finally adopted, as presented by Mr. Canning:

(1.) That it is expedient to adopt effectual and decisive measures for meliorating the condition of the slave population in his Majesty's colonies.

(2.) That, through a determined and persevering, but a judicious and temperate enforcement of such measures, this house looks forward to a progressive improvement in the character of the slave population, such as may prepare them for a participation in those civil rights and privileges which are enjoyed by other classes of his Majesty's subjects.

(3.) That this house is anxious for the accomplishment of this purpose at the earliest period that may be compatible with the well-being of the slaves, the safety of the colonies, and with a fair and equitable consideration of the interests of all parties concerned therein.

(4.) That these resolutions be laid before his Majesty.\*

As Mr. Canning's propositions embraced substantially the general object of the original motion, there could be no hesitation in its supporters acceding to their substitution. The acquiescence, too, of the West Indian body to Mr. Canning's resolutions made it still more desirable to accede to them. Still, though much was gained by the passage of the bill, much was yet to be done. The Executive Committee of the Antislavery Society, therefore, proceeded to form their associations in every part of the kingdom, in order to secure cooperation, diffuse information, procure funds, and to call forth the distinct expression of public opinion on the subject, and, above all, they expected and prayed for the blessing of God on their endeavors.†

The Government always leaned toward the planters, and vague excuses were constantly given for preferring, to the effectual measures propounded by the friends of freedom, the flimsy excuses made by the slave power, in order to evade by gaining time; yet the debate was serviceable to this cause. The great speeches delivered were spread before the country by the antislavery men; the nakedness of slavery was exposed; both its corruptions and cruelty were laid bare; the determination of the colonies to protect its worse abuses was demonstrated; the necessity of the strong interference of the mother country was declared; and even the loss of the motion showed the people of England how much their own exertions were required, as upon them alone the fate of slavery hung.

### 3. Doings of 1824.

Though the Government and Parliament clearly recognized the principles of reform, yet, as the proposed plans of reform were not made the subject of Parliamentary enactment, but referred to the deliberation and decision of the colonial authorities, nothing was done. The instructions of Government to the colonial authorities, as contained in Lord Bathurst's circular letters of 28th of May and 9th of July, 1823;‡ were framed in an unexceptionable spirit of moderation, and directed to the highest objects; and, had they been carried into effect, would have produced the most beneficial effects on the condition of the slave.

The following appear to have been the propositions of Lord Bathurst:

(1.) The establishment of a protector and guardian of slaves.

(2.) The admission of the evidence of slaves in courts of justice.

(3.) The giving to slaves a power, under certain regulations, of purchasing their freedom.

(4.) The legal institution of marriage among the slaves.

(5.) The suppression of Sunday markets and Sunday labor.

(6.) The conferring on slaves the legal right of acquiring, preserving, and transmitting property.

(7.) The prohibition of the separation of families by legal process.

(8.) The abolition of the driving-whip; the regulation and record of punishments; and the abolition of female flogging.

The instructions of Government, however, were met, in some cases, by refusal, and in others by menaces of resistance. In a few of the smaller colonies they were treated with less outward disrespect. But no laws were enacted in any of the colonies to carry out the measures of the Government or the Parliament. The proprietors of slaves filling offices in the colonies were not sparing of their objections, nor the white population in general of their clamors and alarms. The insurrection in Demarara was clearly thus: The evidence on the trial of the missionary, Mr. Smith, and of the slaves implicated in the insurrection, shows that the proximate cause of that unhappy event was the delay of the colonial authorities in giving publicity and effect to the measures of grace recommended by Government. The slaves learned that they were deprived of the benefits of the regulations of Government for their benefit and comfort, through the opposition of their masters. To suppose the measures of Government would lead to insurrection is absurd. Was there any thing in the gift of Sunday as a day of rest; or in the mitigation of punishment; or in the removal of the restraints of inamission; or in the admission of their evidence at courts, which would tend to promote discontent or insurrection? The slaveholders, however, were not backward to throw all blame on the abolitionists and the home Government. No political maneuver is more easy than pretenses of plots and insurrections in the mouths of oppressors. During every period of the slave-trade controversy they were resorted to as convenient means of defense against the proposed abolition of that traffic; and now, when amelioration and gradual emancipation were proposed, the same outcry was heard of assassinations, revolts, etc.

The Antislavery Society, through their gifted Committee, published a very able Report this year, in 112 pages octavo, which embodied a large amount of important matter. It is entitled, "Report of the Committee of the Society for the Mitigation and Gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions, read at the general meeting of the Society, held on the 25th day of June, 1824, together with an account of the proceedings which took place at that meeting. London, 1824."

### 4. Events of 1825.

The proceedings in Trinidad may be given as a specimen of the general spirit of the other West India Islands, and, indeed, of slaveholders generally throughout the world, with some honorable exceptions. A committee of planters in Trinidad published their sentiments in the Trinidad Gazette, of August, 1824. This was published with approbation in the Jamaica Gazette. They declare they have read with grief and dismay the order of his Majesty's council, intended for the improvement of the condition of the slaves in the colonies; that the execution of its provisions would prove ruinous to the property of the master, injurious and demoralizing to the slave, peculiarly hazardous to the lives of the free colored inhabitants, and involve every class in the colony in ruin. They declared that the use of the whip is believed to be identified with the existence of slavery, by which the whole of the laboring population are deprived of their natural rights, and nothing but the force of habit and the British idea of the superiority and fixed power of their masters is able to keep them in awe and

\*Substance of a debate in the house of commons, on May 15, 1823. London, 1823. †Id., pp. 29-39.

‡Antislavery Reporter, Vol. I, p. 297.

subjection. They then affirm that severity to the slaves must be increased in the place of being diminished.

The Antislavery Society held their second general meeting, April 30, 1825, at Freemason's Hall, London. In their report they state, referring to the movements of the colonists, a specimen of which is given above, that all hope of relieving their bondmen from oppression is fled, except by the direct interference of the supreme Legislature, and they express the hope that Parliament will act decisively and authoritatively. The report, too, laments that the higher duty on sugar grown by free labor than on sugar grown by slaves, forces the latter into consumption in England to the exclusion of the former. The West India monopoly, arising from the sugar bounty alone, may be estimated at about £1,200,000 annually.

The Committee of the "London Society for the Mitigation and gradual Abolition of Slavery throughout the British Dominions" felt the need of a regular medium of communication concerning the progress of their work, and the removal of misconceptions concerning their designs and measures. Hence, they commenced the publication of the "ANTISLAVERY MONTHLY REPORTER," in London, June 30, 1825. This was filled with such matter as was best calculated to further their object. The editor was Zachary Macaulay, Esq., father of the historian. This seems to be in pursuance of a resolution passed by the Society on April 30, 1825, which urged the friends of freedom "to employ their strenuous efforts in forming antislavery associations, for the purpose of diffusing information respecting the state of slavery, of exciting and keeping alive a feeling of strong interest in the unhappy lot of our colonial bondsmen, and of producing a suitable impression among all classes, and especially among the young, of the paramount obligations attaching to us as men, as Britons, and as Christians, to leave no means unattempted for alleviating their condition, and for raising them from their present state of mental darkness and brutish subjection to light, liberty, and the hope of the Gospel."\*

From the events transpired since 1823 nothing is more true than the following declaration of T. B. Macaulay, uttered at the antislavery meeting held June 25, 1824, in which he compares the despotism of the slave colonies with the freedom of Britain:

"Out of the mouth of our adversaries themselves we can fully show that West India slavery is an evil—a great and fearful evil—an evil without any affinity to good principles or any tendency to good effects—an evil so poisonous that it imparts to almost every antidote a nature so deadly as its own. When this country has been endangered either by oppressive power or by popular delusion, truth has still possessed one irresistible organ, justice one inviolable tribunal: that organ has been an English press—that tribunal an English jury. But in those wretched islands we see a press more hostile to truth than any Censor, and juries more insensible to justice than any Star Chamber."†

Since the publication of the second report of the Antislavery Society of April 30, 1825, a large mass of important information on the

subject of colonial slavery was laid before Parliament. A digest of the most material parts of this information was published by the Society, under the title of "The Slave Colonies of Great Britain; or, a Picture of Negro Slavery, drawn by the Colonists themselves." This pamphlet contains 122 pages octavo. From this digest, as well as from the other publications issued at that time, it will be clearly seen that every assertion made by the Antislavery Society is more than borne out by the official communications of the colonists themselves. The Parliamentary documents show the unchanged spirit of colonial legislation on the subject of slavery.

In consequence of these disclosures and the posture of resistance among the colonists, a general meeting of the Antislavery Society was held December 21, 1825, for the purpose of petitioning Parliament for the abolition of colonial slavery. The resolutions passed on this occasion are comprised in substance as follows:

That the meeting were well satisfied with the resolutions on the subject of slavery, on the motion of Mr. Canning, in 1823. They also express their high sense of the ability, promptitude, and zeal with which his Majesty's ministers have labored to carry these Parliamentary resolutions into effect; that the papers before Parliament prove the injustice and cruelty of slavery; that the colonists have treated the resolutions of Parliament with neglect or contempt; that the bounty on slave produce is unjust; that the resolutions of 1823 should be carried out, and that Parliament should be petitioned to this effect. Accordingly model petitions were issued for that purpose, and fethered to all parts of the country for circulation.

#### 5. Events of 1826.

The Governor of Jamaica—the Duke of Manchester—in his speech to the Legislative Assembly, in December, 1825, declared "that another year has been allowed to pass away without any effectual measure having been adopted for the improvement of the condition of the slaves."\* The same applies to the other legislative assemblies in the West Indies. Only five of the colonies have done any thing toward carrying out the designs of Parliament, while the other eight have done nothing.

During the year 1826 as many as eight motions were before Parliament, on matters connected with the contemplated reforms. It was partly their object, as it was their effort, to enlighten the ministers of the crown respecting the real nature of the colonial system and the colonial feeling. One of these was on the motion of Mr. Brougham on the trial and sentence of the missionary Smith; another was by Mr. Buxton on the expulsion of the missionary Shrewsbury, and the demolition of the Methodist chapel there.†

The subject of slavery this year received great attention in every part of the kingdom. Many public meetings were held for the purpose of sending in petitions, and the speeches delivered on these occasions presented to the public the evil character of slavery.‡

The number of antislavery petitions presented to the house of commons amounted to six hundred and seventy-four. Several more would have been presented on the last

\* Second Report of Antislavery Society, p. 8.

† Report of British Antislavery Society for 1824, p. 74.

\* See London Antislavery Reporter, Vol. I, pp. 80-164.

† Id., pp. 208, 209.

‡ Id., p. 86.

day of the session had an opportunity been offered. A like number was presented to the house of peers. Many of these petitions conveyed the sentiments, almost always unanimous, of large county and other meetings, at which the whole subject of colonial slavery was fully and freely discussed; and all of them were numerous subscribed by persons of every class. The petition from London contained 72,000 signatures; that from Manchester 41,000; that from Glasgow 38,000; that from Edinburgh 17,000; and from the county of Norfolk 38,000; and from other places in proportion.\*

The Antislavery Monthly Reporter kept the subject thoroughly before the public. Colonial opinions on reform, exemplified by miscellaneous extracts from their own recent newspapers, showed the temper of the slaveholders, and convinced the English public that nothing in the way either of real mitigation or gradual emancipation could be expected.†

The complaints of negroes, too, to the fiscals was another source of information on colonial slavery. Also the bounties and protecting duties, and the restrictions on trade, intended for the support of the slave system, was a theme of discussion. The statistics, too, of the slave colonies on the marriage of slaves, the separation of families, the value of slaves, their manumission, colonial pauperism, the general population, etc., contained much important information, as laid before the house of commons, in the shape of returns from the slave colonies, printed May 9, 1826, in 760 pages folio. This comprises a period of five years, or from January 1, 1821, to December 31, 1825. The outlines of these statistics were spread before the public in the Reporter, with comments.‡ Thus in the year 1826 the subject was discussed extensively in the British isles, and the true character of slavery more generally known.

6. The state of things in 1827.

After a lapse of nearly five years of effort and expectation, no substantial mitigation of the evils of slavery took place, nor had any material advance been made toward its extinction.¶ Indeed, there was no hope of a better state of things, while, in the first place, it was left to the colonial authorities to legislate for the bondmen, and while, in the second, bounties and protecting duties were furnished to indemnify the planter for the waste of negro life, and to uphold and even aggravate the worst evils of the colonial system. Thus Britain became, in the estimation of the antislavery men, a participator in all the guilt of slavery, and undertook heavy pecuniary burdens for its support, while the manufacturing and commercial prosperity of the nation was cramped and impeded. The abolitionists had no recourse to petitions this year; yet they supposed this must soon be resorted to again to further the cause of amelioration and emancipation. But they seem bent on accomplishing their purpose in the right spirit and by the proper means, as we learn from the following declaration,§ uttered by Mr. Z. Macaulay, editor of the Reporter, and mouth-piece of the Antislavery Society. He says: "But whatever course it may be thought right to take, it can not be too strongly impressed on all our minds that

the occasion is urgent and critical, and the object to be contended for most momentous. It involves the fate of multitudes of our fellow-subjects now living and of millions yet unborn; their rescue from the yoke of a cruel and abject bondage; the vindication of their inalienable claim to the protection of British law, and to their enjoyment of Christian light. It involves, moreover, in no slight degree, the comfort of our own laboring population, and the substantial interests of the empire; not its commercial and financial interests merely, but those higher interests which are inseparably linked with His favor by whom kings reign and nations exist and flourish. Let but the friends of humanity and justice be firm, vigilant, and united, and they may look forward, with the Divine blessing, to the most satisfactory results."

The West Indians, in the beginning of this year, commenced the publication of a monthly called "The West Indian Reporter," the design of which was to counteract the effect of the Antislavery Reporter, edited by Mr. Zachary Macaulay. It stoutly contended for the monopoly enjoyed by the slaveholders in grants and bounties for sugar. Thus an organized opposition to amelioration and emancipation was set on foot by the West India slaveholders and the very powerful body of British gentlemen and noblemen in England who owned estates in the West Indies; and all these supporters and interested apologists for slavery were countenanced or aided by the house of lords, and the Government, and a large portion of the commercial and even manufacturing interests of the country. On the other side were found the men of conscience, the religious, and God.

The following case will illustrate the opposition of slavery to true religion. On the 13th of March, 1827, Dr. Lushington brought into Parliament the following act of lawless violence, almost equaling the outrage committed in Barbadoes against Mr. Shrewsbury:

"On Christmas day last, the militia regiment had been called out, in the parish of St. Ann, to keep watch and ward over the slave population, and to protect the property and preserve the safety of their masters. The regiment assisted at divine service, which was performed at the parish church, and was addressed in a sermon by the Rev. Mr. Bridges, late chaplain to the Bishop of Jamaica. That discourse was replete with inflammatory language, directed against the Methodist missionaries in the island, and inciting to acts of outrage and bloodshed. The white company of the regiment was, in the course of the afternoon, left on guard in the vicinity of the house of Mr. Radcliffe, the Methodist missionary. Toward midnight an attack was made on the missionary meeting-house, and on the house of Mr. Radcliffe, the missionary, inhabited by himself, his wife, children, and servants. The attack was made with muskets and horse-pistols, and fourteen musket-balls were fired into the house, not hurriedly, but by word of command. The guard was all this time on duty in the close vicinity of Mr. Radcliffe's house, but no attempt at interference took place on their part; and it was owing not to the humanity of this white company, or to the Christian exhortation of the Rev. Mr. Bridges, but to the accident of the balls not having taken effect, that murder was not

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. I, p. 197. † *Id.*, pp. 213-224.  
‡ *Id.*, pp. 225-228. § *Id.*, Vol. I, pp. 297-313; Vol. II, p. 79.  
¶ *Id.*, Vol. II, p. 175

added to outrage and violence. Dr. Lushington's object in moving for information on the subject, was to induce the house, by instituting an inquiry, not only to visit the guilty with punishment, but to prevent all encroachment on the principles of toleration and religious freedom. To the Wesleyan missionaries this country was indebted for the small portion of instruction and religious knowledge at present to be found among the lower classes and the slave population of the West Indies. But for them, the whole of the black population of the West Indies would have continued in a state of idolatry and paganism. Government had most wisely determined to give a bishop and additional clergy to the island, but he should grieve if the Church Establishment there were to engage in the wicked attempt to exterminate all other sects. If such an attempt were made to oppress them, he would be the first to come forward to enable them to obtain that protection to which, by the laws of God and of the land, they were entitled. What an example of subordination, too, did these white militiamen set to their free black and colored brethren in arms, and to the slave population! But the matter did not stop here. On the Sunday following—two days only having elapsed from the commission of the outrage—the same clergyman alluded to the act of violence which had been perpetrated, and repeated the same sermon. It was right the house should know who this Rev. Mr. Bridges was. He was a gentleman who had first rendered himself notorious by a libel on the character of Mr. Wilberforce, whom he had thus designated: '*Mel in ore, Verba lactis, Fel in corde, Fraus in factis.*' For this mode of treating this venerated name, Mr. Bridges had been rewarded with a considerable sum of money by the House of Assembly; and the Bishop of Jamaica had further rewarded him by appointing him his chaplain, though at the time of the outrage the reverend gentleman no longer continued to hold this office. He hoped some way might be discovered to punish not only those who had fired the bullets, but the instigator to that act of violence. He was not surprised at the act, after the transaction which had occurred at Barbadoes, and the impunity with which it had been attended. True, he had a better opinion of Jamaica than of Barbadoes.\*

#### 7. Occurrences in 1828.

No adequate remedy up to this time was applied by the colonists to do away the evils of slavery, and indeed the prospects seem as distant as when the pledges were made by Parliament and the Government. In every instance the colonial Legislature had either absolutely refused or dexterously evaded the requisitions of Government. These colonial legislatures, like all other slavery legislatures, can readily pass laws for punishing the loss of life or limb of a slave, or for assigning him sufficient food; for on these depend the profit of slavery. But their laws afford little protection from the whip, or sanction to marriage, or the observance of the Sabbath; and though the colonists were forced to do something, it was so little that we need not pause to refer to it.†

Still the colonial legislatures enacted new laws or revised old ones. But these were disallowed by the Crown on account of their

religious intolerance toward the Methodist missionaries as well as some others.\* And the laws that seemed to have a show of justice could be and were easily nullified by having the execution of them in the hands of slaveholders. How true the sentiment of Canning, "There is something in the nature of absolute authority, in the relation between master and slave, which makes despotism in all cases, and under all circumstances, an incompetent and unsure executor even of its own provisions in favor of the objects of its power."‡

There were circumstances which rendered the session of Parliament this year a season of almost complete inaction as to the question of colonial reform. A motion introduced by Mr. Brougham was withdrawn, because his health became such that he could not endure the labor of sustaining it. Mr. Buxton's health, too, was too feeble to prosecute the motion.

But the true friends of freedom did not sleep. Antislavery meetings were held in most of the great towns for the purpose of diffusing information among the friends of the cause, and renewing petitions to the Legislature. The object of the meeting was also to induce Parliament to carry into effect its recorded purposes of justice and mercy toward the slaves, and to relieve the country no less from the guilt than the burdens incurred by the fiscal support and protection given to slavery. The petition of the Antislavery Society to the house of lords was presented by the Duke of Gloucester, and to the house of commons by Mr. Brougham. The other petitions were generally to the same import of this.

Ladies' antislavery associations became numerous. One was established in Dublin, at a large meeting, the Lord Mayor in the chair. We have before us the Constitution of one formed in Liverpool, the seventh article of which contains the following truly-divine and motherly purpose: "That this Society propose to continue its exertions TILL EVERY NEGRO MOTHER LIVING UNDER BRITISH GOVERNMENT shall press a free-born infant to her breast."‡ And why should not women attempt this, when they had before them the recent act of the Legislature of Jamaica, which refused to abolish female flogging, but enacted they should be flogged "on the shoulders" instead of the "hips"?||

But the friends of humanity, notwithstanding their disappointment from Parliamentary proceedings, selected and recommended three ways by which to accomplish their work:

(1.) By spreading information more extensively respecting the enormities of colonial slavery.

(2.) The impolicy in the vast bounties and protections furnished by the people of England in its support.

(3.) By substituting the produce of free for slave labor.

Visitors and collectors were to be appointed, well furnished with the antislavery publications to enable them to meet objections. These publications were issued in great numbers, and distributed over the country.

The slaveholders of the West Indies seem to have been particularly hostile to the Methodist missionaries. In Jamaica the Rev. Mr. Grimsdal was put into a dungeon for preaching the

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. I, pp. 326, 227.  
† Id., for 1828, Vol. II, pp. 161-572.

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. II, pp. 177, 261. † Id., p. 202.  
‡ Pamphlet XXVII, p. 514. || Reporter, Vol. II, p. 273.

Gospel, in consequence of which he soon after died. Mr. Whitehouse, on August 10th, while on his way to St. Aris, was arrested and put in prison. May 12th, Mr. Orten, who came over from Montego Bay to console his brother and fill his appointment, was also confined in jail. Mr. Watkins was treated in the same manner. The other Methodist missionaries applied to the Chief Justice, obtained redress, and procured dismissal of the magistrates who had unlawfully and violently incarcerated their brethren.\*

#### 8. Events of 1829.

Nothing very special took place this year, except that the Reporter continued its lucid and able expositions of slavery, and met the objections of opponents with great effect. The Westminster and Edinburgh Review took decided ground against slavery. The abolitionists were also busily engaged in holding meetings, in which slavery was discussed with great freedom. The various publications against slavery were distributed liberally, and the public mind became better informed on the topics at issue, so that the way was prepared for future efficient action.

#### 9. Proceedings of 1830.

At the end of seven years the friends of freedom saw there was no hope for real freedom in the ameliorations attempted, or in gradual emancipation, under the circumstances. They, therefore, proceeded to the attempt of immediate and thorough emancipation, as the only hope of success, under the blessing of God, from the earnest, concurrent, and persevering efforts of the British nation, to induce the Government and Parliament to carry into effect their solemn pledge, given in 1823, for the extinction of slavery throughout the British territories.†

Hence, on the 15th of May, 1830, a general meeting of the Antislavery Society and its friends was held in Freemason's Hall. It was one of the most numerous meetings ever assembled in that place on any occasion. It was supposed about 2,000 persons were present, and about 1,000 or 1,500 went away, not being able to obtain admission. Some of the most distinguished men of the nation were present.‡ The very able speeches delivered and the resolutions passed contained ample information both of the present state of the slavery question, and the means by which it was reserved to influence Parliament to abolish it.

The religious bodies of England were roused to action, or rather they were the leading movers in emancipation from the first. The Scotch Secession, with its three hundred congregations, had already declared their intentions to forward the measures of the Antislavery Society. The deputies of the three bodies of Protestant Dissenters in London, addressed Parliament in a strong protest against slavery. The zeal of the Quakers burned stronger and brighter. The numerous and influential body of Methodists manifested a stronger and deeper interest in the cause. Mr. Bunting and Mr. Watson were both members of the Antislavery Society, and of its Executive Committee. Among the Churches of Scotland, England, and Ireland, numbers united in the cause with alacrity.||

At the close of the general antislavery meet-

ing, the following resolutions were offered for adoption:

"That on the 15th of May, 1823, Parliament, by its unanimous resolutions, recognized the evils of slavery, and the duty of providing for its ultimate extinction; and that his Majesty's ministers then undertook to carry those resolutions into effect.

"That although during the seven years which have since elapsed, the colonial legislatures have persisted in refusing to comply with the resolutions of Parliament, and the recommendations of the Government, supported by the voice of the British nation, yet, hitherto, the measures proper for giving effect to them have not been adopted.

"That even in the colonies subject to the legislation of the Crown, the orders in council issued on the subject, including the late revised and consolidated order of the second of February last, fall far short of the official and Parliamentary pledges of 1823; and though containing several important and salutary provisions, yet afford no adequate means for the final extinction of slavery, or even for its effectual mitigation.

"That while those pledges have thus remained unfulfilled, the West India body in this country, setting at naught the wishes of the British people, have not scrupled to declare by their Standing Committee, that they make common cause with the local legislatures in the course they have pursued, and more particularly in rejecting all idea of compulsory manumission, thus plainly avowing that it is their purpose and intention that slavery shall be perpetual, and thus also confirming the colonial assemblies in their contumacy, and making any effective reform on their part still more hopeless than before.

"That under these circumstances of disappointment, and recognizing the incurable injustice, as well as the inhumanity and impolicy of slavery; its direct hostility to every cherished principle of the British Constitution, and its utter repugnance to the spirit and the precepts of the Christian religion, the meeting take this occasion to declare anew their unalterable determination to leave no proper and practicable means unattempted for effecting, at the earliest period, its entire abolition throughout the British dominions.

"That in addition to the physical evils of slavery, the moral and religious condition of the slave population in the British colonies has long claimed the commiseration of every benevolent mind, a claim which is greatly strengthened by recent occurrences, and particularly by the intolerant acts of the Legislature of Jamaica, and by the persecution which Christian missionaries and their negro converts have had to endure, and are still enduring, in that island; and this meeting desire to urge it upon Christians of every denomination, and especially upon all Christian ministers, to manifest the grateful sense they entertain of their own religious blessings, by uniting their efforts to vindicate to the unhappy negro his equal right to the unobstructed enjoyment of the light and liberty of the Gospel.

"That deeply deploring the continued prevalence of the unnumbered evils of the colonial system, and among them the affecting circumstance that, under the allegiance of a British monarch, and within the legislative jurisdiction of a British Parliament, thousands of children

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. I, pp. 370, 371,

† Id., Vol. III, p. 189. ‡ Id., p. 228-268. || Id., p. 260.



continue yearly to be born to no inheritance but that of a hopeless and interminable bondage—a bondage now admitted to have been imposed on their parents by the most flagitious means—this meeting feel it to be their imperative duty again to address their most urgent representations to both houses of Parliament, imploring them no longer to postpone the consideration of this momentous subject, but to proceed forthwith to devise the best and wisest means of insuring the early and universal extinction of slavery in all the possessions of the British Crown.

“That this meeting most earnestly invite all antislavery associations, and all who are friendly to the Society’s objects, in every part of the United Kingdom, to join in persevering and concurrent exertions to induce Parliament to take effectual measures for freeing their country from the foul reproach and the deep moral guilt attendant on our continued toleration and encouragement of slavery; and to this end they are entreated to employ such means of public discussion, or such other expedients as they may deem advisable, for diffusing, in their respective vicinages, a more complete knowledge of the nature and baneful effects of that criminal system, and for uniting every heart and hand in petitions to Parliament for its early and universal abolition.”\*

A petition formed on the resolutions adopted by the meeting was prepared by the Committee for both houses of Parliament. It represents slavery as an evil not to be palliated or amended, but eradicated; not as a practice capable of being made tolerable by regulation, but as a crime to be suppressed, an outrage on our professed principles as Christians to be renounced, and a foul stain on the national character to be wholly and forever effaced; and it prays Parliament to postpone no longer, but to use the most efficacious measures to abolish slavery.†

On the first of July Mr. Brougham offered the petition of the Antislavery Society to the house of commons. On the 13th of July he brought forward the discussion grounded on a motion pledging the house to proceed, at the earliest practicable period in the next session, to consider the subject. The house was divided, 27 for the motion, 56 against it; majority against it, 29. It was therefore lost.‡

On the 7th of July, 1830, the Committee of the Antislavery Society issued an “Address to the electors and people of the United Kingdom,” urging them to act in favor of freedom. The address asks them to select no proprietor of slaves or West India merchant; to form committees; have public meetings; use the press; and avoid all political distinctions, except the sole one of freedom. The address says: “You may rescue also yourselves and your posterity from severe calamities which we really believe are now impending over us, notwithstanding our apparent prosperity, not only from the natural effects of our pernicious system in the colonies, if longer persisted in, but from the just vengeance of a righteous and all-directing Providence.”§

The Wesleyan Methodist conference, at their session at Leeds, July 30, 1830, passed resolu-

tions of the utmost importance to the rights of humanity and the diffusion of religious light among the benighted and oppressed. The Wesleyans published, in June of this year, an appendix to their Report of the Wesleyan missions for the year 1829, in which they lament the necessity of making known to the public the flagrant and unprovoked hostility to the spread of the Gospel in the island of Jamaica.\*

Antislavery meetings were held in all the principal towns and cities in England, Ireland, and Scotland, at which slavery was discussed, and petitions presented for signature.†

Antislavery petitions were presented to Parliament in great numbers. From the commencement of the session to the Christmas recess, 3,214 petitions were presented. Many more were on the way before the discussion of the question, on March 1, 1831, in pursuance of the notice given by Mr. Buxton.‡

10. The year 1831.

On the 7th of February, 1831, the West India Committee, the organ of the slaveholders, presented to the commons, and printed March 28th, a paper of forty-six pages folio, entitled, “Slave Laws: West Indies,” proposing to give to Parliament and the public an authentic view of “the commercial, financial, and political condition of the West India colonies.” The paper abounded in gross fallacies and misrepresentations. This was promptly replied to in a pamphlet, dated April 10, 1831, entitled, “Exposure of an attempt recently made by certain West Indian Agents to mislead Parliament on the subject of colonial slavery.” The exposure did its work completely, so as to cripple the action of the West India Committee.¶

The Committee of the West India body, forty-one in number, issued a manifesto, dated April 29th, in which it was attempted to show that the abolitionists had misrepresented them.¶ Their pleas were fully met by Mr. Macaulay in the Reporter of June, and the utter fallacy of their statements set forth in the most glaring light.

While these proceedings were going on, a general meeting of the Antislavery Society was held, April 23, 1831. It was the largest meeting ever yet assembled in any house on the antislavery cause. It was attended by the most distinguished noblemen, gentlemen, and clergymen. The speeches were able, lucid, and to the point. Strong resolutions were passed, and an address to the people of Great Britain and Ireland was drawn up to be circulated generally.¶

In June, 1831, an Agency Committee was appointed by the Antislavery Society for the purpose of disseminating information on slavery by lectures.\*\* The circumstances in which it originated were these. Toward the end of 1830 unusual excitement on the slavery question pervaded the public mind. Hence some gentlemen acquainted with the subject delivered lectures. Others followed their example. The public mind had been biased by the prejudices of self-interest, or the lavish expenditures

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 349-361. Also Document, No. 16, or Sunderland’s Address.

† Antislavery Reporter, Vol. III, pp. 289, 405, 412, 496.

‡ Id., Vol. IV, pp. 25-75. ¶ Id., p. 160.

§ Id., pp. 288, 289, 316, 352, 361.

¶ Id., p. 249. Documents, Nos. 11, 12.

\*\* Report of Committee, London, 1832. Bagster, pp. 22 octavo.

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. III, pp. 240, 251, 253, 263.

† Document, No. 9. Anti-Reporter, Vol. III, p. 269.

‡ Antislavery Reporter, Vol. III, pp. 317-345.

§ Document, No. 10. Pamphlet XXIX, p. 187.

of colonial money. Almost all newspapers and magazines were against the abolitionists, or were neutral, without distinction of party. Seventy-five guineas had been given by the colonial party to a London paper for the insertion of a single article. Hence lecturers were appointed, and printed instructions given to them by the Committee. The first lecturers appointed were Rev. E. Dewdney, Rev. J. Thorp, Edward Baldwin, Esq., George Thompson, Captain Stuart. The western and southern parts of England were divided into seven districts, over which the lecturers traveled and expounded slavery. Brief reports from the lecturers were published in the annual report.\*

#### 11. Occurrences of 1832.

An order of council had resolved to exact from the colonies under the Crown several salutary regulations, such as to give the slaves the more effective protection of law; to put down the whip in the field; to forbid the flogging of women; to legalize and facilitate marriage; to prevent the separation of families; to secure to the slaves their property; to admit their testimony; to facilitate manumission; to insure adequate food and clothing; and to prevent the undue exaction of labor.†

A Committee of Inquiry in the house of lords was obtained by the importunity of the colonial interest, the chief object of which was to show that the recent order of Government is injurious in its tendency, although that order professes to do little more than to give to the slaves such privileges as are mentioned above.‡ The truth is, that such regulations as those mentioned above would utterly subvert slavery.

On the 12th of May, 1832, a general meeting of the Antislavery Society was held at Exeter Hall. The meeting was large, amounting to about 3,000, attended by noblemen and gentlemen of the highest distinction. The speeches were able and lucid, and gave terrible portraits of slavery—terrible because true.¶

Mr. Buxton's motion, in the house of commons, on the slavery question, came on for discussion on the 24th of May, 1832. It was in these terms:

"That a select committee be appointed to consider and report upon the measures which it may be expedient to adopt for effecting the extinction of slavery throughout the British domains, at the earliest period compatible with the safety of all classes in the colonies in conformity with the resolutions of this house on the 15th of May, 1823."

In the discussion of this subject an improved tone and temper were manifested by a majority of the house.§ The Committee, of which Mr. Buxton was chairman, commenced its sittings on the 6th of June, and closed them on the 11th of August.¶

The Committee, by agreement, limited their direct inquiries to two main points, embraced in the following propositions:

"(1.) That the slaves, if emancipated, would maintain themselves, would be industrious, and disposed to acquire property by labor.

"(2.) That the dangers by convulsion are greater from freedom withheld than from freedom granted to slaves."

On the affirmative side of the question, as to the expediency of an immediate or early extinction of slavery, the following twelve witnesses were examined: W. Taylor, Rev. J. Barry, Wesleyan missionary, Rev. P. Duncan, Wesleyan missionary, Rev. T. Cooper, Unitarian missionary, H. Loving, Rev. J. Thorp, of the Church of England, Rev. W. S. Austin, the same, Admiral Fleming, R. Sutherland, Rev. N. Paul, colored Baptist missionary from the United States, Rev. T. Morgan, Wesleyan, and Rev. H. Knobb, Baptist missionary.

On the negative side of the question twenty-one witnesses were examined.

The Minutes of evidence were contained in 655 closely-printed folio pages.\* The testimony proved incontrovertibly that the abolitionists were sustained in their views of slavery and the safety of emancipation. They, therefore, contended that nothing remains for a Christian Government and Parliament to do but to pronounce its immediate and utter destruction, accompanied by wise and just measures.†

The Committee of the house of lords commenced its sittings on the 13th of May, and closed them on the 9th of August, 1832. The Committee consisted of twenty-five peers, of which the Archbishop of Canterbury was chairman. The friends of the negro regarded the appointment of the Committee thus constituted, at least its practical efficiency, with some degree of apprehension and even dismay. The result, however, may be attributed to the overruling providence of God. The noble slaveholders were happily ignorant of the real nature of the system they were eager to maintain. They knew it only by the delusive pictures of its supporters, with the exception of one or two of the Committee, and they were utterly appalled at the disclosures of the real character of slavery.‡ The result of the examination of the Committee was a deep conviction of the inherent, incurable sinfulness of the system of slavery.

The state of things in the West Indies was truly alarming. The missionaries were persecuted, churches demolished, insurrections threatened, and even rebellion.¶ The blacks passed resolutions, and sent in addresses of fealty to the Government and their purpose to keep the peace.§ The Jamaica Legislature passed resolutions denouncing the missionaries, the Wesleyan missionaries especially, as instigators of insurrection.¶ The Baptists published their protest against the false accusation with firm decision.\*\* The Methodist missionaries, and official members, came out with a similar protest, denying every charge, and appealing to the home Government for protection in the enjoyment of their inalienable rights.†† Persecution raged, but the missionaries and their flocks maintained their allegiance both to God and the Government.‡‡

12. Proceedings in 1833, when emancipation was determined on.

The publications of the Antislavery Society filled the United Kingdom. The missionaries, persecuted from Jamaica, came to England, and gave their public testimony as they passed

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 313-318.

† Id., pp. 470-472.

‡ See abstract of the Report in Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 473-564.

¶ Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 81-112, 229-248.

§ Id., p. 229.

¶ Id., p. 233, 234.

\*\* Id., p. 236.

†† Id., p. 236.

‡‡ Id., pp. 81-112, 239, 274-283.

\* Report of Agency Committee. London, 1832.

† Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 34, 35, 135, 205, 208.

‡ Id., p. 135.

¶ Id., pp. 137-176.

§ Id., p. 176.

¶ For an analysis of this report see Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 313-472.

through the country, as well as in the previous year before the committees of Parliament. The lecturers went through the land with well-digested speeches got by rote, and made their impression wherever they went; if not wisely, they did it effectually. The pulpits pleaded from holy Scripture against slavery. The religious bodies spoke in their Church judicatories, and their periodicals, pamphlets, essays, fly-sheets, and sermons were sown broadcast every-where beyond count. The great body of the people in England decreed that slavery must die, and petitioned both houses of Parliament.

The crisis came. Earl Grey and Lord Brougham were at the head of the administration. The colonial secretaries, Lords Goderich and Howick were enlightened, upright, and firm. T. F. Buxton led on to the Parliamentary contest. The king was passive. The West Indians mustered all their strength. The house of lords, including the bishops as a body, were on their side. They succeeded to substitute in the colonial secretaryship Messrs. Stanley and Lefevre for Lords Goderich and Howick.

Mr. Buxton was prepared to urge the question of emancipation early in the session. Mr. Stanley, as minister of the Crown, took it out of his hands by pledging himself to introduce a measure "safe and satisfactory to all parties." The friends of liberty declined to adhere to Secretary Stanley's indefinite and unexplained terms. A deputation was deter-

ined on. Three hundred and thirty-one of the noblest minds selected from all parts of the nation hastened to London, and waited on the ministers, and earnestly urged the prayer of the people. A compromise was effected, without giving up principle, by the friends of freedom. The decision was that slavery, so called, should cease in all the British colonies on the 1st of August, 1834; that a species of apprenticeship should take place with non-prædial slaves for four years, or to 1838, and with prædial slaves for six years, or to August 1, 1840; that the children under six years of age, on August 1, 1834, might be apprenticed, at the discretion of their parents, to their former masters, till of age; and that £20,000,000 should be paid as an indemnity to the slaveholders from the national treasury.

In the winter of 1833 the Agency Sub-committee was dissolved, having completed its work.

A new Antislavery Society was formed, whose object was the abolition of slavery throughout the world.

We may here just remark that real reform is destructive of slavery. Every reform, doing away any one of its real evils, whether moral, social, or civil, is doing away one of the elementary parts of which slavery is composed. This is manifest from the reforming process instituted by the British Government. All of them proved to be destructive of slavery, and in carrying them out the system itself had to be destroyed.

## CHAPTER V.

### ABOLITION MOVEMENTS—MISSIONS.

1. IN the foregoing chapters we have taken a brief survey of the connection of Wesleyan Methodism with slavery, as well as the moral principles and disciplinary practice of the Methodist Episcopal Church respecting it. To these topics were added the historic and moral outlines of the suppression of the slave-trade by Britain and the United States, together with similar outlines of emancipation in the West Indies. It was furthermore observed that these topics stand connected with our narrative, which leads us constantly toward the moral and religious principles and practice of the Church in a country where slavery exists.

We will now consider the Methodist Episcopal Church and slavery, from the commencement of the recent abolition discussion in the United States to the year 1844. This will comprise three periods.

(1.) From the commencement of the abolition controversy in 1831 to the year 1836.

(2.) From the year 1836 to the year 1840.

And, (3.) from 1840 to 1844, inclusive.

There are occurrences to be found in all of these periods which are necessary to be surveyed in order to understand fully, or indeed tolerably, the events that took place from 1844 to 1848, the period properly assigned to our historic narrative.

2. Our readers who have perused the four previous chapters, are aware that from 1823 to 1833 the British public was very much occu-

pled with the topics and principles involved in West India emancipation. From the identity of the moral principles in Britain and the United States, and the close similarity of the slave systems of both countries, it was natural to expect that the subject which moved the British nation would also place the United States in a like condition. A common language, a common religion, and common laws, in the most material parts, naturally led to this result. And though some things in both countries are considerably unlike, there is enough of common interest in both to produce effects of a similar kind, as well as to call forth the same sort of measures. One great disparity, however, between the two countries must not be overlooked in this place. This is the very different sort of men that were engaged on both sides of the Atlantic in the attempt to promote emancipation. We can not find among the first recent abolitionists of the United States, except in few and unimportant instances, such men as Clarkson, Sharp, Wilberforce, Buxton, Brougham, Dr. Lushington, among the laity, and Bunting and Watson among the clergy. Garrison and most of his associates were not the men to make a deep and lasting impression on the public mind, though they were well adapted to inflame a certain portion of the community and lead to rash measures. The soundest orthodox Christianity and sound political principles governed

the British philanthropists, while much that was heterodox in religion and unsound in political economy swayed greatly those on this side the Atlantic. Still it must be admitted that the first class of abolitionists in the United States, such as John Jay, Franklin, Rush, Benezet, and others, might, in their sphere, claim close affinity with the Sharps, Clarksons, and Wilberforces of Great Britain; yet it is gratifying to learn that the soberest men among the abolition ranks in America could not act with the first leaders of abolition, who were mostly of the Garrisonian school; so that, on May 1, 1840, they formed a new society called the "American and Foreign Antislavery Society," whereas the name of the first that was organized, December 4, 1834, was called the "American Antislavery Society," and continues the same name to this day, retaining all of its original characteristics, perhaps somewhat deteriorated; while the Society organized on May 1, 1840, seems to be annually approaching in character to the British Society, or the societies which existed in the time of Franklin.

As we have had occasion to state in a previous chapter, in the year 1823 the condition of the slaves in the British colonies was brought before Parliament; strenuous efforts were made in every shape to resist emancipation; a society was then formed for the abolition of slavery; information was circulated through the country; auxiliary societies were established; public feeling was universally excited; petitions were poured into both houses of Parliament, and laid before the throne, from cities, towns, and villages. In 1833 an act was passed by the imperial Parliament for the abolition of slavery in the British colonies, to take place August 1, 1834, and a grant of twenty millions sterling to the slave-owners. The spirit of this mighty deed passed from Britain to America, which became the theater of a movement which agitated the whole country.

3. On the 1st of January, 1831, the first number of the *Liberator* was published in Boston by William Lloyd Garrison and Isaac Knapp. The *Liberator* was conducted with considerable ability, but with great fierceness of spirit and uncompromising denunciations of slavery. Garrison placed the publications of the British abolitionists under heavy contributions, with all their point and force, in reference to the moral characteristics of slavery, but without their good temper and sobriety, and withal deeply imbued with his own peculiarities. Portions of the community were aroused. It reached the south, so that on the 26th of December, 1832, Governor Lumpkin, of Georgia, approved the act of the Legislature, by which it was

"Resolved, That the sum of \$5,000 be appropriated to be paid to any person or persons who shall arrest, bring to trial, and prosecute to conviction, under the laws of this state, the editor or publisher of a certain paper called the *Liberator*, or any other person or persons who shall utter, publish, or circulate, within the limits of this state, the said paper called the *Liberator*, or any other paper, circular, pamphlet, letter, or address of a seditious character."

4. During the latter part of 1831 a few individuals in Boston determined to form an antislavery society. The first meeting was held December 16, 1831, and the second on January 1, 1832, when the Constitution was reported and

accepted. An adjourned meeting was held January 6th, at which the Constitution was adopted, preface by the following preamble:

"We, the undersigned, hold that every person, of full age and sane mind, has a right to immediate freedom from personal bondage of whatsoever kind, unless imposed by the sentence of the law for the commission of some crime. We hold that man can not, consistently with reason, religion, and the eternal and immutable principles of justice, be the property of man. We hold that whoever retains his fellow-man in bondage is guilty of a grievous wrong. We hold that mere difference of complexion is no reason why any man should be deprived of any of his natural rights or subjected to any political disability. While we advance these opinions as the principles on which we intend to act, we declare that we will not operate on the existing relations of society by other than peaceful and lawful means, and that we will give no countenance to violence or insurrection."

The society was called the "New England Antislavery Society," but its name was afterward changed into the "Massachusetts Antislavery Society." This was the first of the kind formed in the United States in recent times. But it was the forerunner of the 1,100 societies which existed in 1838, or six years after.

Mr. Garrison, in 1832, declares his own views and those of his party as follows, respecting what they demand for the slave:

"(1.) That, instead of being under the unlimited control of a few irresponsible masters, they shall really receive the protection of law.

"(2.) That the power which is now vested in every slaveholder to rob them of their just dues, to drive them to the field like beasts, to lacerate their bodies, to sell the husband from his wife, the wife from her husband, and children from their parents, shall instantly cease.

"(3.) That the slaves shall be employed as free laborers, fairly compensated, and fully protected in their earnings.

"(4.) That they shall be placed under a benevolent and disinterested supervision, which shall secure to them the right to obtain secular and religious knowledge, to worship God according to the dictates of their consciences, to accumulate wealth, and to seek an intellectual and moral equality with their white competitors."\*

Mr. Garrison has since greatly changed his views. He now discards the protection of law, and directs his efforts chiefly to the dissolution of the Union and the overthrow of the civil and religious organizations of the country.

In 1832 Mr. Garrison attacked the Colonization Society with great vehemence, in a large pamphlet of 160 pages octavo. The columns of the *Liberator* constantly poured forth a torrent of abuse against the Society. In his "Thoughts on Colonization," Mr. Garrison endeavors to show that the superstructure of the Society rests upon the following pillars; namely, Persecution, Falsehood, Cowardice, and Infidelity. He says the Society is "without heart, without brains, eyeless, unnatural, hypocritical, relentless, and unjust." He says it is "a conspiracy against human rights." He then divides his work into ten sections, in which he proclaims that the Society "is not hostile to slavery, apologizes for slavery and

\* See Antislavery Almanac for 1848.

slaveholders, recognizes slaves as property, increases the value of slaves, is the enemy of abolition, is nourished by fear and selfishness, aims at the utter expulsion of the blacks, is the disparager of the free blacks, prevents the instruction of the blacks, and deceives and misleads the nation." He dedicates his treatise to "his countrymen, in whose intelligence, magnanimity, and humanity he places the utmost reliance;" and in the next sentence he says, "They have long suffered themselves to be swayed by a prejudice as unmanly as it is wicked."

Thus the first movements in the abolition societies of this country were identified with the most uncompromising hostility to the Colonization Society. This threw most of the sober men of the country in the attitude of opposition to the antislavery cause, by the acts of the abolitionists themselves; and their valuable services were lost to what might have been a sober and well-directed effort after the manner of Sharp, Clarkson, and Wilberforce, of Franklin, John Jay, and Jefferson.

5. At the same time in which the abolition societies commenced their operations in New England, the insurrection and massacre at Southampton, Va., in 1831, directed public attention to the danger and consequences of servile insurrections. This was discussed in the Virginia Legislature; but no plan of emancipation was adopted. A large appropriation was made for the transportation of free negroes to Africa; but it was expressly provided that no slave to be thereafter emancipated should have the benefit of the appropriation. The published debates show that many Virginians believed that slavery was a moral and political evil, which ought to be removed. In opposition to these followers of Washington and Jefferson, the pro-slavery party prevailed. Mr. Thomas Dew, Professor in William and Mary College, became their champion, and published a "Review of the Debates in the Virginia Legislature in 1831 and 1832," and pointed to the folly of those Virginians who talk about emancipation, whereas the "Parliament of Great Britain, with all its philanthropic zeal, guided by the wisdom and eloquence of such statesmen as Chatham, Fox, Burke, Pitt, Canning, and Brougham, has never yet seriously agitated this question in regard to their West India possessions." Such is the sort of reasoning employed by Mr. Dew, whereas the subject of emancipation had been extensively discussed in Britain for several years previous to this time, and in less than two years after emancipation took place.

On the antislavery side several writers came forward to plead against the entire system of slavery. We have already mentioned Mr. Garrison. The Rev. Beriah Green, Professor of Sacred Literature of the Western Reserve College, preached four sermons, on November 18 and 25, and December 2 and 9, 1832, against slavery. Rev. Elizur Wright, also a Professor in the same College, in 1833, published a spirited essay on the "Sin of Slavery and its Remedy, containing some Reflections on the Moral Influence of African Colonization." Mr. Wright followed the wake of Garrison in denouncing colonization. Other writers came also forward, whose names we need not mention. The publication, too, of various essays, books, and tracts, chiefly reprints from the British press, followed. The publications gen-

erally were of the Garrisonian stamp, although there were some exceptions. But the result was to wake up a considerable antislavery sentiment in the minds of all who read them, although the exceptionable matter prevented the most influential and prudent antislavery men from uniting with the abolitionists, or even cooperating with them. And on the pro-slavery side, or what has been ranged on that side, the writings of several authors, as well as Mr. Day, furnished material for considerable comment for the abolition press.

Rev. Thos. S. Clay, of Georgia, in his "Detail of a plan for the moral improvement of Negroes on plantations, read before the Georgia Presbytery, and printed at the request of the Presbytery, 1833," writes largely on the treatment of slaves, in reference to their ultimate moral improvement; and what object could be more worthy than their *moral improvement*? He honestly divulges, without, perhaps, intending it, the moral character of slavery. He says, that in the south there exists a wrong scale of crime. Offenses against the master are more severely punished than violations against the law of God, or faults which affect the slave's personal character or good. Running away is more severely punished than adultery; and idleness, than Sabbath-breaking and swearing; and stealing from the master, than defrauding a fellow-slave. Hence, the negro forms false estimates of the comparative criminality of actions. And, further, the common mode of inflicting punishments tends to confound these distinctions. The whip is the general instrument of correction; and so long as a negro is whipped, without discrimination, for neglect of work, for stealing, lying, Sabbath-breaking, and swearing, he will, very naturally, class them all together, as belonging to the same grade of guilt. The negro is seldom taught to feel that he is punished for breaking God's law. He only knows his master as lawgiver and executioner; and the sole object of punishment held up to his view, is to make him a more obedient and profitable slave. He oftener hears that he shall be punished if he steals, than if he breaks the Sabbath, or swears; and thus he sees the very threatenings of God brought to bear upon his master's interests. It is very manifest to him, that his own good is very far from forming the primary reason for his chastisement; his master's interests are to be secured at all events. God's claims are secondary, or enforced merely for the purpose of advancing those of his owner. Thus far Mr. Clay.\*

The Synod of South Carolina and Georgia, in their report, made December 5, 1833, present a picture of heathenism and irreligion in the south truly appalling. They say, concerning the slaves, there are over two millions of human beings in the condition of heathens; and, in some respects, in a worse condition. From long-continued and close observation, we believe that their moral and religious condition is such, that they may justly be considered the heathen of this Christian country, and will bear a comparison with heathen in any part of the world. It is universally the fact, throughout the slaveholding states, that either custom or law prohibits them the acquisition of letters, and, consequently, they can have no access to the Scriptures; that there were not twelve men exclusively devoted to the religious instruction of slaves in the whole south; that colored preachers are totally incompetent. Few white ministers pay any attention to the slaves. The negroes have

\* See A. S. Quarterly, for 1836, pp. 117-130.

no churches of their own; and there is not room for them in the white churches. There are but five churches expressly built for slaves. They enjoy no privileges of the Gospel in their own houses, or on their plantations; they have no Bibles to read at their own firesides; they have no family altars. Such is the picture drawn by the Synod.

The Synod must have overlooked what others were doing among the slaves, when they drew up such a report; for, in the same year—1833—the number of colored members in the Methodist Episcopal Church alone, was 78,293, principally in the slave states, and most of them slaves. In the Georgia conference there were 7,946 colored members, and in the South Carolina conference, 22,326 colored members; in both conferences, 30,372. There were nine missions for slaves in the South Carolina conference alone, and a similar proportion in the other southern conferences. When southern writers and southern religious bodies make such statements as the foregoing—true as to the moral character of slavery, but erroneous as to the moral and religious character of thousands of slaves, and erroneous as it regards the Methodist Episcopal Church, at least—need we wonder that the men of the Garrisonian school pronounced the southern slaves as heathens, to a man; and, of course, their masters and the Churches worse than heathens? So Mr. Birney, in 1840, published, in England, his famous pamphlet, entitled, “The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery;” and in 1842 a third edition of it was republished in America, with additions by another hand. In the additions, the Congregationalists, Dutch Reformed, Quakers, and Baptists, are especially noticed, as they seemed to have escaped, to a considerable extent, from the scalping-knife of the original pamphlet. Foster, at a later day, published his “Brotherhood of Thieves; or, a true picture of the American Church and Clergy,” whom he denominates *pirates*.

The denunciations of the Colonization Society, and the movements of the abolitionists, seem to have awakened alarm in the breast of the editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal. In the paper of Oct. 11, 1833, with a caption of “North and South,” he expresses himself as follows: After referring to the political compact, he states, that he must “regard the intentions of the recent antislavery societies; and some of the means they use, as at variance with the vested interests and constitutional rights and obligations of the country. He fears their objects are to create great excitement and alarm, and then force the question under the action of Congress. He fears that the leaders, at least, of these recent antislavery societies, would interpret the Constitutions unwarrantably, or break them down, in order to reach the object. He fears the collisions between the different societies will bring mischief on the land. The excitement should be arrested, and made to cease. In order to this, as far as religious societies are concerned, let them be careful to do nothing to create distrust. As it regards the Church, she needs to be, indeed, as wise as a serpent and as harmless as a dove. Each member ought to regard the Constitutions of the country. The Church, as a body, should not be political in any sense, nor on any question. In regard to politics, each member of the Church is an individual citizen. His political movements must be as a citizen, and not as a member of the Church.”\*

6. The organization of abolition societies was

entered on with great spirit toward the close of the year 1833.

In the city of Pittsburg an antislavery society was formed October 4th, of this year. In the preamble of their Constitution they declare: “We believe that no man can hold another as *property*, without violating the plain principles of justice and humanity, as expressed by natural conscience and declared in the word of God;” “That the government of equitable law should be immediately substituted for that of despotic will, and that all men, without respect to any physical distinctions, should be admitted to the rights, privileges, and immunities of free citizens. According to the same equitable rule of qualifications, the two following articles of the Constitution will show further the object and the measures of the Pittsburg Anti-slavery Society.

“ART. II. The object of this Society shall be to procure the abolition of all those laws and customs which deprive any portion of our fellow-men, in these United States, of liberty under law, or of the enjoyment of any of those privileges as free citizens, for which, by the general laws of the states in which they live, they are qualified.

“ART. III. The Society shall endeavor to attain this object, not by exciting the slaves to vindicate their rights by physical force, but by appealing to the consciences and interests of the masters, by correcting public opinion in regard to the justice and safety of immediate emancipation and the whole subject of human rights, and especially by affording to the free people of color the fullest means of education in literature, science, religion, and the various arts of life, and by encouraging them, by industry and honorable attainments, to rise above those prejudices which would keep them forever a degraded caste in this free republic.”

This Society entered heartily on the project of providing a manual labor school for free colored persons; and the final result was the establishment, in Alleghany City, of a college for colored persons, the principal expense of which was defrayed by the Rev. Charles Avery, of the Methodist Protestant Church. This Society became auxiliary to the American Antislavery Society, on the formation of the latter, in December following.

A convention assembled in Philadelphia, December 4, 1833, for the purpose of forming an antislavery society. Sixty names are found attached to their declaration,\* from ten of the free states. While we place in our department of Documents the Declaration of Sentiments of the convention, we will quote the preamble, and the second and third articles of the Constitution of the American Antislavery Society.†

The following is the preamble:

“Whereas, the most high God ‘bath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the face of the earth,’ and hath commanded them to love their neighbors as themselves; and, whereas, our national existence is based upon this principle, as recognized in the Declaration of Independence, ‘That all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;’ and, whereas, after the lapse of nearly sixty years, since the faith and honor of the American people were pledged to this avowal, before almighty God and the world, nearly one-sixth part of the nation are held in bondage by their fellow-citi-

\* See C., October 11, 1833, Vol. VIII, p. 27, col. 1.

\* Document, No. 13.

† Id., No. 14.

zens; and, whereas, slavery is contrary to the principles of natural justice of our republican form of government, and of the Christian religion, and is destructive to the prosperity of the country, while it is endangering the peace, union, and liberties of the states; and, whereas, we believe it the duty and interest of the masters immediately to emancipate their slaves, and that no scheme of expatriation, either voluntary or by compulsion, can remove this great and increasing evil; and, whereas, we believe that it is practical, by appeals to the consciences, hearts, and interests of the people, to awaken a public sentiment throughout the nation, that will be opposed to the continuance of slavery in any part of the republic, and by affecting the speedy abolition of slavery prevent a general convulsion; and, whereas, we believe we owe it to the oppressed, to our fellow-citizens who hold slaves, to our whole country, to posterity, and to God, to do all that is lawfully in our power to bring about the extinction of slavery, we do hereby agree, with a prayerful reliance on the Divine aid, to form ourselves into a society."

The second and third articles of the Constitution of the American Antislavery Society are as follows:

"ART. II. The object of this Society is the entire abolition of slavery in the United States. While it admits that each state in which slavery exists has, by the Constitution of the United States, the exclusive right to legislate in regard to its abolition in said state, it shall aim to convince all our fellow-citizens, by arguments addressed to their understandings and consciences, that *slaveholding* is a heinous crime in the sight of God, and that the duty, safety, and best interests of all concerned, require its *immediate abandonment*, without expatriation. The Society will also endeavor, in a constitutional way, to influence Congress to put an end to the domestic slave-trade, and to abolish slavery in all those portions of our common country which come under its control, especially in the District of Columbia; and likewise, to prevent the extension of it to any state that may be hereafter admitted to the Union.

"ART. III. This Society shall aim to elevate the character and condition of the people of color, by encouraging their intellectual, moral, and religious improvement, and by removing public prejudice, that thus they may, according to their intellectual and moral worth, share an equality with the whites, of civil and religious privileges; but this Society will never, in any way, countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights by resorting to physical force."

From the preamble of the Constitution of the Antislavery Society, the two articles quoted above, and the declaration of sentiments, published in our collection of documents, our readers will readily see what were the principles and measures of the abolitionists when they organized in December, 1833. We have chosen to give their own published documents, so as to avoid the imputation of partiality. We will have occasion to refer to these documents in the progress of our narrative. The preceding closes the principal events of 1833. But these prepared the way for a considerable antislavery movement in 1834.

7. At this stage in our narrative, or in noticing the events pertinent to our subject up to 1833, it is proper to survey briefly the religious state of things among the slave population, and especially the missionary operations, before we enter on the events of 1834.

Ever since the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the condition of the colored people received special attention both from the ministry and the membership of the Church. As a body, the colored people were much neglected, and much hindered in religious matters, and received but little aid from the Churches generally. In the providence of God, a large number of them became truly religious through the instrumentality of the Church. We will give the statistics of the colored members, in decades, from 1790 to the year 1840, or 1845. The first distinction between colored and white members is found in the Minutes of 1787, when the colored members amounted to 1,890, and the whites to 18,791; the colored members being about one-eleventh part of the entire membership.

Year.	Whites.	Colored.	Colored, about $\frac{1}{5}$ of the whole.
1790	45,949	11,682	
1800	51,442	13,452	
1810	139,836	34,724	
1820	217,628	38,755	
1830	402,561	69,383	
1840	745,594	96,963	
1845	985,098	150,120	

From the foregoing table it will be seen that the colored people formed a considerable portion of the membership. It will also be seen that the progress was uniform, and preserved a fair proportionate progress between the white and colored membership.

Up to 1828, as far as we can learn, no special missionaries were appointed to colored people; but they were attended to by the preachers in their circuits and stations, as portions of their ordinary pastoral charges. In the year 1828, however, we find the usage commenced of having preachers appointed to labor among the colored people solely or principally.

8. A brief survey of the origin of missions among the colored people, will not be amiss in this place. On this we quote extracts of a letter from Rev. William Capers, dated Charleston, S. C., September 7, 1829:

"MISSION TO THE BLACKS ON SANTEE.—An inveterate prejudice against having religious instruction imparted to the slaves by Methodist preachers, it is well known, had excluded our ministry, almost without exception, from the thousands who are employed on the rice plantations, sea island cotton plantations, and, indeed, generally along the seaboard of this state; so that long as we have labored in the Gospel ministry in this country, we are now but just beginning to carry to the most numerous and most needy portions of our colored population the blessings of the Gospel of Christ. Indeed, our present endeavors amount to little more than an experiment, as we trust God shall open the way fully and completely at no distant time, to the general dissemination of truth and righteousness among the negroes of the larger estates of the low country, who, hitherto, have been most emphatically 'sitting in the region and shadow of death.'

"Presently after our last conference, brother Massey, who had been appointed to this work, began his labors under favorable circumstances. Apprised of the principal points of jealousy or distrust on the part of the owners, we proposed to make each plantation a distinct preaching-place, confining our congregations to the negroes resident on the spot. The day was to be improved in the service of the children and invalids, and the evening for preaching and teaching among the laborers. Nine rice plantations on the Santee were at once put under our instructions. We have reason to believe that, thus

far, we have been of service to the blacks at each one of these places, particularly those of the Messrs. Pinckney, and that the favorable opinion of the proprietors, both as to the unoffensiveness and usefulness of our labors, has not been diminished. The whole time of the missionary has been devoted to the work, with much patience, meekness, and self-denial."

"MISSION TO THE BLACKS SOUTH OF ASHLEY RIVER.—The way to this mission was partially opened by the labors of the preachers of the Orangeburg circuit last year. Mr. Bearing, a wealthy gentleman, owning a large number of negroes on Combahee, invited them to preach to his negroes on his plantation, and fitted up a convenient house for such a service. About the close of the year I was invited by Col. Lewis Morris, of Wiltanen, on the Edisto river, another wealthy planter, of generous and kind feelings, to attend at his place for the purpose of baptizing some of his negroes, who had previously found means to attach themselves to our Church. These are, as yet, the principal places in this mission where our plan of catechising and preaching to the blacks, as our primary and chief object, is pursued. There are numerous appointments and much work of a promiscuous character on the hands of the missionary. As yet we find only a very narrow opening for our labors in the direction which we chiefly desire to pursue. At Colonel Morris's particularly, our labors are manifestly useful. We have gathered there a flock who, we believe, are truly known of Christ, and hear his voice and follow him."\*

9. In 1830 we find missions for slaves on the Santee river, Savannah river, Little river, and other places in South Carolina conference. "The missions to people of color," says Bishop Soule, "have been successful beyond our most sanguine expectations at their commencement; the good effects of which have been attested by masters whose servants are embraced in the several stations, and by a number of these gentlemen a very liberal encouragement and support have been given to these missions. Perhaps we have no work on our hands more important or more difficult than this."†

10. In 1831 the missions among the blacks gradually advanced. In the bounds of South Carolina conference there were three missions; namely, Santee, Pon Pon, and Savannah, solely among the slaves. Santee had one missionary and three hundred and ninety-one Church members. In Pon Pon there were four hundred and forty members. When the slaves attend divine worship their overseers often are present with their families, and the missionary reports that the greater part of these overseers and their families have been awakened and converted to God by the preaching intended for the slaves. Savannah mission had one missionary and two hundred and forty-six Church members. The Report of the South Carolina conference Missionary Board expresses strong confidence in the continued success and extensive usefulness of these missionary labors among the slaves of the south.

The Georgia conference had one missionary among the slaves on Little river, with one hundred members. In December Rev. A. Turner, the missionary, speaking of two of his appointments, in which he was prevented from laboring up to May, says: "About the time a

revival began at both places, insurrectional fear began to awake, and I fear little can be done to the end of the year. Nay, from the expressions of some, who, by the by, were never favorable to the project, and now have a chance of expressing the latent feelings of the heart, I am led to fear that we shall not have that entire liberty of worship that we have been blessed with heretofore. Indeed, some of our worldly-wise *Christians* advise an entire stop put to the work of missions in that department; but, for my part, I see no other way, even in a political point of view, to secure our well-being, but to do yet more and more to bring that part of our inhabitants into the knowledge of religion. A knowledge of this world will fully demonstrate this fact."\*

11. In 1832 there were four missions among the slaves in the Georgia conference, and about two hundred slaves were added to the Church. In South Carolina conference there were three or four missions. Pon Pon had six hundred and seventy Church members; Santee, three hundred and two; and Savannah River, two hundred and sixty-three. These missions had a most salutary effect on the slave population, and as such are viewed with a friendly eye, and were cordially patronized by the wealthy planters, on whose plantations the missions were established.†

Rev. Allen Turner, under date of Charleston, South Carolina, April 14, 1832, states, "That a new mission was opened, at the last session of the conference, for the slaves, in Bush and Scriven counties, where there are six regular appointments for the Sabbath, and upward of one hundred Church members. On the week-days the missionaries visit the slaves from one plantation to another, catechise the children and as many adults as they can get to attend, and in the evenings assemble the people for a course of familiar instruction. The missionaries are much encouraged in their work by the gentlemen on whose plantations they labor, and success seems to attend their efforts."‡

Rev. Jesse Sinclair, under date of July 20, 1832, writes as follows respecting the mission to the slaves near Macon, Georgia: "On my first round I found four societies of slaves, having in all about two hundred and twenty members. The mission has near twelve regular preaching-places, and four hundred and fifty-six members, ninety of whom have been received on probation this year. Some of the appointments I attend on the working days of the week. The owner—although not a professor of religion—and his slaves, come the distance of two or three miles to the place of worship, and are regular attendants at our quarterly meeting just passed. Many of the slaves that were present spoke in love-feast, calmly and rationally, on the goodness of God in their awakening and conversion, with glowing faces and streaming eyes, while their clean and decent attire, good behavior, humble tone of voice, all spoke volumes in favor of the influence the Gospel is exerting among them. Some of our white brethren were present—mostly owners of the slaves—and they too wept and rejoiced, while the spectators were forced to say, 'See how these Christians love!'"§

Rev. C. G. Hill, under date of June 29, 1832,

\* See C., December 25, 1829, Vol. IV, p. 14, col. 3.

† Id., July 9, 1830, Vol. IV, p. 176, col. 6.

‡ Id., p. 146, May 11, 1832. § Id., p. 142, May 4, 1832.

§ Id., Vol. VII, p. 2, col. 2.



writes concerning Santee mission: "In many places there is at this time a deep interest felt for religious instruction; and I have formed classes among the candidates for baptism, in which are regularly taught the doctrines of Christianity. During the present quarter I have received on trial eighty-six adults, and the accession of three large plantations as preaching-places. The number of children who receive catechetical instruction amount, in all, to one hundred and seventy-eight; and the eagerness with which they receive instruction bids fair for a future harvest. In fact, were there sufficient help, we might embrace in this mission a much larger scope of country. There are obstacles that exist, and must exist till the character of southern missions is properly known and estimated."\*

12. The year 1833 furnishes the most gratifying results from the missionary labors among the slaves. To show this we will make brief extracts from the correspondence of the missionaries.

Rev. George W. Moore, on April 10, 1833, writes concerning Beaufort mission, South Carolina conference: "The mission embraces two plantations and two general appointments on Beaufort Island, at which the negroes from several plantations attend. On Paris Island we embrace six plantations; on Cat Island one; on St. Helena one; on Dalton one; on Coursair one; on Big Island one; and one on the Main. Our visits to these are once in a fortnight. We attend also to the catechetical instruction of the children, and it is astonishing to see the improvement which some of them have made. I have gone to the place where I usually meet them to catechise and instruct them, and have found them singing hymns—one of them giving out the hymn committed to memory, while the rest sung. I have often felt, when going to meet them, to see them running after me, and surrounding me, to hear from my lips those instructions that make them wise unto salvation; and I have frequently thought they were more decorous than many of the children in our Sabbath schools. We have commenced our class meetings and the regular administration of the ordinances of the Church among the members, and hope, by a wholesome exercise of Discipline, we will be able to have regularly-organized Churches established. There are nearly three hundred members on this mission, the whole of whom were received last year, and our prospects are still encouraging. It is delightful to witness the great anxiety manifested by the planters for their religious instruction, not only in their willingness to have them instructed, but in their attendance in giving them instruction themselves. We have a powerful auxiliary in many of the young ladies of the Episcopal Church, and also of several gentlemen and ladies who are owners, who regularly attend to their instruction, some of whom spend an hour each day catechising the children. On last Sunday, after I had closed, one of the gentlemen arose and gave them a very spirited and warm exhortation. This gentleman lectures nearly every Sabbath for the negroes, though an owner of several himself. I not long since, while visiting one of the plantations, saw three young ladies, with groups of little negroes, in different parts of the plantation, instructing them; and, indeed, when wit-

nessing the praiseworthy efforts that are now using for the salvation of this people, I can not but believe that Heaven will smile upon and bless them. I hope all our brethren engaged in this work may write often, and let the world know that the people of the south are not slumbering over their duties to the people, but are alive in reference to the salvation of the negroes."\*

Bishop Andrew, under date of January 29, 1833, says: "I would only say, in reference to the great work before us, we greatly need more men and more money."†

Rev. W. D. Matthews, in a letter dated March 29, 1833, says: "My work is situated directly on the great Ogeechee, embracing plantations on each side of the river. No missionary having been here before me, it can not be expected that I should have done much; but the prospect for usefulness among the colored people here is flattering. Indeed, the cordiality with which the planters receive the missionary, and the hearty manner in which they cooperate with him, would forbid us from expecting less—under the blessing of Heaven—than the accomplishment of good. The mission embraces four plantations, and there is a prospect of an immediate opening sufficient to employ two or more missionaries. I have under my care a society of twenty-three members in a good state."‡

Rev. J. W. Renshark, under date of May 8, 1833, reports that he has succeeded in establishing, on Ogeechee, Georgia conference, three schools among the colored population, consisting of seventy children, who are rapidly advancing in studies. He preaches to large and attentive congregations once in the week, and twice every Sabbath. The owners of the slaves being present on these occasions, gives much encouragement.||

Rev. S. J. Bryan, on May 4, 1833, writes, "That on the Savannah River mission, there is a general disposition among the blacks to attend to the word of life, and they are encouraged by the countenance of the planters. He had over one hundred children, which he met weekly for catechetical instruction. These he divided into eight classes, and placed over them some of the most pious and intelligent adults, who gave to him an account of their behavior and improvement. He was encouraged in preaching to the adults, both on Sabbath and week evenings. He had over a thousand with whom he thus labored. Fifty adults were members of classes."§

Rev. John Bunch, October 2, 1833, gives us the following information respecting North and South Santee. He esteems the missionary cause among the negroes among the best. He and his colleague, each one preaching four sermons on each Sabbath for three Sabbaths, have the fourth at home. The week-days are spent in catechising the negro children, by a regular form of catechism composed by Doctor Capers for the benefit of small children, and especially the negro children on the missions. The children's part consists of four lessons; and there are but few exceptions out of three hundred, or perhaps even four hundred, but that can repeat the answer to each question throughout the four lessons, as soon as the

\* See C., Vol. VII, p. 142, col. 3. † Id., p. 142, col. 3.  
‡ Id., p. 142, col. 3. § Id., p. 158, col. 3.  
|| Id., p. 158, col. 3.

question is asked. The work of catechising both the little negroes and the members on trial in our Church, by a regular form, is an excellent work. We have four hundred and sixty-two members on this mission, the greater part of whom exhibit marks of repentance, and some of faith unfeigned. What may not a few years more of faithful preaching and catechising bring forth, under the blessing of almighty God?\*

Rev. T. D. Turpin, October 6, 1833, describes the state of things on May and New River missions, South Carolina conference: "I have twenty-two places at which I preach and catechise. The number of adults to whom I have access in preaching, is about one thousand. I meet with a hearty reception by the proprietors of plantations, wherever I go, at present. The number of children to whom I tender catechetical instruction, is upward of three hundred. Myself and wife have been graciously preserved, amid numerous afflictions and deaths which have surrounded us. We are but little ones. Pray for us."†

Rev. Jas. Gwin, missionary among the blacks in Nashville and vicinity, writes, under date of October 24, 1833: "God has been with us this year. Five hundred and forty have been added to the Church in this city and vicinity. A missionary society, to support this mission, is about to be got up in this place, which I hope will do well. The members of it will be principally slaveholders."‡

From the Minutes of Conference for 1833, we find sixteen missions entirely devoted to the religious instruction of slaves; namely, nine in South Carolina conference, one in Tennessee, and six in Georgia; and the work of catechising the children seems to be an important part of the missionary's duty. What a divine work this is!

13. In 1834 we find the missions among the slaves in a state of encouraging progress.

Rev. G. W. Moore, from the Beaufort mission, writes, January 14, 1834, that the work of grace continued to advance. The mission numbered two hundred members, with upward of three hundred children, who receive oral instruction, embracing ten appointments, at which the negroes from over twenty plantations attend. There are twelve classes on the mission.¶

From Cape Fear mission, South Carolina conference, Rev. E. Le Gett gives us information, under date of January 16, 1834: "There are in this mission four regular preaching-places; three houses and one place in the woods. We have no schools, teachers, nor scholars; for in this state there is a law prohibiting the teaching of letters to the slaves, selling or giving them books of any description whatever. Therefore, we can only tender to them oral instruction. This is done by catechising the little negroes, etc. The mission numbers two hundred and forty-seven members, in regular standing, and fifty-seven still on probation. We have, at present, no revival; but I think the good work is gradually advancing. The appointments are so arranged that the blacks may attend public worship, at least, once every two weeks. Many of them seem to appreciate, to a good degree, their religious privileges, and manifest a deep concern for the salvation of their souls.¶

Respecting the mission to slaves in Gadsden county, Florida, Rev. Charles Brown states, May 2, 1834, "The mission meets the desired appro-

bation of every gentleman with whom I have conversed on the subject. Numbers of them seem anxious to have their servants instructed in the great things of religion, and speak of it with deep interest. They feel for those immortal beings that are committed to them, not with the austerity of a reckless despot, but with the charity of Christian masters. And though there may be some who are disposed to object to the plan of Christianizing the slaves, yet, when the object is explained to them, their prejudice is removed. I have seventeen appointments and one hundred and sixteen members, and a Sabbath school for catechising the children, and I expect to form another soon. There is a missionary society in the bounds of the mission, composed mostly of gentlemen on whose plantations I labor. They have pledged themselves to conference for the support of the missionary."\*

Rev. S. J. Brian and J. B. Barton, of the Savannah and Back River mission, Georgia conference, October 6, 1834, write: "That they visit the sick on the different plantations every week, and about four hundred children are orally instructed, many of whom are improving in their manners, morals, and intelligence. Since our last report, seventy adults have been received on probation, who continue to evidence their desire of salvation; twenty-four have been baptized, who have passed their probation, and thirty children. Fifty, during the last quarter, have been called to their reward; several of them died in the full assurance of faith. Some old Africans have thanked their master, mistress, and preacher, for their attention, and, just before dying, have raised their withered hands and thanked God that he allowed them to come over the big water to find a blessed Savior, and so strait a path to so good and heavenly home. Since the appearance of cholera on this mission, over fifty have died, and the disease continues to prevail; when and where it may stop, our heavenly Father only knows. The planters have generally moved their slaves from the rice fields, to the up or pine lands, where they remain in camps or tents; and the cases that occur in these camps are generally more mild, and if medical aid is timely afforded, the disease generally yields to medicine. We continue to visit the camps, hospitals, and barns, in which the sick and dying are placed; and frequently, when trying to talk and pray with them, are made to rejoice together in God our Savior. Yesterday, while preaching on the road under some oaks, between the camps, thirty or forty desired our prayers. Since the appearance of cholera, we have not received any into the Church; several have applied for admission, but we suppose it best to wait till their alarm is over. It appears really necessary that they should bring forth fruit meet for repentance, before we take their names as members on trial."†

We find in 1834 twenty missions among the slaves of the south; namely, ten in South Carolina conference, nine in Georgia, and one in Tennessee. Indeed, these missions seem, in the providence of God, to be calculated to do the greatest possible good to those who greatly need religious instruction. The reformation among the slaves produced honesty, obedience, truthfulness, temperance, and chastity, and the other moral duties, which rendered the slaves more happy, the masters more secure, as well as a greater amount of labor. In short, many of the leading burdens of the slave

\* See C., Vol. VIII, p. 30.

† Id., p. 34, col. 4.

‡ Id., p. 43, col. 2.

¶ Id., p. 94, col. 3.

§ Id., p. 94.

\* See C., Vol. VIII, p. 153, col. 3.

† Id., Vol. IX, p. 33, col. 2.

system were alleviated through Christianity; and yet, without any design or reference to emancipation, on the part of the missionaries, or the Church in whose services they were employed.

We deemed it necessary to present thus briefly a survey of the state of the missions among the slaves only, from their formal commencement in

1828, to 1834, inclusive, that our readers might see, that our southern brethren, whose lives and comforts were sacrificed to the salvation of the slaves, had just cause for jealousy, when they feared any foreign or distant influence that would completely shut up their way in promoting the salvation of the slaves.

## CHAPTER VI.

### ABOLITION MOVEMENTS OF 1834.

1. In the previous chapter we gave a brief account of the origin and progress of Methodist missions among the slaves. We have seen how delicate was the position of the missionaries, whose only work was to impart religious knowledge to the slaves, and instruct them in the great principles and duties of religion; and that by way of oral instruction alone, as their principal mode of teaching. But the missionaries were watched with eagle eye.

There were four methods, about this time, proposed to instruct the slaves. The plan of the Methodists, by preaching, oral instruction, and Sunday schools; the plan of the Presbyterians, similar to, or the same as, that of the Methodists, was to preach to the slaves, establish daily or weekly schools for negro children, and conduct the labor and discipline of the plantation on Gospel principles; the plan of the Gospel Messenger was household instruction; and Rev. Mr. Clay recommends preaching, Sabbath schools, and evening meetings, to be conducted by the slaveholders themselves.

The Hon. W. B. Seabrook, of South Carolina, in an address in 1834, took up the subject of religious instruction of the slaves; and while he does not "deny the importance of religious instruction," he would have it only in the *day-time*, and confine it to those "prominent portions of Scripture which show the duties of servants and *rights* of masters." He opposes all the foregoing plans, and pronounces them to be dangerous innovations. He states in his printed address, that "slavery is not inconsistent with the laws of nature or of God—that it was established and sanctioned by divine authority among even the elect of heaven." He further declares: "As slavery exists in South Carolina, the action of the citizen should rigidly conform to that state of things. Whoever believes slavery to be immoral and illegal, and under that belief frames a code of laws for the government of his people, is practically an enemy to the state. Such a person is utterly unfit to fulfill the obligations of his trust; and the most acceptable service he could render his fellow-citizens, would be to emigrate to the land of the Tappans and the Garrisons."\*

Such is a specimen of the sentiments that became current in the southern states in 1834, and afterward, of course, the missionaries were either compelled to confine themselves to the mere elements of Christianity, or give up entirely the religious instruction of the slaves. But, by oral instruction, and the aid of Capers's catechism, they persevered in their divine work, confining themselves to first principles, by the plain sermon,

catechetical instruction, exhortation, and reading the holy Scriptures to them, and teaching them to commit hymns to memory.

Dr. Durbin, in an editorial in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, under date of February 21, 1834, describes the process thus: "The southern conferences have no difficulty in having access to the plantations for the purpose of imparting religious instructions. The conferences send missionaries every year among the blacks, and would, no doubt, send many more, if they could command the men and the money necessary. These missionaries are many and successful. All that is necessary is, to be discreet, prudent, and respectful to the *laws* of the land, as Christians are bound to be, and the planters and citizens generally not only greet the missionaries with welcome, but facilitate their great work by assisting them, and sometimes by building places for worship, and requiring the attendance of the negroes. The missionaries preach to them, catechise and instruct them in classes, to the salvation of their souls, and the improvement of their morals and minds. We are aware it is a great and a delicate work; but, hitherto, our brethren in the south have been wise to manage it. It would be cruel and wicked to throw any obstacle in their way; we would not do it for the world; and many persons, and some papers in this part of the country, for want of understanding the matter, are not doing the cause of God service, by saying and publishing such things as, in the nature of the case, must tend to shut out the missionaries from the southern plantations. Discretion and respect toward the condition and institutions of the south are binding on all good and orderly Christians."\*

2. The American Antislavery Society held its first anniversary on the 6th of May, 1834. During the four months intervening between its formation and its anniversary, 25,000 copies of the *American Antislavery Reporter* were printed, and between two and three thousand of them were gratuitously distributed. Lectures on slavery were delivered in many places. At the anniversary, Mr. J. T. Thome, of Kentucky, gave a dark picture of slavery, indeed. Rev. S. S. Jocelyn, of New Haven, followed in the same strain, and pronounced heavy accusations against the Churches. He said, "The American Church holds the keys of the great prison of oppression, and refuses to unlock its doors. She does it at the *south*, by her general example; by her degrading discussion; by her religious press. The Methodist Church in its conferences, and the Presbyterian Church in its General Assembly, have sanctioned slavery—the

\* *Quarterly Antislavery Magazine*, Vol. I, pp. 122-130.

\* C., Vol. VIII, p. 103, col. 1.

Methodist Church, by altering her salutory Discipline; the Presbyterian Church, by blotting out, in 1818, her noble testimony against oppression." Dr. S. H. Cox, of New York, denounced the Colonization Society, and gradual abolition. Captain Stuart, from England, the representative of the British abolitionists, was at the meeting, and devoted himself to the cause of abolitionism in the United States, with true fiery zeal.\*

The Abolitionist, a new antislavery paper, was issued at Boston this year. The appeal and odes of Mrs. Child, the lectures of Mr. Phelps, Our Countrymen in Chains, by Whittier, Jay's Inquiry into Colonization and Slavery, were also published. After the sale of Mr. Jay's work, another edition of five thousand copies was issued. Mr. Birney, of Kentucky, by his lectures and letters, espoused the same cause. Thus the country was fully supplied with these productions.

In July the city of New York was in the hands of a mob, whose plea was the unwarrantable proceedings of the abolitionists. The city papers, for the most part, trace these proceedings to an antislavery meeting on the 4th of July, held in Chatham-street chapel, where the whites and blacks were seated in alternate rows through the house. For three days, the 10th, 11th, and 12th of July, the laws were violated with impunity, and the lives and property of the abolitionists were in jeopardy. Many of them were compelled to leave. The house of Lewis Tappan was attacked, and his furniture destroyed. The churches and dwellings of Rev. Drs. Cox and Ludlow were greatly injured. Four other churches of colored persons were greatly injured. This riot was followed by another at Philadelphia. The sufferers here were free persons of color, some of whom died by the violence inflicted on their persons.

3. The missions to the slaves were periled greatly, at this time, by the movements of the abolitionists. The New York Evangelist, at that time a violent ultra-abolition sheet, and greatly opposed to Methodism, called on its readers to establish missions among the slaves of the south, as though nothing had been done by the Methodist Episcopal Church, or any other, for the religious instruction of the slaves, nor any sympathy for their welfare till just then. The Evangelist "protests against oral instruction while diligently keeping back from our fellow-men God's written declaration of his will." Dr. Durbin, then editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal,† in his editorial of June 20th, refers to the Methodist missions, and, in reply to the question of the Evangelist, "What is to be done?" exhorts the abolitionists to go to the south, and unite with the Methodist missionaries in instructing the slaves. In regard to oral instruction, he justly said that our teaching and preaching are mostly oral, that thousands of the slaves can not read, and unless they are taught orally they can not be taught at all.

Dr. Capers, the apostolic pioneer in catechetical and efficient instruction of the slaves, and at this time the superintendent of several prosperous missions, in a letter, dated June 30th, took occasion, from the article of Mr. Durbin, of June 20th, to reply to the strictures of the

Evangelist.\* We quote nearly all the article of Dr. Capers. He says:

"Which [oral instruction] is, notoriously, the only way of imparting to the slaves—except, perhaps, one of a thousand—any instruction at all. I understand you as recommending to the zealots of a speculative and false philosophy to cease their vamping and betake themselves to acts of patient, humble charity, such as occupy the Methodist missionaries in their missions to the slaves. Or that the work which these men affect to despise and labor to disparage, but by which we seek to do what good we can in the world as we find it, ought not to be relinquished to allow them an experiment of first making a world to their own mind, and then schooling it according to their philosophy. I hold, and mean to hold, no discussion with them on the subject; but to you, my brethren, I beg leave to say, that, in any remarks which you may be provoked to make, it might be well to bear in mind that your opponents are not convertible, and that, even if they were, they could not possibly be permitted either work or companionship with us at the south. They would not, could not be trusted by any body, pious or profane, for any good thing, make what professions they might. With regard to the Colonization Society, I take occasion to remark, that, although disposed to make a very wide difference between it and the abolitionists, seeing that a great majority of our brethren who have the best opportunities of being informed of the views and feelings of its chief managers and friends, appear perfectly satisfied of its worthy character; and the furious opposition of the fanatic schemers of the north goes far to recommend it. Still some miscarriages of that Society have given such extensive and great offense in parts of the country where missions are most necessary, that we can not, with safety to the missions, identify our cause or even hold it as in any connection with that of this Society. We stand for the missions on the only basis of Christ's injunction, 'Preach the Gospel to every creature.' We go solely as Christ's ministers, and we form and can form no partnerships in our work. Our only business is, as you have stated it, preaching Jesus and the resurrection. We know this to be our proper work, and while we keep ourselves separately to it, we have no fear for the result. You, brethren, we are aware, greatly admire the Colonization Society, and it may startle you to read, and from so humble a source, of miscarriages of this Society. Nevertheless, we speak soberly. If the Society has done any thing whereby public opinion has been so much offended as to require a minister of Christ either to hold himself aloof from it or give up preaching to the negroes, you will admit this was a miscarriage; and such a miscarriage the Society perpetrated when it solicited sermons to be preached by whoever would preach them, throughout the United States, on the 4th of July, and collections then to be taken up for the promotion of its objects. Why on the 4th of July especially? What associations made that day the very one for this purpose? And did you ever see any of these 4th of July sermons? Several of them have found their way to the south—just such as our new-light philanthropists might choose to have preached—ranting, fanatic, incendiary,

\* Slavery in America, Vol. I, pp. 26-28.

† *Z*, v, 79. ‡ *C*, VIII, 171, col. 1, *suva*.

\* *C*. of July 13th, VIII, 187, col. 2.

to such a degree, that if I could myself have been the author and distributor of them, and had been to suffer death for it, I might not have called the punishment a persecution. This confessedly was an abuse; but prudent men might have foreseen, or, if not, they ought, in all reason, to have corrected it promptly, when it first transpired, and rescinded a resolution fraught with so much mischief. Have they even yet done so? I know not if they have. Let me humbly beg, therefore, to have the missions kept wholly distinct and independent of all enterprises whatever, except that only one of which they form a humble but efficient part—the enterprise of preaching Christ and him crucified to all men. I conclude with repeating that, in the work of our missions to the slaves in this country, we disclaim all partnership, connection, or affinity with the Colonization Society, which, whether it be good, bad, or indifferent, is absolutely nothing to our work.\*

The foregoing, as a whole, is Scriptural, Methodistic, and philanthropic. The British Methodists, in their instructions to their missionaries in the West Indies,† insist strongly that the missionaries should pursue the same course, in the main, which Dr. Capers here points out; or, rather, he almost copies the British course, or, from the nature of the case, prescribes a course similar to it. The Wesleyans, in 1817, embody, in printed instructions, the substance of various advices and directions which have, from time to time, from the commencement of the Wesleyan missions, been delivered to the missionaries. And these printed instructions should, in future, be their guide; and they were never modified or annulled to this day, as far as they can apply. They say the missionaries in the West Indies are placed in stations of considerable delicacy, which require peculiar circumspection and prudence on the one hand, and zeal, perseverance, and diligence on the other. Their missionaries were required to endeavor the religious instruction and conversion of the ignorant, pagan, and neglected colored population, and of all others who may be able to hear; that they should not mingle in doubtful controversies, but mainly aim at the conversion of their hearers, by preaching, and to introduce the instruction of children and the less-instructed adults by the catechisms, and wherever it was prudent and practical, to establish Sunday schools, week-day schools, and infant schools, for their instruction. They were on all occasions, when they instructed slaves, “respectfully to seek, for that purpose, the permission of the owners, or managers of plantations in the country.” They were not to engage in any of the “merely-civil disputes or local politics of the colony to which they were appointed, either verbally or by correspondence, with any persons at home or in the colonies, nor to become parties in any civil quarrel. They were to guard against all angry and resentful speeches, and in no case to attempt to inflame their societies and hearers with resentment against persecutors or opposers.” Indeed, these excellent instructions, to which Dr. Capers’s views are similar, or the very same, as he elsewhere approved of these instructions, are the only principles on which

the Gospel can at all be preached to slaves, or even a large portion of mankind.

Dr. Bangs, in the *Christian Advocate*, of July 25th, of which he was then editor,\* indorses fully the views of Dr. Capers, as to the course to be pursued by the missionaries among slaves. In regard to the abolitionists, he says, “The proceedings of the Antislavery Society deserve the reprobation of every sober friend, either to the whites or blacks; nor have we ever doubted but that their principles and practices were insurrectionary in their character. Our remarks on this subject were intended as a gentle rebuke to the abolitionists of the north for their impolitic and irrational attempts to break up the existing relations of society, as we believed they were opening the gates for the inundations of numerous evils in our country, without the prospect of any good as the result of their labors. Such principles as they avowed, such speeches as they delivered, and such sentiments as they promulgated from the press, must sooner or later inundate the country with the wild uproar of the bitter waters of contention and strife, if not even of the destruction of life.” After denouncing in the strongest terms the mobs of New York, Dr. Bangs says, “We can not but think, that, on sober reflection, the abolitionists will find cause to relent on account of the manner in which they have expressed themselves, however tenaciously they may hold fast their leading doctrines.”

4. The British Wesleyans, in their annual address of the conference, to the Methodist societies in Great Britain, under date of August 13, 1834, refer to emancipation in West Indies as follows:

“It is a singular and very delightful circumstance that, during the sittings of the conference, the day arrived when the state of slavery in the British colonies, according to the decision of the Legislature, should forever cease. We congratulate you on this happy accomplishment of your ardent desires. The bondage of the negroes has now become a mere matter of past history, and no longer oppresses the servant, or demoralizes the master. We deeply regret the fact that there are yet states, professedly Christian, in which the sinfully-degrading *caste* of color exists in its most repulsive form; but we are willing to cherish the hope that the example of Great Britain will be followed by every other nation, and that slavery, at least among all people calling themselves Christians, will be allowed to continue no longer. God hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on the face of the earth; and we anticipate the time when, by the admission and triumph of this great truth, all civil distinctions arising merely from color and complexion shall be abolished. These anticipations are delightful; but there are others yet more so. Opposed and persecuted as the missionaries in the West Indies have too frequently been, yet their labors have been signally successful. And are we not justified in supposing that if the word of the Lord has thus been glorified, when its progress was obstructed by so many hinderances, far more efficient and rapid shall be its movements, far more bright its glory, now that, through the wonder-working providence of God, those hinderances continue no longer? We thank God, who has put it into your hearts, to show already such liberal zeal for the spiritual welfare of the negroes; and we feel confident that you will enable us to embrace the increasing opportunities

\* C., VIII, 187, col. 2.

† See *Grinrod's Compend of the Laws and Regulations of Wesleyan Methodism*, p. 212, London, 1842.

\* C., VIII, 190, col. 5.

for useful labor, which will now be afforded by the altered condition of West India society.\*

The Wesleyans seem to have overlooked the fact, that though color should not form caste, nor be the just reason of civil distinctions, that, nevertheless, it was too strong in its *social power* for the British philanthropists and the British Government. And though color is not an original nature, it has become a *second* nature, utterly unmanageable by religious or political power to do away, or reduce to practical effect. The negroes introduced in any way to England, or even Nova Scotia, could never be fully made one civilly or religiously by the British. Hence they transferred the colored population to Sierra Leone, and continue to do so to this day. And the remnants of them now in London, are more isolated from general society than the colored people of the free states are with us. But abolitionists in this country *will not see this*, but virtually condemn the Churches because they do not annul laws, and set the slaves free, or do away the deep, indelible mark of color, implanted by a second nature; although they themselves are practically, in all cases worthy of mention, as much governed by it as those whom they condemn. Thus, the authors of the extra quote the above from the Wesleyan conference, as far as to the words "civil distinctions arising from color," and leave out of sight the part that speaks of the more delightful anticipations of greater progress in the purely-religious advantages of their missionary operations. The truth is, the Wesleyans never got any help from the British abolitionists in promoting religious instruction of the slaves; on the other hand, they were even hindered by them in carrying out their religious movements to full maturity.

5. Before we proceed to notice Mr. Thompson's labors in this country, we will give a brief historical view of his appointment and mission to this country.

Mr. George Thompson, with several others, had been employed in England, as we have seen in another page, by the British Antislavery Society, as a public lecturer, during the months which preceded the Act of Emancipation, in 1833. He traveled extensively, and denounced slavery in all its phases, as well he might. He was originally invited to embark in the mission to America, by the New England Antislavery Society, of which Mr. Garrison was the soul. This Society deputed Mr. Garrison to visit Great Britain for that and other purposes. The emancipation societies of Edinburgh and Glasgow were successively formed in support of Mr. Thompson's mission; and lastly, by the "British and Foreign Society for the universal abolition of slavery and the slave-trade," which was instituted early in 1835, having auxiliaries in many English towns. Mr. Thompson was, therefore, the agent of the London, Glasgow, and Edinburgh Societies.† Such is the statement of the Glasgow Chronicle, as cited below. Mr. Garrison says, "That Mr. Thompson visited America expressly at the invitation and as the agent of the New England Antislavery Society, and under the countenance of the British and Foreign Society."‡ So far for the expositors.

\* For this entire address, see W., I, 130, col. 6. See also the extra, Document, No. 16, for a part of the above paragraph, and the remainder, as given here, is there inserted in brackets.

† Glasgow Chronicle, Oct. 24, 1834, quoted Z., VI, 13, of January 28, 1835.

‡ Preface to Thompson's Letters, p. 7.

The British and Foreign Society of abolitionists saw fit, in their zeal, to issue a Circular letter, in connection with Mr. Thompson's mission to the United States, calling for funds to pay "lecturers of acknowledged power, for a term of three years, to operate in this country by a system of agitation, by which time it is hoped that American feeling will be sufficiently excited to dispense with all pecuniary assistance from strangers." The Circular also states, concerning American abolitionists, "These good men have entreated our assistance. Their number is too few in proportion to the vast extent of country over which their labors must be distributed, and their financial resources too scanty, on an occasion which America has never yet regarded as one of charity, not to feel dismayed at the difficulty of their gigantic undertaking."

And Mr. Garrison did obtain this support, by a reckless denunciation of the American people, and the American Constitution, and published it in the London Patriot, from which the following is an extract: "I know there is much declamation about the sacredness of the compact, which was formed between the free and slave states on the adoption of the national Constitution. A sacred compact, forsooth! I pronounce it the most bloody and heaven-daring arrangement ever made by men for the continuance and protection of the most atrocious villainy ever exhibited on earth. Yes, I recognize the compact, but with feelings of shame and indignation; and it will be held in everlasting infamy by the friends of humanity and justice throughout the world. Who or what were the framers of the American government, that they should dare confirm and authorize such high-handed villainy—such a flagrant robbery of the inalienable rights of man—such a glaring violation of all the precepts and injunctions of the Gospel—such a savage war upon the sixth part of their whole population? It was not valid then—it is not valid now. Still they persist in maintaining it, and still do their successors, the people of New England, and of the twelve free states, persist in maintaining it. A sacred compact! a sacred compact! What, then, is wicked and ignominious?"\*

Mr. Thompson opened his mission in America with a lecture before the New England Antislavery Society, on the 5th day of August, 1834, in the Town Hall of Lowell, Mass., to an audience of about a thousand persons. He said, "All eyes were now turned toward the United States of America, to see if that land of liberty, of republicanism, of Bibles, of missions, of temperance societies, and revivals, would direct her matchless energies to the blessed work of emancipating her slaves, and elevating her entire colored population." He said, "His was no sectarian or political embassy; as a citizen of the world he claimed brotherhood with all mankind." He then took a compendious view of slavery in the south; he then denounced the prejudice against color. The remedy was the removal from the whites of this prejudice, and the immediate emancipation of the slaves. He then stated the reasons why the north should interfere with slavery, and concluded with an address to the ladies.† On the 9th of October he addressed the same Society again, and proclaimed himself as the representative of the British abolitionists, who were prepared to aid American abolitionists with their sympathy, counsel, and their contributions, of

\* Z., VI, 42.

† See Letters of Thompson, by Garrison, pp. 1-5.

which his presence was a proof and a pledge. He said, "They had no intention of interfering to an unwarrantable extent in the political questions of the country; that theirs is a question of morals, humanity, and religion." He declared for "immediate, entire, and unconditional emancipation, without expatriation, and the admission of the colored man into the unabridged privileges of the Constitution."\*

Any person will see that there was much of political interference in the sentiments and course of Mr. Thompson. For though morals, humanity, and religion might be inculcated with little or no political action, *immediate, entire, and unconditional emancipation, without expatriation*, and the admission of the colored man to the *unabridged principles of the Constitution*, would certainly involve political interference in principle and practice, and that too in constitutions and laws.

Mr. Thompson continued his lectures in various parts of New England, during the months of October, November, and December, in high-wrought declamation, much argument, and abundance of denunciation, inculcating immediate, entire, and unconditional emancipation, without expatriation, as well as equal political rights for both slaves and all colored persons. Any one who reads his letters and addresses, as published by Mr. Garrison, will find the proof of all this in his own words, without the need of comment on our part.†

6. It is not marvelous that the Circular of the British and Foreign Society, for the abolition of slavery, which commissioned and sent lecturers to the United States, to proclaim in behalf of immediate and unconditional emancipation, and to raise all colored persons to the rights of freemen; and that these lecturers actually began their work—it is not strange that the doings of lecturers and their patrons should call forth strictures of indignation. Accordingly, Dr. Bangs, editor of the *Christian Advocate*, October 24th, expresses himself thus, after referring to the lectures and the distributing of printed documents in favor of immediate emancipation:

"Much as we deplore the evils of slavery, as it exists in some portions of the country, on reading the ludicrous document, [the Circular,] we could hardly suppress our indignation at beholding this officious intermeddling of foreigners with the internal and civil affairs of our country. We think we understand our own affairs quite as well as they do, and are much more competent to devise a remedy for any existing evils than they have proved themselves to be in meliorating the condition of their starving poor, of softening the rigors of their proud aristocracy, and of exalting their numerous peasantry to the equality, rights, and privileges of freemen. How much better off are those degraded and suffering classes, both in England and Ireland, but particularly in the latter country, than our enslaved negroes, for whom these gentlemen profess to feel so much sympathy? Let them first emancipate those from their civil disabilities, and raise them from their extreme poverty and degradation, before they talk so lovingly of enlightening Americans on this subject. We hope, therefore, that no countenance will be given to these foreign emissaries, who come to our shores in the character of political lecturers; who are ignorant of, and, in most instances, averse to the civil

and religious institutions of our country."\* Thus far Dr. Bangs.

Dr. Bangs, on December 5th, had occasion to pass additional strictures on the lecturers, in reply to a correspondent—Mr. Sunderland, we suppose—who undertook to plead for Mr. Thompson and the Circular, on the score that the aim was moral, and that he might as properly inculcate his sentiments as missionaries do. We give the following extracts from the article of Dr. Bangs, headed, "*Is it right?*"

"In answer, we say that we think *it is not right* for foreigners to come here in the character of itinerant lecturers on our political and civil institutions. If they came as religious missionaries to enlighten our spiritual darkness, and were to keep themselves to their appropriate sphere of labor, we would bid them God speed with all the heart. But these visitors do not come in this character. If they will come here and imitate the character of the apostles, and teach both master and slave how to serve God, and make the best of their present condition, as preparatory to a better state of existence, they shall have our most hearty concurrence and cooperation; and we will lend them all the influence in our power to teach even the slaves, that 'if they may be free to use it rather.'

"We say, if they will imitate the conduct of the apostles—and we might add that of Jesus Christ. At the time he made his appearance in our world, slavery existed all over the Roman empire, not excepting even the highly-favored land of Judea, to such an extent that it has been estimated that about one half of the population of that vast empire were in a state of civil bondage. This must have been well known to Jesus Christ and his apostles. But, notwithstanding this, when Jesus Christ sent out his apostles to preach, did he give them a command to denounce their masters because they held slaves; and to tell them that unless they let those oppressed go free, they could not repent and enter into the kingdom of heaven? Nothing of this. We do not recollect a single instance of his having uttered a word on this subject.

"And did not his apostles imitate their divine Master in regard to this thing? Where do we find them hurling the anathemas of Heaven against those numerous slaveholders whom they addressed because they held their fellow-creatures in bondage? On the contrary, we find the apostle Paul, especially, giving specific directions to masters and servants concerning their duties and behavior toward each other. From all this it appears evident that, however much the apostle might have deprecated slavery as it then existed throughout the Roman empire, he did not feel it his duty, as an ambassador of Christ, to disturb those relations which subsisted between masters and servants, by denouncing slavery as such a mortal sin that they could not be servants of Christ in such a relation. We are not the apologists of slavery as it exists in our own country; but we do think that the means resorted to by the abolitionists are such that, instead of lessening its evils, and hastening the day of emancipation, they are only binding them faster in their chains, and thus contributing, unintentionally, no doubt, to make their condition more painful and prolonged. Let Christianity work its

\* Letters of Thompson, pp. 6-10.

† Id., pp. 1-27.

\* C., Vol. IX, p. 34, col. 4, *infra*.

way, in its renovating and sanctifying influences, among the people, and the civil and spiritual condition of both master and servant will be so improved that the latter will be prepared to receive his freedom without detriment to himself or danger to his master, while both rejoice together 'in hope of the glory of God.'\*\*

It is clear to our own mind, that the British abolitionists acted imprudently in sending Mr. Thompson and Captain Charles Stuart to this country to promote immediate abolition, although we may allow they meant only the use of moral means to accomplish this end. The reason is that political action and political principles were so involved even to the abrogation of constitutions and laws, so as to involve at once direct, radical, and general political interference. Who, then, can be surprised that the soberest men in the country, whether as religious men or citizens, were exceedingly opposed to this political interference, if not in profession, yet in effect?

On the one hand, we see that the mere political effect of this procedure was constantly presented prominently by the religious and political press. And on the other hand, the great moral principles involved in the system of slavery were principally, or in a great degree, overlooked. Hence, the opponents of Thompson dwelt too much on the *one idea* of political interference by foreign aid, and passed over the sinful moral elements necessarily existing in the system of slavery. Hence they obtained the names of pro-slavery, apologists for slavery; while the abolitionists made no distinction—or so slight a one that it passed for nothing—between those who were voluntary slaveholders, and those who were involuntary, and became slave-owners and slaveholders by the will and acts of others, without their own act, and against their own will, of whom there are many in the south.

Besides, although it is true that the system of slavery, in popular language, is not just condemned by name in the New Testament, yet all the individual parts that compose the whole are expressly forbidden by Christ and his apostles, such as man-stealing, theft, robbery, oppression, separation of parents and children, taking the laborer's toil without equivalent pay, etc.; while, on the other hand, duties are enjoined at direct variance with slavery, such as love to man, reciprocal duties and obligations, marriage, obedience to parents, mercy, justice, etc. And who can read the great avowed end of Christ's coming without seeing in it the death-warrant of slavery in the following words: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovery of sight to the blind; to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord." Luke iv, 18, 19. Indeed, the sentiments and practice of the primitive Church declare, without doubt, that the emancipation of slaves became general among them, although they did not require absolutely emancipation in all cases, or perhaps in any one individual case; for the principles of slavery were held in the utmost abhorrence by the primitive Christians, and slavery had, therefore, neither defenders nor apologists among them. And the

principles upsetting slavery were radical and prominent in the early Church, and the general practice was emancipation as far as they could, while those who were yet legal slaves were treated as *brethren*, and only an opportunity was needed to set them free, as in the case of Onesimus and Philemon; for, in the primitive Church, the wretch that would sell his Christian brethren, or disregard the principles of freedom, would be hooted out of the assembly of the pious, the same as a man who would attempt to sacrifice to idols, and make it a part of divine service among Christians.

7. It must not be supposed, as some would intimate, that the cause of emancipation, or the moral evil of slavery, had no advocates at this time among slaveholders or in slave states. The Presbyterian Synod of Kentucky, at their session commencing October 8, 1834, passed a declaration and resolutions concerning slavery. This was published in the *Western Summary*, a Presbyterian paper, and copied into the *Western Advocate* of October 24, 1834.\* The Synod declare that slavery, as it exists among them, is repugnant to the principles of our holy religion as contained in Scripture; and the continuance of it any longer than is necessary to prepare for its safe and beneficial termination is sinful. The Synod then declare that immediate measures should be commenced in view of emancipation, and a committee of ten be appointed to address the Church in Kentucky on this subject.†

Indeed, the sentiments on slavery in the west and south-west, at this time, were strongly antislavery, as they always were, and are even now. In the *Western Advocate*, in a comment on the General Rule on slavery, dated November 21st, we have the following from the pen of the Rev. J. A. Reeder, of the Ohio conference: "Preachers are not allowed to hold slaves if it be possible for them to liberate them. All are prohibited from trafficking in the article of human beings with an intention to deprive them of their liberty. The holding of slaves and using them well is sufferable in some cases; but where the great evil can be done away, the Methodist possessing an enlightened mind and good intentions, must do so or incur the censure of the Church—is condemned at the bar of his own conscience, and pays no regard to the divine precept, which says, 'As ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them likewise.' 'Is it not hard to be deprived of our slaves for which we have paid our money?' Yes; but not so hard as it would be for our slaves to become our masters, take from us our liberty, and fetter us and our children in perpetual slavery, though the one would be as fair as the other. It would be as easy for me to give up my money—the price of my slaves—as it would be for my slaves to give up their liberty, which our patriotic fathers declared to be an 'inalienable right.'‡ The above remarks come to hand in the character of *Thoughts on the General Rules*. Does any body blame me for my thoughts on this subject? They blame me for being a Methodist; they blame me for being an advocate of the sentiments of the Redeemer of men; they blame me for cherishing the spirit of our patriotic fathers; they blame me for advocating the principles of justice and equity."§

\* C., Vol. IX, p. 56, col. 3, *medio*.

\* W., I., p. 103, col. 1.

† Document, No. 15.

‡ Declaration of Independ. [W., I., p. 117, col. 1, *infra*.



8. Toward the conclusion of this year several Methodist preachers in New England became warmly enlisted in the abolition cause, and made common cause with Garrison, Thompson, and the other leaders of abolition. The most prominent were Orange Scott, Leroy Sunderland, S. W. Willson, A. D. Merrill, G. Storrs, Jared Perkins.

The attention of Mr. Scott was turned to the subject of slavery in the summer of 1833, by a conversation with Rev. Hiram H. White. Soon after he went to Boston he subscribed for the *Liberator*, purchased Bourne's *Picture of Slavery*, Mrs. Child's *Appeal*, Garrison on *Colonization*, and some other works. With these works he continued the study for one year before he took a public stand on the matter. At the New England conference for 1834, resolutions in favor of the colonization scheme, offered by Dr. Fisk, were, on Mr. Scott's motion, laid on the table. At the close of 1834 he made his first *debut* in Boston, with great eclat, at a public meeting, in which G. Thompson and H. B. Stanton were speakers. While presiding elder on Providence district, in the same year, he brought up the subject of abolition, at two or three different camp meetings, among the preachers, and had resolutions passed in favor of opening *Zion's Herald* to the antislavery discussion. After some delay the request was granted. Previous to this decision, or early in October, 1834, he resolved to commence, on his individual responsibility, the next January, a series of articles in the *Herald*. Early in November he wrote his first article, which is said to bear date December 30th; but we can not find it in the *Herald*. Perhaps it was published in another paper before the columns of the *Herald* were opened for the discussion.

Armed with such information as he could derive from the *Liberator*, Bourne, Mrs. Child, Phelps, and Garrison on *Colonization*, and listening occasionally to Thompson, Mr. Scott stood forth as the champion of abolition at the close of 1834, ready to commence the contest openly and formally in the beginning of 1835. Who can wonder, with such teachers as Garrison, Thompson, and Bourne—and he seems to have been nearly limited to these—that he became, in such hands, what he was, not by nature or grace, but by a kind of untoward, unlucky transformation! In our next chapter we will see the course he took in this matter.\*

Rev. Leroy Sunderland came up second, if not the equal of Mr. Scott, in the abolition ranks among the Methodists of New England. In November, 1834, Mr. Sunderland told certain ministers that he contemplated writing an *Appeal*. The date of this document is December 19, 1834. It was published as an extra in *Zion's Herald* of February 4, 1835. Mr. Matlack, who designates Messrs. Scott and Sunderland as "distinguished ministers," observes: "So spontaneous are the feelings which prompt good men to engage simultaneously in a great and good cause."† He also states, that in such a cause able advocates are necessary, and that the abilities of these advocates were unrivaled. Indeed, Mr. Matlack compares Mr. Scott with Luther, and even gives him the preference; while Mr. Garrison claims for Mr. Thompson a character far enough superior to Lafayette.

In our next chapter we will survey the extra, Mr. Scott's articles, Mr. Thompson's movements, and other matters which bear upon the subject of abolition as connected with Church interests.

## CHAPTER VII.

### EVENTS OF 1835.

1. In the foregoing chapter we gave an account of the rise of abolitionism in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in connection with the antislavery movements of the first antislavery societies and their leaders, Messrs. Garrison, Thompson, and others. Some notice was especially taken of Messrs. Scott and Sunderland—the one the author of the *Appeal*, the other of sixteen articles on the subject of slavery, copied principally, as to style, matter, and manner, from the fiery pens of Bourne, Garrison, and Phelps, and imitating the turgid and indiscriminately censorious speeches of Thompson. We noticed how the extra originated, as well as the circumstances under which Mr. Scott wrote his pieces. After a mere notice of the *Appeal* and the *Counter Appeal*, we will give a circumstantial account of each, survey Mr. Scott's articles, and then follow events in their chronological course, as far as we can, throughout the year 1835.

In less than one year from the formation of the American Antislavery Society, whose declaration of sentiments has been given, a number of ministers of the New England and New Hampshire conferences issued an "APPEAL," written by Leroy Sunderland, on the subject

of slavery, and addressed to the two conferences named. It was dated Boston, December 19, 1834, and signed Shipley W. Willson, Abram D. Merrill, Leroy Sunderland, George Storrs, and Jared Perkins. The *Appeal* was issued as an extra to *Zion's Herald* of February 4, 1835. The editor of the *Herald*, on account of its length, refused to publish it in the *Herald*; but, on the condition that the signers of it would pay the additional expense, it was issued as an extra.

The *COUNTER APPEAL*, or the reply to the *Appeal*, was written by D. D. Whedon, dated March 27, 1835, signed W. Fisk, John Lindsey, Bartholomew Otheman, Hezekiah S. Ramsdell, Edward T. Tayler, Abel Stevens, Jacob Sanborn, and H. H. White. It was published also as an extra to *Zion's Herald* of April 8, 1835, and addressed to the preachers of the New England and New Hampshire conferences.

2. The *Appeal* contained the doctrines of the abolitionists, while the *Counter Appeal* professed to represent the doctrines and discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church on

\* Matlack's History, p. 100. Life of Scott, pp. 32-34.

† Matlack's History, p. 100.

the subject of slavery; or, in other words, the authors of the Counter claimed to be the genuine antislavery Methodists, while the authors of the Appeal were the representatives of the abolitionists in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and claimed to be the true successors of the primitive Methodists. Hence the formation of two leading parties in New England, the one headed by Dr. Fisk, and the other by Orange Scott as principal, and Leroy Sunderland as second. Contemporaneously with the Appeal and its Counter, several other collateral branches of controversy sprang up in New England. A sharp controversy arose between Rev. D. D. Whedon and Rev. O. Scott. Mr. Scott and Dr. Fisk also entered the list against each other; while Mr. Scott continued his articles, commenced December 30, 1834, to the number of sixteen, in which he attacked slavery with all his might, drawing his matter principally from Mr. Garrison's *Liberator*, Bourne's *Picture of Slavery*, Mrs. Child's *Appeal*, Phelps on *Slavery*, and Garrison on *Colonization*—works calculated to give partial information, distorted views of slavery, and deeply tinged with fanaticism, uncharitableness, and revolutionary Christianity.\* In short, Mr. Scott was a Garrisonian abolitionist, as all, or nearly all, of the first American abolitionists were.

We will here give a brief survey of the leading sentiments embraced in the Appeal. The signers of the Appeal declare, in advance, that they have, for a number of years, bestowed the most serious attention on the subject of slavery; that they not only plead the cause of two and a half millions and their posterity, but the cause of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose peace and prosperity are threatened by the evils of slavery. They do not profess to discuss in detail the evils of slavery, or a particular discussion of its principles, but to mention some of the most prominent features of the system of slavery as it exists in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Appeal further declares "that no man has, or can have, a right to hold a fellow-man for one moment in bondage as a piece of merchantable property, to take the hire of his labor against his will, or to refuse him the means of social, moral, and intellectual improvement; that personal liberty—that is, liberty to enjoy the fruits of one's labor—is the inalienable gift of the infinite God to every human being; therefore, to take away this liberty where no crime has been committed, is a direct violation of a right which belongs to God alone. Hence, every American citizen who retains a fellow-being in bondage as a piece of property, and takes the price of his labor without his consent, is guilty of a *crime* which can not be reconciled with the spirit of the Christian religion; and it is the more criminal for a professing Christian or Christian minister to do this, because they thus afford their support to an unjust and violent system of oppression—a system which always has been, is now, and always will be the unyielding enemy of virtue, knowledge, and religion—a system which leaves more than one-sixth part of the citizens of these United States without any adequate protection for their persons—a system which opens the way for and fosters the worst passions and crimes, such as prostitution, adultery, murder, discord, theft,

insurrections, indolence, insensibility to the claims of justice and mercy, pride, and a wicked contempt for the rights and feelings of a large portion of our fellow-men. Its natural tendency on all who become the victims of its opposition, is to benumb the sensibilities of the mind, to corrupt and deaden the conscience, and to kill the soul. Hence, we say the system is *wrong*, it is *cruel* and *unjust* in all its parts and principles, and that no Christian can consistently lend his influence or example for one moment in support of it, and consequently it should be abandoned now and FOREVER."

The extra proceeds to examine slavery in its connection with the *Methodist Episcopal Church*, because hundreds of her ministers and thousands of her members are enslavers of their fellow-men, and hold the bodies and the souls of men, women, and children in abject slavery, and retain their standing without any censure on this account; and that the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal*, the official organ of this Church, apologizes for the crimes of the enslaver of the human species, and attempts to justify the system.

To support their position the authors of the Appeal proceed to maintain,

(1.) That the testimony of God is against slavery, and quote, for this purpose, the following texts, accompanied with comments; namely, *Exod. xxi, 16; Deut. xxiv, 7; Matt. xxii, 39; Matt. vii, 12; Col. iv, 1; 1 Cor. vii, 20-23.* The sum of their argument is, that the Bible condemns slavery in precisely the same way that it condemns many other things which all Christians allow to be sins.

(2.) That the Discipline opposes slavery; and though some inconsistencies may be detected in it, yet the rules now contained in it, and those formerly in it, were designed to prevent the existence of slavery in the Church.

And from the General Rule they infer, first, that no person who continues to profane the name of God or the Sabbath, or to enslave men, can be continued a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church; second, that no person who continues to enslave men has been truly awakened.

They take exceptions to portions of the section on slavery, and infer from it the following absurdities, which they charge on the Church; namely, "No *Sabbath-breaker* shall be eligible to any official station in our Church, where the laws of the state in which he lives do not legalize Sabbath-breaking. When any traveling preacher becomes a drunkard, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he can show that the laws of the state in which he lives sanction drunkenness."

(3.) The authors of the Appeal next quote largely from Wesley's *Thoughts on Slavery*, and they also produce some extracts from his letters written subsequently, as well as selections from Clarke. They then conclude, "We do not wish to apply all the foregoing remarks to all enslavers *indiscriminately*, nor yet is it for us to search out the individuals, if there be any, to whom they may not be applied; but we do say, that every one who, in any way, countenances slaveholding is justly chargeable, more or less, with the evils which flow from it. Christian enslavers of the human species do the very same thing to perpetuate the system and evils of slavery which the *Christian rum-*

\*Life of Scott, p. 33.

*drinker* or the *Christian distiller* does to perpetuate the evils of intemperance.

(4.) The action of the Wesleyan conference, in 1830, on West India slavery, drawn up by Mr. Watson, is next quoted in full.

(5.) Heavy accusations are next brought against the *Christian Advocate*, and the papers of June 20, 1834, December 5, 1834, December 12, 1834, are referred to as specimens of its pro-slavery character.

(6.) The extra then quotes a part of the declaration of the British conference on West India emancipation, but leaves out an important part, which was at variance with the doctrines of the extra.

(7.) And finally the extra urges all Methodists to perform duties in reference to this subject; such as to make themselves acquainted with slavery, especially as it is connected with the Church, to pray for the slave, especially on the last Monday of each month, etc.

3. It may be proper now, after furnishing a general outline of the sentiments of the Appeal, to make some observations on it in regard to some of its principles and measures. And as to the general character of slavery in its moral qualities, the outline of the Appeal is, on the whole, correct; namely, that the system is *wrong, cruel, and unjust* in all its parts and principles, and no Christian can consistently lend his influence or example for one moment in support of it. All the elements of the slave system are wrong, morally wrong; such as making man property, depriving him of liberty, his labor, and the pursuit of happiness; depriving him of the rights of education, religion, and marriage, and inflicting on him cruelties, miseries, and disabilities at the option of another, who is irresponsible for his conduct. Whatever element of good may mingle with slave laws, or may influence masters, it is not owing to slavery, but in spite of it. Having said this much in reference to the extra, we have serious objections to it—not altogether as to what it contains, but as to what it does not contain, but ought to have, considering its pretensions.

And, in the first place, it overlooks one great element in slavery; namely, that it is the creature of law, and, in our country, owes its existence, its continuance, and its moral character to legal enactment, sanction, and support. As a *system*, this is true. We may except all those cases, in regard to individuals, where the laws allow freedom, and where individuals do not avail themselves of legal privileges, and thus relieve themselves from the sin. In this case, individuals by their will and act become sinners, and equally so with the laws themselves. This distinction is either noticed so slightly by the Appeal, or entirely overlooked, that every member of the Church who is a slaveholder, though without his act or will, is made out to be as great a sinner as any pirate or actual man-stealer, from Joseph's brethren, through all the African slave-trade, down to the regular kidnapers, man-stealers, who steal free persons or slaves, and sell them for their own benefit. And the writer of the Appeal, and after him his indorsers, seem to swallow every other moral absurdity growing out of this as readily as the same Mr. Sunderland swallowed Garrisonianism, Mesmerism, Pathetism, infidelity, and the long list of moral monstrosities that connected with or followed these. Hence, he and his transfer all the gross moral evils of the slave laws to the door of the Methodist Epis-

pal Church. Hear them: "We wish simply to mention some of the most prominent features of the system of slavery as it exists in the Methodist Episcopal Church." They then proceed to enumerate the evils of slavery, as we have quoted them above, true enough in all important respects as it regards slavery as established by law, but any thing but true when ascribed to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Starting with this false principle or gross slander against the Church, the men of this school made out that the Churches are the bulwark of American slavery, as if their councils had enacted every slave law, whether constitutional or statutory, comprising all the slave laws of the states and United States. Whatever Church may be in fault here, the Methodist Episcopal Church certainly comes in for a less share of it than any other, the Quakers, perhaps, excepted.

Another gross error of the Appeal is, that its author and indorsers overlook the great good the Methodist Episcopal Church has done toward enlightening and Christianizing the slaves and colored people of the south. The more than eighty thousand Church members go for nothing. The catechising of the children goes for nothing. The kind treatment and constant endeavors of Christian masters to teach the slaves to read, where they could, or to teach them orally when they could do nothing else, must all be unnoticed; and these same benevolent persons are left in the undistinguished mass of criminal slaveholders, slave-dealers, and kidnapers.

But look at the sweeping condemnation which makes all slaveholders as guilty as drunkards or Sabbath-breakers. This is true enough in regard to slaveholders whose own will and act make them slaveholders, but not true when the law makes them slaveholders or till they consent to this by their own voluntary act. The absurdity of their position is further manifest from the consideration that such persons are made sinners by the act and will of others. And, then, sin is not their own act, but the act of the law, or of father or mother, or donor who gave or bequeathed to them the slaves. And, indeed, they seem to allow of no exceptions as to the guilt of all slaveholders or slave-owners; for when they say they do not apply their remarks to any individuals, yet they more than hint that there are none exempted, when they introduce somewhat parenthetically the words, *if there be any exceptions*.

Hence the indiscriminate condemnation of all slaveholders; and hence, too, the entire want of point and force in the truth itself in their hands. As the righteous and wicked are equally condemned by them, the wicked will readily screen themselves under these general sentences of condemnation, bestowed alike upon others as upon them. Thus the good teachings of this class of abolitionists have fallen powerless to the ground, and produced no good effect; and that on the principle that a person who often speaks falsely will not be believed when he tells the truth.

The author of the extra takes care to leave out about one-half of the paragraph in the address of the Wesleyan conference in 1834. The conference continue to express more gratitude for the spiritual benefits resulting from their labors among the slaves, than for their emancipation. But any advantage of a religious kind not comprising immediate emancipation, seems to be nothing in the eyes of the author of the extra;

while the Wesleyans considered the religious advantages as far excelling the other, though duly prizing both. Why did not Mr. Sunderland find out that the Wesleyans had slaveholders in their communion in the West Indies, without rebuke, up to the very day in which emancipation took place? So had the Baptists; and so must every Church in a slaveholding state have slaveholders in their communion, more or less, and for a longer or shorter space. And those who take a different course will end as the Quakers did; that is, do nothing for the salvation of slaves.\*

But the strangest of all is, that they would represent Methodist Discipline as truly antislavery. Yet, before our infallible Sunderland ends, he, by his Mesmerism, or Pathetism, or something else, ascertains that the code of the Church is no better than the code of the state, and the pro-slavery element seems to meet him in all directions.

We need not pursue our remarks further on the Appeal. Suffice it to say, that Garrisonianism was the order of the day in the circle which surrounded the signers of the paper. Scott, Sunderland, Garrison, Thompson, and their associates, were the very soul of the abolitionism of the region. It absorbed every thing else. It broke out in rampant and ungovernable extravagance in the Appeal. The very sweepings of British abolitionism were collected for American use; while all the sage things that Clarkson, Wilberforce, Sharp, Wesley, the British conference, and British wisdom uttered, lay on the shelf, and Thompson and Garrison were the dictators general; and Scott and Sunderland were the Methodist gullibles to vex the Church and their brethren with moral monstrosities.

4. We next come to consider the Counter Appeal, dated, as we have seen, March 27, 1835, and published as an extra in Zion's Herald of April 8, 1835,† and signed W. Fisk and others, accompanied with an indorsement from Bishop Hedding, in which he says: "In general, I believe the arguments and statements are correct;" and adds, "Several of our brethren in this country who write against slavery, do not understand its condition in the south, and that therefore they undesignedly misrepresent it." He then exhorts them to desist believing they do not benefit the slave.‡

The Counter begins with deploring that the Appeal is fraught with doctrines radically erroneous; arraigning the fathers, the Discipline, and institutions of our Church, and productive of deeply-injurious consequences. The signers of the Counter invoke, that neither they nor the signers of the extra may hinder the great cause of freedom to the oppressed, harmony to our Church, and peace to the Union. They then proceed to inquire into the Scripture argument, the Discipline, the authorities quoted in the extra, and the measures of the abolitionists, and the proper course to be pursued.

#### I. Scripture argument.

From the texts which teach love to our neighbor and reciprocal duties, they lay down this position: that no man has a right to remove any providential evil from himself by imposing a still greater evil upon another. And, hence, they draw the following results: 1. The authority of the master should terminate, as soon as its cessation would not produce more evils than would its longer continuance. 2. And the authority should be diminished in amount and severity, when such a diminution would not produce more evil than it

would subtract. They also say, "*The abuses of the master's authority are not for a moment justifiable, as that its existence in some circumstances is.*"

The several texts quoted in the extra are then considered, and other texts, not quoted in it, are then examined, as Eph. vi, 5-9; 1 Peter ii, 18, 19; 1 Tim. vi, 1, 2. They infer that the apostles did admit slaveholders into the Church; and that slaveholding is not in all cases and invariably sinful; and that it does not, of itself, form the ground of exclusion from the Church. Hence, from the entire Bible argument they conclude.

*First.* That although Christianity spread in countries where slavery existed as cruel and licentious, yet it did not on account of these heathenish abuses pronounce the relation itself immutably wrong, as cruel and unjust in all its parts, nor excommunicate the slaveholders as not truly awakened.

*Secondly.* Christianity teaches that man can not be a mere article of property.

*Thirdly.* The Gospel operates with irresistible tendency to the amelioration, diminution, and destruction of slavery, as a system; holding forth its perpetuation as an abomination, and its continuance, by the authors of legislation, beyond the time of practical removal, a sin.

The authors of the Counter then conclude, that the course of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the south, in preaching the Gospel to the slaves and masters, is apostolical, Scriptural, and truly Methodistical. Our brethren in the south are in the minority, in a government where slavery is established by laws which they can not alter, and are not allowed either to control or resist.

II. Defense of General conference and Discipline.

On the General Rule the Counter maintains: 1. That it does not forbid slaveholding. 2. Nor all cases of internal slave-trade. 3. It was altered by a General conference constitutionally competent to alter. 4. It never forbade slaveholding. The course of the Christian Advocate is also justified by the Counter.

III. The authorities quoted.

On these there is much of sober remark, which we need not recite.

IV. The present measures considered.

In this exceptions are taken against the agitation and the political measures soon to be entered on by the abolitionists; that Methodism has been evangelically powerful, because politically neutral; that even prospective emancipation is not forwarded by abolitionism; and that our brethren in the south are doing a great work, and should not be impeded in it.\*

5. In regard to the Counter Appeal, after presenting its leading points, we would take the liberty of making a few observations. We can heartily indorse the greater part of its contents, as sound, Scriptural, and safe. Yet we must also say that there are several things in it which we think are neither sound, Scriptural, nor safe. Some things in it are vaguely expressed, as we think, or not sufficiently defined; hence, the defenders of slavery, on the one hand, derive from it some countenance to their side of the question; while ultra-abolitionists can find some things to sustain them in their ultra sentiments and course. But we must descend to particulars.

The signers of the Counter quote, with approbation, from Robinson's Calmet, on the article, *Slavery*, in which Calmet says: "Moses notices

\* Document, No. 16.

† Z., Vol. VI, p. 54, or April 8, 1835.

‡ Document, No. 17, or Counter Appeal.

\* Document, No. 17, for the Counter Appeal

two or three sorts of slaves among the Hebrews, who had foreign slaves obtained by capture, by purchase, or born in the house. Over these masters had an entire authority; they might sell them, exchange them, punish them, judge them, and even put them to death, without public process; in which the Hebrews followed the rules common to other nations." We pause to ask, have we ever read so few words containing so many historical and moral errors in our life? In the code of Moses the most manifest distinctions are made to distinguish slavery from service. Joseph was a slave. The Hebrews were slaves in Egypt. And the law of Moses decided that he who stole a man, or bought the stolen man, or used him as such, was guilty of capital crime, and to be put to death. Ex. xxi, 16. Besides, there were given by Moses plain rules to govern servitude, so that it should not run into slavery. It should terminate at the end of six years, or by a new contract might continue to the end of life, unless the jubilee intervened, which terminated all contracts of servitude, and proclaimed liberty to all the inhabitants of the land. There is scarcely any other matter in which commentators have more erred than in this same matter, from Cornelius a Lapide down to the present time, comprising both Catholic and Protestant interpreters. But we have not space to enlarge; we must, therefore, confine ourselves to this brief notice.

The authors of the Counter Appeal express themselves unsafely when they say, at least virtually, that some parts of the system of slavery are not wrong. The component parts of slavery are to make man property without his consent; or, as the civil law defines it, "*Servitus est constitutio juris gentium qua quis, Dominio alieno, contra naturam subicitur*"—"Slavery is an institution by the laws of nations, by which one is subjected to another, as master, contrary to nature."\* After depriving a man of himself, slavery deprives him of liberty, the pursuit of happiness, the acquisition of property; places him entirely in the power of another. It deprives him of education, religious privileges, the right of marriage, and inflicts on him many and severe wrongs. Now, which of these is right? And where we find the exercise of mercy, humanity, justice, and the like, either in slave laws, or in masters, these form no portion of the system of slavery, but they exist in spite of it; and the exercise of these would soon overturn the whole scheme. And as to the *abuses* of slavery, so called, they are mere imaginings; for slavery, as a whole, is a master abuse; it is the abuse of the system of lawful servitude. And when these *abuses* are all removed slavery has no being.

The Counter, furthermore, fails, we think, to recognize in a suitably full manner the real moral character of slavery; not just by denying it, but in not designating or defining it. This omission has been the source of mischief for many years, perhaps for thirty or more years back. The strong language of the Discipline from time to time declared slavery to be a great moral nuisance, to be abated as much and as fast as possible, in the place of a system which had some good traits, by reason of which it might remain untouched for some time to come, not very near, however; that is, practically, it may be perpetual. Hence, by reason of such unwise palliatives, and neutralities, and omissions in testimony, by men in the north as well as in the south, slavery may be tolerated for awhile, then forever; and hence the

Bible sanctions it, or it is a political matter, and must not be touched. After a thirty years' silence, is it marvelous that the Church became weakened in maintaining successfully, north and south, its original, unrepealed, yet neglected testimony and action against slavery?

6. The Christian Advocate and Journal,\* of February 20, 1835, under the heading of a *Great Mistake*, replies to the strictures of the extra on its course. The extra said the Advocate apologized for the crimes of the enslaver of the human species, and attempts to justify the system. The Advocate denied the charges, and challenged the proof, and states that its whole offense is that it deprecates the *disease* of slavery, but disproves of the prescriptions of the abolitionists as physicians. The editors then administer some fine lessons of advice to the signers of the Appeal; namely, that they ought not to censure harshly their brethren from whom they dissent; that they should quote the words of the Advocate, and not attribute sentiments to the editors which they disavow; that they arrayed themselves improperly against the General conference, and the ministers and members of the Church, in ranking them with man-stealers, drunkards, and Sabbath-breakers; that they should beware of taking such strong ground on a subject of such questionable policy; and should they deem it their duty to promote the objects of antislavery societies, they should treat their brethren from whom they differ with fairness, and not build arguments on wrong or doubtful assumptions.

7. The signers of the Appeal made a spirited and firm reply to the strictures of the Advocate, under date of February 15, 1835,† in which they declare that, as the editors of the Advocate denied the charge and challenged the proof, they proceed to quote the very words of the Advocate. We gave in the foregoing chapter, as nearly as we can ascertain, the strongest declarations of the Christian Advocate; and we must say that in our opinion the brethren who sign the Appeal infer, rather interpretatively than otherwise, the pro-slavery element in the editorials referred to. Certainly genuine pro-slavery advocates would infer from Dr. Bangs's editorials that he was a rank abolitionist, somewhat of the Garrisonian school, were they to take detached sentences from his writings, and then draw their inferences from them. Dr. Bangs all along disavowed to be the advocate for slavery; and if he was not always sufficiently guarded, this was more the fault of the times than his fault.

8. On the third of April, 1835, the signers of the Appeal present a brief reply to the Counter Appeal, addressed to the preachers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the bounds of the New England and New Hampshire conferences.‡ The reply is in a calm, temperate, and Christian spirit, in which the Garrisonian element is happily wanting. They affirm that, in their associate capacity, they never addressed the *public* on the subject of slavery, and, with one or two exceptions, they never did this as *individuals* till, in Zion's Herald, of March 18th, they were compelled to say a little by way of self-defense. They say the Appeal was never, properly speaking, published at all. It was printed and sent to the New England and New Hampshire conferences—and to the Maine also—as a *private concern* between them and the signers alone. They say the Appeal was not written for the Herald, as

\* Corp. Jur. Civ., Inst. Lib. 1, Tit. 3.

\* C. IX, 102, col. 3.

† Z., VI, 41, March 18, 1835.

‡ Z., VI, 57, April 15.

was stated by the editor of the Herald,\* in his reply to Mr. Whedon's inquiries. It was written and sent for publication in another paper, but a person connected with the Herald requested or suggested the propriety of publishing it as an extra of that paper, to which the signers consented. They say the reason why it was not written for the Herald was, that the columns of the Herald were closed, at that time, against the controversy. They complain that the columns of the Herald were filled with implications and charges against the abolitionists, and against themselves in particular, more severe than any thing in the Appeal. And these denunciations were grounded on a private document, not published to the world, but designed for, and sent to a few brethren in the ministry, and to them alone.

The authors of the extra complain, that in Zion's Herald they have been met in the most severe language; such as, "That the very spirit of abolitionism is exacerbated by a reckless censoriousness, as foreign from the philanthropy it professes, as its opposite extreme;" that the "tender mercies of such abolitionists are cruel." They also quote the following language of Dr. Fisk:† "Is it worse to cauterize a black man's flesh than it is to brand a white man's character? Your theoretical benevolence vapors much, and often lashes itself up into a paroxysm of feeling, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. Already they have aroused all the jealousies, and by their denunciations provoked all the excitable feelings of the south. It is moral quackery, at such times, to administer stimulants or apply caustics to the social system. What, then, shall we say of those who are still goring the sides of public feeling with the spur of excitement? Who are lacerating and exciting the public sympathy more incessantly, and with more recklessness, than the cruel slave-driver lacerating his writhing victim, even according to their own exaggerated account of it? They are goading into high-wrought feeling all the sentient principles of the human mind. Lecturers go about our streets with cowhides in their hands; tens of thousands of dollars are contributed to rouse public sentiment, by agents, tracts, periodicals, and books. Even a presiding elder can peddle out these rawhead and bloody-bones books all around his district, and at his own expense, I am told, sends out weekly one hundred copies of the most exciting and unreasonable periodical published by the abolitionists of the present day, to stir up among as many ministers the same exclusive, censorious, and fervid spirit." Though the above is given as quoted by the brethren, yet it is made up principally of detached sentences from Dr. Fisk, on *Unauthorized Transformation*.

The authors of the Appeal complain, that in less than one year they have been several times assailed in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and that they were never permitted to say one single word in their defense, though they requested it both verbally and publicly, but from first to last this privilege has been peremptorily denied them. They furnish the following specimens from the columns of the Advocate:

"The report as well as the address [at the meeting of the American Antislavery Society] were false and malicious." The abolitionists are guilty of "monstrous and extravagant absurdities."‡

They are set down as "injudicious, anti-republican, jacobinical, speculative, hot-headed, furious, and frenzied abolitionists."||

Dr. Capers gives them the following designation: "Vaporing zealots, of a speculative and false philosophy; who would not, and who could not be trusted by any body, pious or profane, for any good thing, make what professions they might—preaching such ranting, fanatic, incendiary sermons, that if I could myself have been the author and distributor of them, and had been to suffer death for it, I might not have called the punishment a persecution."\*

"Whatever errors our correspondent [Dr. Capers] may have committed, or however much the Colonization Society may have failed to accomplish its objects, the doctrines of abolitionists can not find an advocate nor an apologist in the columns of our Journal." "Abolitionists are no friends to the slaves; their measures are insurrectionary—they have made impolitic and irrational attempts to break up the existing relations of society, and their speeches and sentiments must, sooner or later, inundate the country with the wild uproar of the bitter notes of contention and strife, if not even of the destruction of life, and their conduct is highly exceptional."‡

9. The editors of the Advocate; respond to the authors of the extra, and say that only one of the signers of the extra, Mr. Sunderland, wrote to them, that the articles complained of were written before it was known that they were abolitionists. The articles against abolitionism were chiefly aimed at the abolitionists of New York city, who caused the people to boil over with excitement, and which terminated in mobs. The editors assert that the authors of the extra were the assailants in laying things to their charge, in the extra, which they have denied, and which can not be proved. They made quotations from the Advocate which could not be found in it, and which, if they were there, the editors never wrote. The signers charged the editors with "apologizing for slavery, and attempting to justify the system," which they denied, and challenged proof. The whole amounts to this, say the editors, "Some in the north take it into their heads that slavery must be instantly and unconditionally abolished. But they request to have their pieces published in the Advocate on this subject." We decline, and assign our reasons. With this they are dissatisfied, and accuse us of attempting to justify slavery and apologize for enslavers. We deny the charge, and advise them to desist, which advice has been strengthened by that of the venerable Bishop Hedding. This they construed into an act of injustice, from which we demur, and appeal to our readers. They, therefore, must judge and decide."

10. The signers of the Appeal, however, published a card in Zion's Herald, of April 29th, in which they complain, that they feel injured by the declarations of the Advocate of the 25th inst. But they think it would be doing injustice to the readers of the Herald, to fill its columns with remarks on what appeared in another paper, which they never saw; but that they are ready to prove that the Advocate has used language, which they think may be fairly understood as an attempt to justify the system of slaveholding, when its columns shall have been opened to them for that purpose. Yet who wrote the language to which they refer, or what the real design of it was, they do not pretend to say.||

11. It was stated in a former page that Mr. Scott had formally commenced, at the close of

\* Z., VI, 26, col. 3, note C.  
‡ C., whole No. 403.

† Z., VI, 37.  
|| C., 407.

\* C., 411. † C., 412. ‡ C., IX, 138, col. 4, April 25th.  
|| Z., VI, 66, col. 1, *supra*.

1834, a series of articles on slavery, continued from week to week, in Zion's Herald; the first appearing December 30, 1834,\* and the eleventh on March 20, 1835. The continuation of these articles, five in number, appeared in Zion's Herald, from February 24th, to April 20, 1836. Our attention now will be directed to the eleven first articles, and the replies to them by Mr. Whedon, in six numbers, in Zion's Herald, the first appearing February 11th, and the last, May 3, 1835. These last were on emancipation; the former were on colonization, the cruelties of slavery, amalgamation, etc.

Early in October, 1834, Mr. Scott purposed to write on the subject of slavery, in the columns of Zion's Herald, and wrote his first number early in November, which was designed to appear December 30, 1834, but we can not find it. The Wesleyan Association, which publishes the Herald, at first objected to the introduction of the controversy into that paper. On reconsideration, the columns were opened for the discussion. Mr. Scott, in his second number,† thanks the Association for the permission, and observes, "You will, of course, give me the privilege of prosecuting my work in *my own way*." He says many of the readers of the Herald know little more of slavery than that it *exists*. He proposes to deal principally in facts and arguments, and that the horrible acts perpetrated in the south and west ought to be known. He sets out with adopting from some favorite one of his school, that "slaveholding is, in all cases, falsehood in theory, tyranny in practice, a violation of God's law, and the parent of abominations." The antislavery publications were, it seems, his only source of information; and among these were Bourne's "Picture of Slavery," Mrs. Child's, Garrison's, etc., and such productions. He says, "I am indebted to *various sources* for the facts which follow; but as many of the accounts are considerably abridged, I deem it unnecessary to give credit, except in this general manner."‡ After giving Mr. Scott's own account of the sources of his information, let us now see how he has proceeded in his performance.

In No. 6, of February 25, 1835, he says of his introductory article, in replying to Mr. Whedon, of February 11th,|| "That it was designed merely as introductory to what was to follow; it covered, though imperfectly, the whole ground; it was not written in a guarded manner; many statements were made without being illustrated, argued, or proved. As he did not anticipate any reply to his first essay, the expressions were not particularly guarded."§

In his seventh number, of March 4th, Mr. Scott declares in an apologetic postscript—the italicizing is his own—"I ought, perhaps, to have said before this, by way of apology, for the obvious imperfections of my essays, in many respects, that they are *all* written in a hurry, the first rough draft being all that I am able, in any instance, to furnish you with. They are mostly written in *company*, and *at intervals of frequent interruptions*."¶

In No. 10, of April 8th, in remarking on Mr. Whedon's rejoinder, of March 25th, he says, that it is of such a character, that he is utterly incapable of making any answer to it, and adds, "My course is onward; I am doing a great work, so that I can not come down, neither have

I time for *criticisms, witticisms, playfulness, or sarcasms*. If brother Whedon will bring any arguments against the doctrines of the abolitionists, or against any thing I have written, and state them, with at least some degree of candor, *they shall be duly noticed*; till then I shall probably take no notice of any thing he may write."\*\*

He accuses Mr. Whedon of employing "his past exertions to soothe the consciences of slaveholders, slave-drivers, and kidnappers."†

Now, according to Mr. Scott's own showing, he derived his information from *various sources*, of the current antislavery publications of the times, all of which were purely Garrisonian, especially his text-books, Bourne and Garrison. These were never or rarely cited or quoted, but abridged at pleasure. We must, therefore, conclude that his array of what he calls facts, was without authenticity, was garbled, and even distorted, as any one may see who will compare his numbers even with his authorities; and these authorities themselves, as far as they are to be considered as authorities, are destitute of historical credit. Hence Mr. Scott's sources of information were not reliable, at least his principal ones. The evils of slavery may be all as great, and probably are, as these authorities affirm; but this is not proved by them, as far as they are entitled to credit. Yet Mr. Scott says, "Bourne contains a faithful delineation of some of the principal features of the slaveholding system—it is a faithful expose."‡ Furthermore, Mr. Scott's performances, on his own showing, were done carelessly. He says his very definitions, or introduction, was prepared imperfectly, unguardedly, without anticipating a reply! And who can place confidence in his statements, when his very definitions, or elementary introduction, was an imperfect, unguarded performance, contrary to the course of all wise and prudent men? But this is not all. His future articles were written in a *hurry, in company*, and *at intervals of frequent interruptions*.

Is it wonderful, then, that a person who has such an amount of self-confidence, as to attempt to instruct the world, from worse than apocryphal authorities as to facts, and his lessions, too, delivered in a careless, unguarded manner, should declare, as a climax on his rashness, that his course is onward, and he can not come down to the regions of sobriety or common sense! And though we may wonder that he had a single follower, it is not marvelous that those who were led by him were soon, for the most part, involved in the greatest inconsistencies.

12. Mr. Whedon wrote six numbers in reply to Mr. Scott, the first in Zion's Herald, of February 11th, and the last on May 3, 1835.

Mr. Whedon, in his first article, replied to Mr. Scott, in regard to colonization, emancipation, and the propriety of discussion. He shows that Mr. Scott's immediate emancipation was one which was gradually accomplished. He also maintained that such discussion could not benefit, but injure the slave, nor reach the master; and if it did, it would exasperate but not convince him.

On the cruelties of slavery, as alleged by Mr. Scott, we may remark: 1. Some of his au-

\* Matlack, p. 102.

† Z., VI, 10.

‡ Z., VI, 10, col. 1, *supra*.

§ Z., V, 21.

¶ Z., VI, 30.

‡ Z., VI, 34, col. 2, *supra*.

\* Z., VI, 54, col. 2, *supra*.

† Z., VI, 38, col. 1, *melio*, March 11.

‡ Z., VI, 45, col. 1, *supra*.

thorities, at least, are *ex parte*. Mr. Bourne's book, his chief reliance, seems not so much to aim at conveying knowledge, as to excite the mind. The book is the language of the lawyer, and not of the witness. 2. All the facts of cruelty and licentiousness may be true; yet the concentrated impression of the whole may be false. A collection of the evil deeds of a few, may misrepresent the many, when applied to them. Truths, in regard to individuals, may have the effects of falsehoods on the masses; and so it doubtless is, in a more or less degree, in regard to the south. 3. The increase of population among the slaves in the United States, shows conclusively, that the charge of great, general cruelty does not exist. In the West Indies, the slaves continually decreased. And while the laws of slavery in the United States are more severe than they were in the West Indies, slavery is more mild in the United States than it was in the West Indies. Nothing but the power of the Christian religion in the south, both among masters and slaves, has made this difference in favor of the United States. 4. Nevertheless, the system of slavery is truly chargeable with all those cruelties and acts of oppression committed on slaves; although many slaveholders may abhor and condemn these acts in others, and would by no means perpetrate them themselves.\*

13. Dr. Fisk had published an admirable address on temperance, at a former time. Mr. Storrs, under a fictitious name, without the knowledge or approbation of the author, substituted *slavery for intemperance*, and thus made Dr. Fisk an advocate for abolition. This called forth an able, indignant, and scathing philippic from Dr. Fisk, in *Zion's Herald*, of March 11th, entitled *Unauthorized Transformation*, which was copied into the *Christian Advocate*, of March 20th. He complains that his address has been sent abroad garbled and altered, so as to make it speak the language of modern abolitionism; but that he ascribes no wrong motives to the transformer, though he thinks the impulsive feelings of human nature preponderated over the understanding, and that the thing was fraught with impropriety and injury. Dr. Fisk then presents six objections to the Transformation.

That such a use of the address, without his consent, was uncourteous, and in contravention of those principles which ought to influence our intercourse with each other as ministers and members of the same Church.

It is an attempt to fraternize two causes, that are, in many particulars, entirely distinct.

He disclaims any partnership in the sentiment, that all who do not join in the present abolition movements are apologists for slavery.

He protests against this transformation, because his language is made use of to declare that the Methodist Episcopal Church is aiding and abetting in a most stupendous system of robbery, oppression, and murder; whereas, she has done the best she could on this difficult subject. She has followed closely in the apostolic steps in this matter; or, if she has deviated from the course of the primitive Church at all, it has rather been by a more explicit and avowed advocacy of the doctrine of universal emancipation than was maintained in the doctrine and discipline of the apostolic Church.

He protests against the use of his address to favor the cause of the abolitionists. He would consent to the use of his words or *life* to favor the cause of humanity in the emancipation of the slaves, on principles safe and practicable; but, in his opinion, the course of abolitionists *will never do this*, though it will likely retard it.

He objects, finally, to the transformation, because it makes him the opponent of the Colonization Society.

He concludes by declaring, with the present abolitionism, under its present *leaders* and its present spirit and measures, he can not be identified. He fears for the peace of the Church, for the tranquillity of the nation, and for the vital interests of the slave himself.

Indeed, the prudent men of those times did not unite with the leaders or measures of the abolitionists, except a very few indeed; and these soon found reason to retire. The leaders and the measures, as a matter of course, were exchanged, and others took their place in the division in the abolition ranks in the year 1840, when the Garrisonians kept their ground, and those who, like Fisk, disagreed with them, formed a new organization of their own, entitled, "The American and Foreign Antislavery Society," rejecting the most objectionable principles and measures of the Thompsoniano-Garrisonian party, yet retaining some measures and principles which the sober men of our times, the leading British abolitionists, and the original antislavery men of America never adopted; and such men never will adopt them; yet for the reformation already effected we are glad, and we hope for more.\*

Mr. Storrs, March 12th, replies in *Zion's Herald*, and evasively, or rather tauntingly declares that he had no objection to the disclaimer of Dr. Fisk as to any partnership in the sentiments. He made use of some of Dr. Fisk's language, but the sentiments were his own, and he did not wish for any partnership in them. He also avows that he did not design to give trouble in this matter.† Still he persisted, and his friends with him, in maintaining the propriety of his course. Dr. Fisk made a brief reply, in which he states that he did not consider it so high an offense as some of the periodical press affirmed it to be, and while he thought his strictures were appropriate, he expressed all good will to Mr. Storrs.‡

Mr. Scott, in the *Herald* of March 25th, took great offense at Dr. Fisk's article on the transformation of his address, especially to the following sentence: "Even a presiding elder can peddle out these rawhead and bloody-bones books all around his district, and at his own expense, I am told, sends out weekly one hundred copies of the most exciting and unreasonable periodical published by the abolitionists of the day, to stir up among as many ministers the same exclusive, censorious, and fervid spirit." Mr. Scott himself acknowledges that he had lately purchased several hundred copies of Bourne, which he intended either to sell or give away; and if he were able he would soon put a hundred thousand copies of that work, or some other of a similar character, into as many families in different parts of the country. He also says, he considers Bourne's book to contain "a

\* Whedon, No. 4, on *slavery*, in *Z*, VI, 58.

\* *Z*, VI, 37, col. 1. See also, *C*, IX, 119, col. 2.

† *Z*, VI, 42.

‡ *Z*, VI, 61, col. 1, *supra*.



faithful delineation of some of the principal features of the slaveholding system; that it is a faithful expose of the cruelties of slavery." He also declares that he is now sending out weekly, at his own expense, one hundred copies of the *Liberator* to as many ministers, and characterizes the *Liberator* thus: "I consider the *Liberator* better calculated to give the needed information than any other paper I know of in this part of the country, as it is wholly devoted to the subject, and publishes on both sides."\* Indeed Mr. Scott, in so fully indorsing the *Liberator* and Bourne, and "some others of a similar character," fully sustains the statement of Dr. Fisk as to the rawhead and bloody-bones productions.

14. Mr. Thompson, in the spring of 1835, continued his lectures in the several towns and cities of New England as far as he could find opportunities. Mr. Whedon, on February 18th, in *Zion's Herald*, made some strictures on his course, under the heading of *Foreign Interference*. Mr. Whedon censures Mr. Thompson, because "he comes professedly sustained by the contributions of foreign societies to lecture the citizens of the United States upon the most delicate and the most vital of all the political questions which agitate this distracted nation—a question in which political feelings the most sensitive, political interests the most immense, and political principles lying at the foundation of our Union, and modifying even the character of our national Constitution, are involved." He maintains further that there is no proper analogy between the mission of Mr. Thompson and that of a missionary in any country, or a temperance or colonization agent sent from America to Britain.†

Mr. Thompson, in *Zion's Herald* of March 4th, replies, by stating that he was ignorant of the character of Mr. Whedon; but if he was a Christian he would soon see cause to regret his course. Mr. Thompson denies that he acts the politician; but he comes to America to apply the principles of the Gospel to the system of slavery. He then proceeds, in no measured terms, to denounce the professor, as we judge, as an unprincipled man.‡

Mr. Whedon, on March 4th, wrote a second number on foreign interference, in which he shows that the Circular of the British abolitionists, calling for help to support three lecturers on slavery in the United States, for three years, contemplated to carry on a "system of agitation;" that this system of agitation has been fastened on this country at the suggestion and cooperation of the Garrison party; that the Constitution of the United States was denounced by Garrison in London in the *London Patriot*; and that little or no consequences were to be minded by the immediateists.¶

Dr. Fisk, April 1st, called attention to Mr. Whedon's article on foreign interference, and gives us, from the *Liberator* of the 18th of February, the following from the editorial of Mr. Garrison in commenting on Mr. Whedon's publication. We give it to show the manner, the spirit, and the sentiments with which Fisk and Whedon had to contend. And, indeed, though Garrison took the lead, it would be sometimes hard to say whether he, Scott, Sun-

derland, Storrs, or Thompson excelled most in such style as the following from Garrison:

"The following article, [Mr. Whedon's on foreign interference,] we have perused with feelings of horror. Its spirit is clearly murderous, especially as it is manifested in the words we have italicized. He who can thus write, like an assassin, needs only darkness, opportunity, and courage to strike a deadly blow. Who or what its author is we know not, except that we believe he is a professor in the Wesleyan University at Middletown, Connecticut, and the sanguinary advocate of the American Colonization Society. We presume he is from the south, and a slaveholder, or the son of a slaveholder. His piece is calculated to stir up the evil passions of wicked men, and to lead them to assassinate the noble philanthropist whom it attacks. It has been long apparent that the Wesleyan University is one of the strongholds of southern despotism. It will be remembered that our esteemed brethren, Charles Stuart and Charles W. Denison, were mobbed in Middletown, much to the gratification of many of the students of the University."\*

Dr. Fisk quotes the above to show to what a pitch of acrimony and gall the modern spirit of abolitionism is propelling its votaries, and the above is a fair specimen of the articles and lectures that they promulgate. He then exhorts the members of the New England and New Hampshire conferences to beware how they give up themselves to this spirit of agitation by foreign and domestic influence. He then shows that Garrison and Thompson were one in sentiment and operation in this system of agitation.†

Mr. Scott wrote a reply to Dr. Fisk, April 2d, which contains nothing of any weight; for it is composed of carping observations of little relevancy, other than to manifest that some confusion had found its way into his thoughts, showing he was not a little disconcerted at the last letter of Dr. Fisk.‡

Mr. Thompson seems to have got into difficulties in all quarters. In New York he claimed and insisted on the analogy between missionary labors among the Mohammedans, pagans, and Chinese, and his coming here to promote abolition.¶ Dr. Reese replied to him on this topic, and charged him with designing to divide the Churches. This Mr. Thompson denies.§ But though this was not intended by Mr. Thompson, all know that such measures will lead to schisms. Such is the experience of the past, and such was the result in this very case. In the year 1842 the followers of Scott seceded and formed a new Church.

The Rev. F. A. Cox and Mr. Thompson had a collision. Mr. Cox, the British delegate from the Baptist Churches, was requested to speak at an antislavery meeting in New York. He declined, and wrote, on the 12th of May, his reason; namely, that it was a political question, in which, as a stranger, a foreigner, and a visitor, he could not meddle.¶

At the Antislavery Society meeting, in Boston, Mr. Thompson supported a resolution, which stated that "the Colonization Society was at war with the best interests of Africa, opposed to the feelings of the colored people, a

\* Z., Vol. VI, p. 45. † Id., Vol. V, p. 25.  
 ‡ Id., Vol. VI, p. 33; also, Thompson's Letters, by Garrison, p. 41.  
 § Z., Vol. VI, p. 42, col. 1.

\* *Liberator*, February 28, 1835.  
 † Z., Vol. VI, p. 49, col. 1. ‡ Id., p. 61, col. 1.  
 § Z., Vol. IX, p. 116, col. 6. ¶ Id., p. 175.  
 ¶ Id., p. 157, col. 5.

fraud upon the ignorance, and an outrage on the intelligence and humanity of the community, demanding the strongest public reprobation." Dr. Proudfit, agent of the Colonization Society, made a triumphant reply in the columns of the New York Observer, under date of June 1st, to this charge, which was copied into the New York Christian Advocate.\*

In regard to the relation in which the Methodist Episcopal Church stands to the Colonization Society, Dr. Bangs describes it, June 26th, as follows: That in 1824 the General conference declined any formal recognition of the Society, because they were not sufficiently acquainted with its operations. In 1828 the General conference had all scruples removed, and recommended the Society to the regards of the Church, the principal reason for which was

the good it would be the means of doing to Africa.\*

Mr. Thompson and Mr. Gurley, in June, had had a debate on colonization, in which each gave their views on the subject.†

The foregoing are the principal events of the year 1835, from January 1st to July 1st, that have any appropriate relevancy to our ecclesiastical affairs. In our next chapter we will continue the events of the year 1835, from July 1st to December 31st. We could only refer or give a very brief outline of many things. Those of our readers who may be curious to inquire further into these matters, may consult the references in the margin, which will conduct them to all the original articles from which we draw our information.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### EVENTS OF 1835—CONTINUED AND CONCLUDED

I. WE resume the events of 1835 at where we left off in the former chapter, and continue them from July to the end of the year.

The abolition movements advanced with considerable rapidity, attended with no small amount of extravagance on the part of abolitionism; and perhaps as little moderation, if not extravagance, too, was displayed by many on the other side.

Mr. Thompson continued his exertions in behalf of immediate and unrestrained emancipation, and seemed not very scrupulous in accomplishing his object. He is charged with exciting insubordination among the students of Andover Seminary. The faculty decided that the students should not organize either antislavery or colonization societies among them. Mr. Thompson thought differently, and in his lectures denounced one of the professors by name, and publicly called on the young men to organize an antislavery society over the heads of the faculty.‡

Mr. Birney resolved on publishing the Philanthropist in Danville, Kentucky, and issued his prospectus. On the 25th of July four or five hundred of the citizens assembled, and passed resolutions in reference to his course; and the resolutions were, in pursuance of memorial and remonstrance, earnestly urged previously by many citizens against the project of Mr. Birney. One of the reasons urged was, that Mr. Birney's paper was to be supported by persons unknown to them, and at a distance from them.‡

The Antislavery Society continued their publications with great energy, and sent to some southerners the newspaper called the Emancipator for August, somewhat previous to date, Antislavery Record, No. 7, the Slave's Friend, No. 3, and perhaps some of Human Rights for July. No papers were sent by the antislavery agency, as far as they knew, except to respectable free citizens; and that nothing was in them contrary to the Constitution and laws of

the United States, or designed to excite insurrection among slaves. They also affirm, that while they believed it to be their constitutional right to address the understanding and conscience of their fellow-citizens, that they do not wish to press their publications on any. On the 29th of July, the mails in Charleston, South Carolina, were ransacked by a mob of gentlemen, as most of the mobs of those days were composed of persons calling themselves respectable citizens. Some antislavery publications, together with the effigies of A. Tappan, Garrison, and Dr. Cox, of Auburn, New York, were burned in the street. The Executive Committee of the American Antislavery Society published a card, offering gratuitously copies of all the publications burned to all who would read them. Their office was presently thronged with persons asking for the incendiary publications, so that many thousands read them who, but for the pillaging of the post-office, would never have seen them. This is a mere specimen of the manner in which violence does a work it never designed to do.

We will give two specimens of southern expression on this occasion:

"A recreant southerner has made his appearance under the signature of 'Hieronymus,' in the New York Journal of Commerce, whose object seems to be to break ground in favor of ultimate abolition. This questions the fact of the recent burning in effigy Garrison, Cox, and Tappan in this city. We ourselves witnessed the occurrence of the *mimic fact*, and doubt not the REAL TRAGEDY would be consummated on the persons of those miscreants, could they only be brought within *catching distance*." (Charleston Courier, S. C.)

"Let us declare, through the public journals of our country, that the question of slavery is not, and shall not be, open to discussion; that the system is deep-rooted among us, and MUST REMAIN FOREVER; that the very moment any private individual attempts to lecture us upon its evils and immorality, and the necessity of

\* C., Vol. IX, p. 185.

† W., II, p. 63, col. 1.

‡ W., II, p. 63, col. 1.

\* C., Vol. IX, p. 174.

† Z., Vol. VI, p. 90.

putting means in operation to secure us from them, *in the same moment* HIS TONGUE SHALL BE cut out and cast upon the dunghill." (Columbia Telescope, S. C.)

The rioters in Charleston, having sacked the post-office, called a meeting for the avowed purpose of controlling the freedom of the mail. The Charleston Courier states, that "the clergy of all denominations attended in a body, lending their sanction to the proceedings, and adding, by their presence, to the impressive character of the scene." The slaveholders resolved, "That the thanks of this meeting are due to reverend gentlemen of the clergy in this city, who have so promptly and so effectually responded to the public sentiment by suspending their schools in which the free colored persons were taught; and that this meeting deem it a patriotic action, worthy of all praise, and proper to be imitated by the teachers of similar schools throughout the state." The abolitionists censured the clergy without mercy. But there are two sides to this question. The laws of South Carolina prohibited all schools, or other associations, that looked to the *mental improvement* of colored persons. The Methodists especially, and others after them, had so far gained on the public, in improving the characters of the slaves, that they were emboldened to commence Sabbath schools, and to extend them throughout the state, for the religious instruction of free colored persons and slaves, when their masters allowed their attendance. These schools, the hope of their laborious toils, were now *suspended*. Hence their interference on the occasion, at a time when the public sentiment charged these publications with being the cause why their labors should be frustrated. The truth is, the real state of the question was but limitedly understood, and the abolitionists seemed to care little whether the schools were destroyed or not, provided they succeeded in extending their publications. The clergy, too, seemed to be, for the time, pretty much in the position of the majority who attend mobs. The greater part knew not for what purpose they were gathered together. Still a great mischief was done. The Sabbath schools and day schools for the instruction of colored children were broken up, and the pastors in many places were no longer permitted to preach or catechise the children.

2. The New Hampshire conference, at its session commenced July 29th, in Committee of the Whole, adopted a report on the subject of slavery, and requested its publication in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and Zion's Herald. It was published in the latter paper, September 30th, but not in the Advocate.\* The Report defines slavery to be, "The holding and treating men, women, and children as *property*." They declare that treating human beings as such is a *flagrant sin*, because it deprives the enslaved of the rights of reason and conscience; it more or less annihilates the family state; it sanctions the promiscuous intercourse of the sexes among slaves; it places the religious privileges of the slaves at the mercy of the master; it crushes the mind; it withholds the hire of the laborer; it sanctions the breach of the eighth commandment. They next maintain that they of the north have much to do with slavery; for as men they have as much to do with it as with the burning of

widows; as Methodists, they have principles of long and acknowledged standing; as citizens, they are concerned as long and as far as it is a national affair. The five following resolutions are then adopted by the Committee:

"(1.) That the holding and treating the human species as property is a sin against God and a violation of the inalienable rights of humanity.

"(2.) That ceasing to hold man as property is the first and most effectual step which can be taken by the enslaver toward preparing the enslaved for the *proper use of the rights* and privileges of civilized religious society.

"(3.) That, as Christians, we are *morally* responsible for the existence and continuance of slavery in these United States, and in the Christian Church especially, and that we will use our Christian endeavors to bring it to a peaceful and speedy termination.

"(4.) That, as citizens of the United States, we are responsible for the existence and continuance of slavery in the District of Columbia, and in the territories over which the Government of this nation has the control.

"(5.) That a committee of five be forthwith appointed to draft and forward a memorial to our next General conference, together with this Report and the foregoing resolutions upon the subject of slavery, praying that venerable body to give its testimony against this enormous evil, and to take such other measures as may be deemed proper to free the Church and our common country from the dreadful calamities with which its continuance threatens the Church and nation.\*"

At this session of the New Hampshire conference was formed "The Wesleyan Antislavery Society, within the bounds of the New Hampshire conference." The second article says: "Our object is the entire and speedy abolition of slavery throughout this nation, the elevation and protection of the whole colored population in all their literary, civil, and religious rights;" but that this should be done peaceably, by prayer, the diffusion of light, etc.†

Although the resolutions quoted above contain truth in the main, there are more mistakes in them, especially in a practical view, than their indorsers may have noticed. For instance, "ceasing to hold man as property," as in the second resolution, is not always the best way to prepare the enslaved to enjoy his rights. In many places in the south, nay, in most places, if the master gives up the right of property, the poor slave is instantly sold to another; whereas, did he *retain the right* till an opportunity of freedom offered, the exercise of the right of property would be the only means to secure liberty to the slave. So in minors, to hold them as property till they were educated would be mercy, justice, and Christianity. Other elements in these resolutions are more than exceptionable; such as the avowed measures by which missionaries among slaves would be involved when their brethren, not as citizens, but as ministers and ecclesiastical bodies, were engaged in measures truly political, though of a moral character in some respects, as is the case with slavery.

Another incident occurred, in the doings of the New Hampshire conference, which may be noticed here. Dr. Bangs, in commenting on

the course and published pieces of Mr. Storrs, lamented that he had become a "bitter reviler." The New Hampshire conference, by their Committee, decided that the language of Mr. Storrs could not be justly construed into "bitter reviling;" and if even guilty, his faults should be corrected in another way rather than by the public prints, and especially as Mr. Storrs had been refused the columns of the Advocate to make his defense.\* The editors of the Advocate, in their paper of August 21st, declare that they think the accusation was just, and that the conference, in censuring the editors, exceeded their proper powers of jurisdiction, and then condemned them without having an opportunity to plead their cause, and even asked them to publish to the world the sentence of their own condemnation.†

Though there was a majority of the New Hampshire conference abolitionists, a large minority were not; but the minority, for the sake of peace, made no formidable resistance to the proceedings of the majority.‡

3. The New England conference, which sat June 3d, at Lynn, Massachusetts, or rather a majority of them, entered fully into the abolition movements of the times. They formed an antislavery society, entitled the "New England Wesleyan Antislavery Society," the object of which was to spread information concerning the slaves and colored people; to remove the prejudices against them; and to bring about the abolition of slavery throughout the world. The means to be employed were, to circulate tracts, such as Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery, newspapers, to lecture, so as to show the six and evils of slavery, and its remedy.‡

A committee of five persons, namely, S. W. Willson, O. Scott, L. Sunderland, P. Crandall, and J. A. Merrill, were chosen to write an address to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the New England conference, and published it in Zion's Herald. This the committee say was done in four numbers, though we can not find the first. The three numbers appeared in this paper, some of which is the commonplace characteristics of the slave system, such as all sober men, not interested, condemn at first sight. Some things on immediate abolition are strange enough, and utterly inconsistent in theory, and impracticable in themselves. We quote some of these strange things:§

"That the slave-owner, as far as he is personally concerned, should *cease immediately* to hold or to use human beings as his *property*. And is there any slaveholder in this nation who can not do this? If there be one, then he must be set down as *non compos mentis*, or an idiot. Every intelligent being in the universe of God can do right, and no man in the world can be compelled by law or circumstances to do wrong.

"So far as the state is concerned, it should annihilate the right of man to hold man as property, and all who are now slaves should be immediately brought under the protection and restraint of suitable and impartial laws. But the want of action on the part of any state government, in relation to this subject, should not, and need not hinder any one from doing his duty as above described, any more than the want of laws in Massachusetts should hinder any one

from ceasing to manufacture and use intoxicating liquors."\*

Again they say: "We are told that in some of the states slave-owners can not emancipate their slaves without rendering themselves liable to severe penalties for doing so; and it is asked, What they can do in such cases? Answer: Let them obey God rather than man. God says: 'Let the oppressed go free.' Let them follow the example of Daniel."†

Any one can see the illogical character of much of the above. Let us test it a little with a syllogism or two. No man can be compelled by law to do wrong. But the law of slave states compels men to become slave-owners by their laws of inheritance; therefore, those who inherit slaves by law do not do wrong. So there are some slaveholders who are not sinners. Again: the law compels some men to hold slaves by not allowing of emancipation; hence, some men are slaveholders, and innocent. Slavery is the creature of law. The law compels no man to make whisky, or it does not make men whisky-makers. But the slave laws make men slave-owners without the will, act, or deed of the owner. The cases are not parallel between the slave laws of the south and the laws of Massachusetts, in regard to the manufacture of whisky. How strange is it that five ministers of the Gospel should prepare an article with such crudities in it, and spread it before the world as the very pattern of logical reasoning! Mr. Scott had a hand in it, and so had Mr. Sunderland. We have seen that Scott wrote hastily, carelessly, and even foolishly, according to his own declarations and confessions. And Mr. Sunderland was laboring then under the same mental hallucination, which in no very distant time led him to Mesmerism, Pathetism, and infidelity. The other men, signers of the address, recovered slowly from the delusion, and found out, after severe loss, the miserable intellectual sophism in which they were entrapped. But Scott and Sunderland were lost to reason ever after.‡

When the election of delegates took place for the New England conference, the antislavery question determined the choice. Mr. Scott had the highest number of votes; Dr. Fisk, though elected, had fewer votes than Mr. Scott. The former declined to be the delegate of the conference, because his views were different from those of the majority. This act called forth an address to Dr. Fisk, which was published in Christian Advocate of September 4, 1835, or the four hundred and seventieth whole number, and signed by distinguished clergymen and lay members of New York. It condemned severely the action of the New England conference in their choice of delegates, and congratulated Dr. Fisk on his high and dignified course, in refusing to be the delegate of the New England conference. The address and Dr. Fisk's reply to it were extensively circulated.

As many as forty-three members of the New England conference drew up a protest, and published it in Zion's Herald, in which they complain that the doings of their conference are implicated and censured, and that they consider themselves injured by the communication above named, and enter their protest against it, giving the following reasons among others: 1. Though the subject of slavery was introduced into the conference by the anti-abolitionists, the abolitionists are charged with having done it by a system

\* Z., Vol. VI, p. 127, col. 3.

† C., Vol. IX, p. 206, col. 6.

‡ Id., Vol. X, p. 19, col. 1.

§ Z., Vol. VI, p. 94, col. 2.

‡ Id., Vol. VI, p. 140.

\* Z., Vol. VI, p. 140.

† Id., Vol. VI, p. 144.

‡ See Z., Vol. VI, pp. 140, 144, 148, for the three numbers of the address.

of party management. 2. That they did not allow themselves to be influenced by considerations merely of immediate abolition. 3. That it was a direct interference with the concerns of the New England conference. 4. That it was an attempt to forestall the influence of the New England conference at the next General conference.

The course of the New York preachers and laymen who signed the congratulation to Dr. Fisk, was extraordinary. It was unjust, and inflicted a great injury. The New England conference is assaulted as a set of serviles, and not high even in that grade. They are published as such to the world, and they can have no space in the columns of the paper which defamed them, to utter their protest against such unjust measures. It is true the address to Dr. Fisk contained some things very severe, and just enough in themselves, in regard to the abolition measures of the New England conference; but they were charged with some things which were unfounded, and that, too, without the opportunity of replying. Among all the publications we have read since the abolition excitement arose, in 1833, we have seen nothing so extraordinary and so much astray as this same paper, which so unsparingly denounced the New England conference. Truth compels us to state this matter.\* In short, some of the anti-abolition measures were fully equal in extravagance to certain doings of their opponents; and, then, there was this difference—the abolitionists were manifestly right in the main, as to the evils of slavery, while many of their opponents were in fact the aids of the pro-slavery men; though without design of being so, we are ready to allow.

4. In these perilous times, Bishops Hedding and Emory, on the 10th of September, published an address "to the ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the New England and New Hampshire annual conferences," urging them to a different course from that in which they had been recently engaged, in regard to abolitionism. We give the following outlines of this pastoral letter, remanding to our collection of documents the whole as one of those able and timely lessons of warning worthy of preservation for future generations.

They express their solicitude at the painful excitement in some parts of the two conferences, on the subject of immediate abolition; that no such excitement existed in any of the other northern or eastern conferences, as far as Troy inclusive; that in the New Hampshire and New England conferences a large minority of the preachers, and a majority of their members and friends, disapproved and deplored the agitation; that a large majority of the preachers and members in the non-slaveholding states were decidedly opposed to the measures of the immediate abolitionists, which have already produced pernicious results, and are likely to produce more, both in the Church and the social and political relations of the country.

The Bishops refer to the protection of the Constitution of the United States, and the blessings of the Union, as a reason to preserve both inviolate; that the citizens of one state are not responsible for the government of other states, and that the peace of the country, and of the world, can not be maintained on any other principle than on non-interference; that the events indicate clearly political action, in which, as mere ministers, they should not interfere; that they do not discuss the question of slavery itself, as there is no

occasion for it, seeing the sentiment of the Church is well known—their object is a practical one.

They exhort them "not to speak evil one of another." They think the strong denunciations in reference to their brethren, who reside where the laws do not admit of emancipation without removal, are incompatible with this precept, or with the common Discipline with which they are united, and to which they have solemnly pledged themselves. They ask if they are willing to exchange places with their southern brethren, and carry out the principles at the south which they maintain in the north; and unless they can, and will do this, theirs is not the apostolic spirit, the apostolic principle, or the apostolic course of action.

The Bishops declare that the interests of the colored population, both bond and free, are greatly periled by the immediateists, and that the regular ministers and missionaries are greatly hindered in promoting the salvation both of the slaveholders and the slaves.

As to the example of Great Britain, the circumstances of the two countries are very different. Congress can not act in this matter. The imperial Parliament had complete control in the West Indies. Compensation, too, was awarded, and Britain still has many of her subjects of all colors in a state of political disability.

The Bishops affirm that neither the New Testament, nor the preaching and practice of our Lord, or of the apostles, were ever intended to justify slavery. Yet the course of the immediate abolitionists is at variance with the examples of our Lord and his apostles; for while slaves in the Roman empire were in a worse condition than in the United States, yet there was no such barrier, in case of liberation, to the enjoyment of citizenship, as with us. Hence, the denunciation of one portion of the Church against another, is contrary to the requirements of our Discipline. The Bishops, therefore, think that ministers should not take part in measures calculated to inflame the public mind with angry passions, and stir up civil or ecclesiastical strife and disunion, in violation of solemn vows. In conclusion, the Bishops say that they intend not to abridge or impair any acknowledged right of any individual, but to carry out the principles of positive compact under which they were associated.\*

5. When Dr. Fisk was about to embark for Europe, he wrote an affectionate farewell address to his New England friends. In his address, published in Zion's Herald,† he states that one thing rested on his mind which gave him great solicitude; namely, the question concerning slavery, which threatened, in his opinion, to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church, and also the union of the states. He states he was never favorable to a public agitation of the abolition question, either in the Herald or elsewhere, and laments that another series of numbers was about to be inflicted on the Church, in the columns of the Herald. The question is destined, he fears, to tear the Church limb from limb, but his voice may not be heeded. He thinks the infatuation with which the subject is pressed, shows that nothing will open the eyes of the leaders till it is too late to retrace their steps. He then quotes an extract of a letter from a northern preacher in the south, who thinks that the severance of the Union, and the disruption of the Church must soon follow the present movements of the abolitionists. Dr. Fisk, however, trusts this event will not be, though he much fears it. He

\*C., Vol. X, p. 6, of Sept. 4th, and Z., Vol. VI, p. 166.

†Document, No. 18, and W., II, p. 93, and C., X, p. 17.  
‡Z., VI, p. 149.

prays that the great body of the people will see the impropriety of the course, and that public sentiment will put an end to this ill-timed northern agitation on slavery.

As a further expression of Dr. Fisk's views, we have his sentiment on the propriety of petitioning Congress on the extinction of slavery in the District of Columbia. His reasons for not signing the paper were, that the ultra-abolitionists, by their imprudent movements and ill-timed and ill-managed system of agitation, have removed all hope of success in any measure of this kind for the present; there was no hope of *prospective* emancipation in the present feverish state of public feeling; much less is there any hope of success in a measure got up under the auspices of modern abolitionists. As he wished freedom to the slave, when it can be properly secured, he wished comparative enjoyment and future salvation to those who are not permitted to enjoy freedom here. He exhorts all who were opposed to the present movements, as a tribute to humanity and protection, to refuse to sign such memorials till the party will pursue a different course. When this is done, there will be some hope of restoring to the social system a healthy tone of action.\*

6. It is proper, however, here to remark, that though there were very exceptionable movements to be found among many of the abolitionists, there were also among them many who were not of this character. It is true the body became deeply imbued at first, and for some time, with the ultraisms of Garrison and Thompson, as well as of Scott, Sunderland, and a few others in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of others in other Churches; yet the soberest abolitionists began to see that this course was exceedingly injurious to the cause they had most at heart. Accordingly, on the 3d of September, 1835, the Executive Committee of the Antislavery Society issued an address to the public, in order to disabuse themselves of many things laid to their charge, as well also, no doubt, to attempt to correct the sentiments of the Thompsonians and Garrisonians, who undertook to be the mouth-pieces of all the abolitionists of the land.

The Committee declare that Congress has no right to interfere with slavery in the states; that American citizens have the right to express their views on the constitution, laws, and institutions of any country; that insurrections are to be deplored; that they publish no incendiary publications; that they send none of their publications to the slaves, nor employ agents in the slave states to distribute their publications, nor did they send *packages* to any, or avow that they believe slavery to be sinful, and injurious to any country where it prevails; that the education of the poor is to be attended to in every country; that they prize the Union, and that the abolition of slavery would greatly consolidate it. And they conclude their address by an appeal to all citizens, referring to the measures taken to destroy the liberty of the press, in the following manly and patriotic language:

"Fellow-citizens, will you, in order that the abominations of slavery may be concealed from public view, and that the capital of your republic may continue to be, as it now is, under the sanction of Congress, the great slave-mart of the American continent, consent that the General Government, in acknowledged defiance of the Constitution and laws, shall appoint, throughout the length and breadth of your land, ten thousand censors of the press, each of whom shall have the right to inspect every document you may commit to the

post-office, and to suppress every pamphlet and newspaper, whether religious or political, which in his sovereign pleasure he may adjudge to contain an incendiary article? Surely we need not remind you that if you submit to such an encroachment on your liberty, the days of our republic are numbered, and that although abolitionists may be the first, they will not be the last victims offered at the shrine of arbitrary power."†

7. Indeed, civil society can not exist when power is the standard of right. In this country the laws are made by the people, and, hence, obedience to them is binding on all. The constitutions of all the states in so many words virtually declare, "That every citizen may freely speak, write, and publish his sentiments on *all subjects*, being responsible for the abuse of that right; and no law should be made to restrain or abridge the liberty of speech and of the press." And a jury is the only tribunal before whom a person is to be arraigned for the abuse of this right. This freedom of discussion, too, extends to all subjects. The right is sacred, and no individuals, whether magistrates or others, can interfere with its exercise. Of the abuse of this right, grand juries are, in the first instance, the only judges, and courts and juries are the only authorities to whom the people have delegated the power of punishing it. Even a legislature can not meddle with this right, and any law to interfere with it would be null and void. Of course, the subject of slavery can not be exempted from the common ordeal to which all other subjects are liable.‡

8. Nevertheless, there were many who declared openly that the abolitionists had gone beyond the bounds of moderation in their denunciations, as well as the utterance of opinions of an injurious character. We will give specimens of these.

The Rev. Dr. Reed, the English delegate to the Baptist Churches, himself an antislavery man, declares, respecting the American Antislavery Society: "In looking to a noble issue, it has been impatient of the means necessary to the end. In proposing to confer an inestimable good, it has not paused to ask, how it may be granted with the least alloy of evil. It has allowed nothing to prejudice, nothing to interest, nothing to time. It has borne on its front defiance, and not conciliation; and this not merely against slavery, but the slaveholder. Means leading to the result, and remuneration consequent on it, instead of being candidly discussed, are peremptorily denounced. If there be any thing that has special power to shock existing prejudice, it has been called up, and placed on the foreground of the battle. As you might foresee, the effect has been, that mostly those who would have been its best friends, have been afraid of it; and those who were pledged, from the purest benevolence, to the Colonization Society, have received offense; while in the slave states, its personality and want of prudence, apart from its devotion to a hated principle, has thrown back the cause for which it pleads to a lamentable distance."‡

Rev. W. E. Channing, D. D., in his admirable work on slavery, published this year, in his chapter on Abolition, utters sentiments very much like those of Mr. Cox. While he praises them for their strength of principle, their sympathy with the oppressed, and their active goodness, he faults them for their immediatism, their system of agitation, and other extravagances.¶ Many

\* Document, No. 19.

† See Judge Jay's charge on this subject, in C., Vol. X., 49.

‡ W., 11, 83, col. 2.

¶ Slavery, by W. E. Channing, D. D., Boston, 1835, p. 130.

other such testimonies could be produced, had we space for them.

9. Several conferences took occasion to express themselves on the subject of abolitionism. The New England and New Hampshire conferences took the lead in uttering heavy censures on the Church, and our Discipline, and in recommending nothing less than ultra-abolitionism. Other conferences, entertaining very different opinions, also declared their opinions.

On the 20th of August, 1835, fourteen preachers of the Baltimore conference, among whom were S. G. Roszell and Jacob Gruber, both strong antislavery men, express themselves as follows:

"The undersigned, ministers within the Baltimore annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, respectfully request those individuals north of us who are agitating the question of immediate abolitionism, to desist from sending to any of us their inflammatory periodicals, or other publications on that subject, as we never ordered or desired them, and are determined to have nothing to do with any of them, of which we request all postmasters to take notice.

"We beg leave to assure them, also, that though we are neither slaveholders nor the friends of slavery, yet that, in our judgment, the rash and violent course they are pursuing, in conjunction with foreign emissaries, is doing immense mischief in all our southern country, and especially calculated and tending to overwhelm our colored population, both bond and free, with greatly-aggravated afflictions and dangers, both temporal and spiritual, and to embroil the country in disgraceful and murderous riots.

"It is well known that the Baltimore annual conference has always taken, and still takes a decided stand in favor of gradual and ultimate emancipation; yet, so far as we know, the sentiments herein expressed are those of our brethren generally in this section, in regard to the interference of foreign agitators in this most delicate and embarrassing of our domestic difficulties."\*

The Ohio conference, at its session at Springfield, Ohio, August 25th, adopted a report drawn up by T. A. Morris, L. L. Hamline, and E. W. Sehon, avowing strong antislavery sentiments, but disapproving of abolitionism. The report declares that the conference, as citizens of Ohio, and ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, are opposed to slavery, and in favor of gradual, peaceable, and constitutional emancipation; but that neither our civil relations as citizens of a free state, nor our duties as Christian ministers, require us to interfere with the political regulations of other states, in order to hasten the abolition of slavery. Nor does the example of Christ and his apostles require more. They object to the means now proposed for the removal or mitigation of slavery; and after considerable of argument, the following resolutions were adopted:

"That, as the friends of peaceable, gradual emancipation, we have no cause to regret the course which has been pursued by the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery, as set forth in the Discipline, but retain undiminished confidence in the same.

"That we continue to appreciate highly the principles and objects of the American Colonization Society, believing that it has exerted, and continues to exert, a salutary influence in favor of the colored race, both in this country and their native land.

"That we deeply regret the proceedings of the

abolitionists and antislavery societies in the free states, and the consequent excitement thereby produced in the slave states; that we, as a conference, disclaim all connection and cooperation with, or belief in the same; and that we hereby recommend to our junior preachers, local brethren, and private members within our bounds, to abstain from any connection with them, or participation of their acts in the premises whatever.

"That those brethren and citizens of the north, who resist the abolition movements with firmness and moderation, are true friends to the Church, to the slaves of the south, and to the Constitution of our common country; and that, to encourage inflammatory lectures by foreign agents, and sanguinary publications in favor of immediate abolition, is injurious to Christian fellowship, dangerous to our civil associations, unfavorable to the privileges and spiritual interests of the slaves, and unbecoming any Christian patriot or philanthropist, and especially any Methodist."\*

On the 21st of August, at a large meeting of citizens in Boston, the following among other resolutions were passed:

"That we hold in reprobation all attempts, in whatever guise they may appear, to coerce any of the United States to abolish slavery by appeals to the terror of the master or the passions of the slave.

"That we disapprove of all associations instituted in non-slaveholding states, with an intent to act within the slaveholding states without their consent."†

The Kentucky conference, at their session in August, 1835, adopted a report on the subject of slavery, abolition, and colonization. They say: "Although citizens of Kentucky, we are not the advocates of slavery. We believe it to be morally wrong, and relatively mischievous in all its tendencies. We consider it an evil in its most tolerable aspects. We deeply regret and anxiously deplore its existence in this or any other country; and in relation to our own particularly, we pledge our exertions and influence, in an appeal to all just and lawful means and methods for its removal, wherever such exertions and influences can be brought to bear without infringing on the rights of others, constitutionally secured in the Constitution of the Federal Government."

The following resolutions, as well as the preamble comprising the foregoing sentiments, were unanimously adopted. Dr. Bascom was the chairman of the committee, and doubtless drew up the report:

"(1.) That we strictly adhere to the principles of our Church on the subject of slavery; and that it is our purpose to persevere in the course hitherto pursued, without any allowance whatever, with men or measures, whose object may be an interference with the question of slavery, uncalled for by the common good, and productive of mischievous, rather than beneficial results.

"(2.) That, in the judgment of this conference, the interference of abolitionists and antislavery associations in the north and elsewhere, by which the peace and quiet of a large portion of the nation are disturbed, and their common interests, laws, and safety placed in jeopardy, should be looked upon as an unwarrantable assumption of claim, and an abuse of the rights of citizenship.

"(3.) That, in the opinion of this conference, whenever such interference with the rights of American citizens is attempted by foreign emissaries

\* W., Vol. II, p. 79, of Sept. 11, from Baltimore Patriot.

\* Document, No. 20, and W., Vol. II, pp. 77, 78.

† W., Vol. II, p. 79, col. 2.

ries, whether as lecturers, ecclesiastics, or otherwise, all lawful means should be promptly resorted to, to arrest at once the mischievous tendency of their seditious intermeddling and officious insolence.

"(4.) That, without presuming to decide, we would respectfully suggest, that it is a dangerous maxim to be adopted by American citizens in the present crisis, that we may appreciate as pure and correct the motives of men whose measures and movements tend directly to subvert the Constitution and dissolve the Government.

"(5.) That it is not considered by this body allowable for any minister or member of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the limits of this conference, or, as we conceive, elsewhere, to resort to any extrajudicial means whatever for the purpose of interfering with the question of slavery.

"(6.) That we continue to repose entire confidence in the rectitude, policy, and operations of the American Colonization Society, and that we commend it to all who are likely to regard our opinions, as every way worthy their approval and patronage."\*

The following resolutions were adopted by the Tennessee conference, at their session in November of this year:†

"(1.) *Resolved, by the Tennessee annual conference,* That the course pursued by the abolitionists is fraught with danger to the peace, union, and very existence of this republic; unsustained by Scripture, and at open variance, both with the letter and spirit of the Gospel.

"(2.) That, as ministers of the Gospel, it is our imperious duty to discountenance the mad efforts of the abolitionists, and, in seeking the salvation and happiness of both white and black, to discourage whatever may incite the one to severity and the other to disaffection; not intermeddling with matters which the civil authority alone can regulate, but, in this as in every thing else, demeaning ourselves as good citizens of civil and religious society.

"(3.) That, while we do highly disapprove of the agitation of the public mind on this subject, as attempted by the abolitionists, and greatly dread the consequence of a persistence in that course, we still view with unabated feelings of approbation the cause of colonization, regarding it as the only peaceable, safe, and practicable plan of giving liberty to the slave.

"(4.) That, in so far as may be in our power, and consistently with these principles, we will use our best efforts to advance the temporal and spiritual welfare of the blacks.

"(5.) That we do heartily approve of the course pursued by the Maine, Ohio, and Kentucky conferences, and also of the efforts of Dr. Fisk in opposition to abolitionism, and especially of the letter recently addressed by Bishops Hedding and Emory to the New England and New Hampshire conferences."

10. Apart from the abolitionists, several productions of great merit on the subject of slavery were issued from the press, having no connection with the abolition press, and, indeed, containing stronger antislavery arguments than those published by the abolition press, but without its exceptionable matter.

The Rev. William E. Channing, D. D., the distinguished Unitarian of Boston, wrote a work on slavery, published in Boston this year, and circu-

lated widely in the north, and even to a limited extent in the south. The leading topics were, Property in Man; Rights of Man; Explanations; Evils of Slavery; Scripture Argument; Means of removing Slavery; Abolitionism; Duties, etc. Mr. Channing portrayed the moral evils of slavery with a masterly pen, and censured pretty severely what he esteemed exceptionable, in the principles and proceedings of the abolitionists. But he gave them full credit for their excellences, which was a rare thing in those days.\*

As we have seen in a previous chapter, the Synod of Kentucky adopted a report on slavery and emancipation, which we have published. The report provided for the appointment of a committee of ten persons, five laymen and five clergymen, to draw up the views of the Synod. The lay gentlemen were John Brown, John Green, Thomas P. Smith, J. R. Alexander, and Charles Cunningham. The clergymen were William L. Breckenridge, James K. Burch, Robert Stewart, Nathan J. Hall, and John C. Young. The resolution of the Synod required that the committee "digest and prepare a plan for the moral and religious instruction of our slaves, and for their future emancipation, and to report such plan to the several presbyteries for their consideration and approval." The committee proceed to state, that all admit that slavery is not right, and they show wherein it is not right; namely: Because, 1. It deprives men of the right to acquire and hold property. 2. It deprives of personal liberty. 3. And of personal security. These odious features are not the excrescences, but the system itself—its essential, constituent parts.

As to the effects of slavery, 1. It depraves and degrades its subjects, by removing from them the strongest natural checks to human corruption. 2. It dooms men to helpless ignorance. 3. It deprives its subjects, in a great measure, of the privileges of the Gospel. 4. It licenses and produces great cruelty. 5. It produces general licentiousness among the slaves. 6. It demoralizes the whites as well as the blacks. 7. It draws down the vengeance of Heaven. The committee then prove that slavery is not supported either by the Old or New Testament. They then go on to answer the objections, that slaves are better off than free negroes; that emancipation would promote amalgamation. And they then conclude, that slavery is as certainly sinful, as that the light of God's truth hath shone upon the world; and that it is the duty of every Christian to use vigorous and immediate measures for the destruction of this whole system, and for the removal of all its unhappy effects.

The committee then ask, What is the wisest plan for effecting emancipation? The *most simple* is immediate or complete emancipation; and this is preferable to perpetual bondage. So, too, political revolution is preferable to the perpetuation of tyranny. But, in consequence of adverse laws, immediate emancipation is not so good as a gradual course. The plan they propose is, for the master to retain, during a limited period, and with a regard to the real welfare of the slave, that authority which he before held in perpetuity, and for his own interest. Let the full future liberty of the slave be secured from all contingencies, by a recorded deed of emancipation, to take effect at a specified time. In the mean time, let the servants be treated well, receive intellectual and religious instruction, and stimulated to prepare himself for

\* W., Vol. II, p. 103, and Document, No. 21.

† W., Vol. II, p. 126, col. 3.

\* Slavery, by W. E. Channing. Boston: James Monroe, 1835, 166 pp 13mo.



independence. They conclude that there are only three courses to be pursued, one of which must be pursued—either to emancipate immediately, and without preparation, or to pursue a gradual plan, or to continue to lend their example and influence to perpetuate slavery. He that does the latter, lends his aid to perpetuate a demoralizing and cruel system which it would be an insult to God to imagine that he does not abhor—a system which exhibits power without responsibility, toil without recompense, life without liberty, law without justice, wrongs without redress, infamy without crime, punishment without guilt, and families without marriage.\*

I think it may be said with truth, that the address of the Synod is the masterpiece of the times. It will rank in ability and soundness with the works of Wesley, Clarkson, Wilberforce, and Duncan, on slavery, while it leaves in the vast distance nearly the whole of what the present American abolitionists have written. This work will not die. It will yet do much in the cause of emancipation.

The committee, in the same pamphlet, publish a defense of their plan of gradual emancipation, from the pen of one of their committee, Rev. J. C. Young, in reply to Rev. Messrs. Steele and Crothers. They consider it a necessary appendix to the address, and both make an octavo pamphlet of sixty-four pages.

Mr. Young performed his part with distinguished ability; and whether the plan will succeed in form or not, such good intention must do its work in some form. It is dated May 19, 1835, and entitled, "the Doctrine of Immediate Emancipation unsound, by J. C. Young, in reply to brothers Steele and Crothers." The doctrines of the address, as to the *time* for emancipation, were strongly opposed by Messrs. Stuart, the British abolitionist, Steele, and Crothers, and the committee published Mr. Young's defense in connection with their own publication. We fear that, after all, little thus far has been accomplished in Kentucky, by the Presbyterians or others, since the publication of the plan, either by gradual or immediate emancipation. But the arguments against slavery will have their weight with all conscientious and intelligent men.

11. It may not be amiss to present to our readers some specimens of the doctrines and ultra movements of the times.

In Utica, N. Y., an abolition convention was mobbed, and indeed broken up, so as not to be able to do any business.†

The Governor of South Carolina demanded from the Governor of New York the delivery of Arthur Tappan, to be judged of by the laws of South Carolina, as an incendiary, and of course to be hanged, if not by the decision of a court, the mob could do the business as readily as pillage the mail. The Charleston Mercury, however, very conclusively argued against the whole matter, as improper, unjust, and unavailing, nay, as tending to civil war.‡

Governor M'Duffie of South Carolina, in his message, declares as follows: "Domestic slavery, therefore, instead of being a political evil, is the corner-stone of our republican edifice. No patriot who justly estimates our privileges, will

tolerate the idea of emancipation at any period, however remote, or on any conditions of pecuniary advantage, however unfavorable. I would as soon think of opening a negotiation for selling the liberty of the states at once, as for making any stipulations for the ultimate emancipation of our slaves. So deep is my conviction on this subject, that if I were doomed to die immediately after recording these sentiments, I could say in all sincerity, and under all the sanctions of Christianity and patriotism, 'God forbid that my descendants, in the remotest generations, should live in any other than a community having the institution of domestic slavery, as it existed among the patriarchs of the primitive Church, and in all the free states of antiquity.'"

On the foregoing, the editor of the Western Advocate, Rev. Thomas A. Morris, now Bishop Morris, remarks: "The question between the north and south, respecting slavery, assumes more and more the character of a political one. For slavery as a system we have no apology to make, and never had; neither have we any to make for the means which abolitionists propose for its extermination. Intelligent, sober-minded Methodists in the south, no more believe in the ultra views of Governor M'Duffie and a few other southern politicians, than consistent Methodists in the north believe in the visionary and miscellaneous notions of leading abolitionists."\*

The proceedings of mobs, and the expressed sentiments of southern men on the subject of slavery, and such doings as demanding the person of Mr. Tappan, or advertising a reward for his head, made abolitionists in abundance; while some of the measures and principles of abolitionists prevented many, or indeed the most part of sober antislavery men from having any partnership in their movements. Thus the ground was principally left to the ultraists on both sides; and it was difficult to say which was the more ultra party. Yet the prudent men were denounced to be either abolitionists or pro-slavery men, according to the views of the party into whose hands they fell.

12. In the mean time, Mr. Thompson found it best to leave for England, before he had achieved immediate abolition. We will quote his own words. Before the meeting of the American Antislavery Society he declared: "When he reflected upon the ignorance, the wickedness, and the mighty prejudices he had to encounter; on the two and a half millions of clients, whose cause was committed to his feeble advocacy, with all their rights, eternal and irreversible, he trembled, and felt almost disposed to retire."† On the 12th of July, at Andover, Mr. Reed, the Secretary of the Antislavery Society of that town, reports: "Mr. Thompson closed by expressing his determination to labor in behalf of those in bonds, till the last tear was wiped from the eye of the slave, and the last fetter broken from his heel; and then let a western breeze bear me back to the land of my birth, or let me find a spot to lay my bones in the midst of a grateful people, and a people FREE indeed."‡ From the foregoing we infer, that Mr. Thompson must have expected that his three years' mission from the London abolitionists would suffice to accomplish his work; otherwise he would stay till it was done. The whole burden, too, seems to have been principally laid on his individual shoulders, as we learn from his declaration,

\*An address to the Presbyterians of Kentucky, proposing a plan for the instruction and emancipation of their slaves, by a committee of the Synod of Kentucky. Cincinnati, 1835, 31 pp. 8vo. Pamphlets, Vol. VII, p. 778.

†W., Vol. II, p. 110.

‡See Mercury, quoted W., Vol. II, p. 119.

\*W., Vol. II, p. 138.

†Letters, p. 66.

‡Id., p. 79.

quoted above. But after weighing all things, he threw the mountain from his shoulders, and we find him leaving Boston, on November 8th, on the ship Satisfaction, and addressing "his dear Garrison" from St. Johns, New Brunswick, just as he was about to sail for England. Still he breathes out, not just slaughter, but vengeance against his British abolitionists in this country, the "Otises, the Spragues, and the Fletchers, who lacked the magnanimity to allow him the chance of contending with them on the day when they traduced their COUNTRY, and HIMSELF. The placards that have adorned the walls of North American post-offices, and southern slave-markets, shall make their unaided appeal to British hearts and British understandings."\* No foreigner ever returned home from America more disappointed, or in worse humor than George Thompson. Yet Mr. Garrison lauds him to the skies, elevates him above Lafayette, and almost says he set all the slaves in the United States free.†

13. The state of things in the missions among the slaves, will enable us to see what great benefits religion conferred on them, as well as the great injury done in throwing obstacles in their way. We will give some abridged extracts from the reports of the missionaries, which will show the real state of things.

Rev. J. B. Chapel, April 25th, on Pee Dee, South Carolina, writes: "There is now a more flattering prospect on the mission than at any former time. There is not only more earnest attention to preaching and catechising among the slaves, but the owners manifest an increasing solicitude to have their negroes instructed in religion. They see that the Gospel is calculated to better their condition, improve their morals, and lead them to act in accordance with truth and righteousness. The field is enlarging. Many are saying on the opposite side of the Pee Dee, 'Come over and preach the Gospel to us. We want our slaves to hear the word of life.'"‡

Rev. Wm. Culverhouse, April 15th, Pickens Mills mission, Alabama, says, "The blacks here are very numerous, and little hitherto has been done for their salvation. But their owners generally give us a hearty reception. I have twenty-three appointments, which I meet once in three weeks. The south owes a great debt to the negroes. The only way to discharge it at present, is to give them religious instruction. They are hungry for the bread of life; and while they are contributing so largely to our wealth and ease, shall we not afford them the means of salvation? Under the influence of Christian principles they become, in every respect, more agreeable to their owners, and more happy in themselves."§

Rev. Samuel L. Bryan, of Back River mission, May 4th, says, "This mission is in the swamp of the Savannah river. It embraces eleven plantations, which are visited every

week. I instruct orally two hundred children, divided into eleven classes. We have three hundred and ten members. In 1833, when I was appointed to this mission, I found but three persons disposed to open the way of the missionary to the slaves. Through that year our object and plan became better known, and in December, 1834, planters desired their slaves should be taken into the mission. The conference of 1834 appointed two other missionaries to this work. The planters built several churches, asked for two additional missionaries, and contributed over eight hundred dollars to the Missionary Society. If two or three missionaries can be obtained, the planters will provide for their support. I ask, can no man be found? It is true, sorrow and death are in this field. But He that is with his people always, can as easily carry his people to heaven from these swamps as from any other place."\*‡

We could readily multiply, to some extent, extracts to the same import from the reports of the missionaries. In brief, the missionaries confine their labors to the religious instruction of the slaves, in preaching, catechising, and the use of all the ordinances of religion. The general result is, great benefit to the masters and vast improvement among the slaves, intellectually, morally, and physically.†

We find, also, that in some places, owing to the rumors regarding immediate abolition, and the proceedings of the abolitionists, some missions were temporarily suspended, and in other places the missionaries were viewed with distrust. But as the missionaries confined themselves solely to religious instruction, and inculcated obedience and industry on the slaves, the impediments were only trivial and short-lived.‡

Dr. Capers, now Bishop Capers, always labored, and employed his great influence in promoting the religious interests of the colored people. And, indeed, the Methodist preachers generally were active in this good work. From the days of Asbury, the spaces on each side of the center aisle, from the front to the extent of the end gallery, were appropriated to the old and infirm negroes, and the others had their seats in the gallery. In 1834 some thought that they could not consent that their wives and daughters should sit on the same floor with the colored people. They, therefore, insisted that all the colored people should occupy the galleries. This was opposed by the most influential white members, and Dr. Capers at their head, who assured the malcontents that these colored people were respectable, and their brethren, and their contributions aided much in meeting the expenses of the Church. And because Dr. Capers, and the body of the white members would not allow of the change, those who demanded it seceded from the Church.¶

\* C., Vol. IX, p. 158.

† See more specimens of missionary operations, C., Vol. IX, pp. 158, 165, 174, 176, 198, 202. Also C., Vol. X, pp. 20, 41, 50.

‡ C., Vol. X, pp. 20, 41, 50.

¶ Correspondent of Zion's Herald, Vol. VI, p. 38.

\* Letters, p. 120.

† Garrison's Eulogy, in Preface to the Letters, pp. 9-12.

‡ C., Vol. IX, p. 150.

§ C., Id.

## CHAPTER IX.

## EVENTS OF 1836.

1. In treating on the events of 1836, we would commence by noticing the movements of the abolitionists, in issuing periodicals to maintain their side of the question.

Zion's Watchman was issued January 1st, in New York city, by the New York Wesleyan Society, with Leroy Sunderland as editor. He was a member of the New England conference, placed on the superannuated list, I suppose, to relieve him from pastoral duties, that he might thus be at liberty to devote himself to the paper. It declared that there was "no design to come in contact with one distinctive feature or principle of Methodism. It is rather our object to defend the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, against the sin of holding and treating the human species as property." It was also assumed, that "it was as much an official organ of the Methodist Episcopal Church as was the Christian Advocate and Journal."

The Watchman, in remarking on the notice of its existence in the Christian Advocate and Journal, affirms, that for two years the preachers and members in New England have been displeased with the curse of the Christian Advocate, both in regard to them and the subject of slavery. The truth is this, nothing would satisfy the abolitionists, unless they had the Advocate under their complete control. As proof of this we mention the extra, which denounced the Church, its ministers and members, and even garbled the address of the British conference in 1834, obviously because it placed a higher value on the religious instruction of the slaves, than on their emancipation. They had Zion's Herald completely under their control to publish what they pleased, and they made full use of their privilege. But the Herald gave indications that its columns could not be the complete one-sided tool of the ultra-abolitionists, and, therefore, they looked out for another organ, in which Sunderland, Scott, Storrs, and those of their school might say what they pleased, and have at least one half of Zion's Herald, so as to promote their views in all directions.\* The Watchman commenced with Methodist pretensions, but like all others of its class, such as the Wesleyan Repository, the Mutual Rights, this profession was soon forgotten, and it assailed the Church, its bishops, ministers, editors, and members first, and then the institutions of the Church; and this prepared the way fully for the existence of the Scottite Church, which was formed six years afterward, commencing with the withdrawal of Scott, Sunderland, and their intimate conferees.

The Philanthropist, edited by James G. Birney, a native of Kentucky, and not long since a slaveholder in Alabama, was established at New Richmond, Ohio, thirty miles above Cincinnati, January 1, 1836. About the middle of April it was removed to Cincinnati, and pub-

lished there till July 12th, when the press and office were destroyed by a mob. It was conducted with ability and a due share of moderation, except that it partook pretty fully of the extravagances of the abolitionism of the times. Had Mr. Birney remained in Kentucky, unassociated with the northern abolitionists, in connection with the antislavery men of Kentucky, there is no doubt but his services would have been far more efficient, and that he might, after the exercise of some patience, enjoy the privilege of discussing slavery to its full extent in Kentucky. But he allied himself with Garrison, Thompson, and such; although he was in many respects unlike them. In his case the maxim holds specially good, "Evil communications corrupt good manners." After his departure from Kentucky, antislavery papers have been published in that state, without serious hindrance.

2. Mr. Scott, after doing his utmost, in connection with the New England and New Hampshire conferences, and having enlarged his antislavery knowledge, comes again to the rescue of his cause; the first of his continued numbers dating February 24th, and his sixteenth or last, April 20th, all of which were on the subject of emancipation. He then commences by declaring that he had "examined the subject in all its features and bearings, and the result is, a still clearer and stronger conviction that my course, and that of the abolitionists in general, is sanctioned by HEAVEN; and in my most cool and mature deliberations, and in view of my responsibilities to God, as a man, a CHRISTIAN, and a MINISTER, I feel that I would not retrace a single step that I have taken if I could."\*

Mr. Scott maintains that "slavery is a sin under all circumstances." This can not be successfully controverted, taking the system of slavery as it is established by law, and sustained according to law, which is the only true state of the question. But Mr. Scott seems to overlook that slavery is a creature of law, and seems to say that every owner or holder of a slave is a sinner, and that, too, without his will or act. He says, "With the Christian character of slaveholders I have nothing to do—my warfare is with slavery. I do not say that all slaveholders are bad men. What appears to be impossible with men may be possible with God. How much allowance he may make for the fact that they have been brought up in the midst of slavery, we can not tell. Without hurling upon them any anathemas, we leave them in the hands of God, hoping that in some cases, at least, they will obtain mercy, because they did it ignorantly in unbelief."† This declaration is synonymous, as far as we can see, with saying no slaveholder can be saved; and yet many men are constantly made slave-owners without their knowledge or act. About one hundred thousand infants are an-

\* Matlack, pp. 108-111. C., Vol. X, p. 86. W., Vol. II, p. 159.

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 30, col. 1.

† Id., p. 30.

nually enslaved by the slave laws of the several slave states, or about eight thousand three hundred and thirty-three monthly, or about two hundred and seventy-seven daily, independently of the present act or will of those who own them. Many are slaveholders by inheritance, and many are slaveholders who can not set the slaves free; while very many slaveholders are as sinful as the system of slavery itself. One thing is curious, that when abolitionists become owners of slaves by inheritance, and hold the slaves till an opportunity offers to set them free, as in the case of Mr. Birney, they are all good Christians; but when others do the same thing, as many do, the most that is said for them is, there is, *perhaps*, a hope that they may be saved, and their salvation may be possible with God, yet no anathemas are hurled against them!

"By immediate emancipation," he says, "it is not meant that the slaves should be turned loose upon the community without law—it does not necessarily imply equal political rights and privileges. This is a question for after consideration—immediate emancipation is the true doctrine."\* Messrs. Thompson, Garrison, and Scott set out with the doctrine of "immediate, entire, and unconditional emancipation," or "immediate emancipation, without expatriation, and the admission of the colored man into the unabridged privileges of the Constitution." In short, under immediateism, almost every thing has been included, if you will except time and opportunity to carry into effect emancipation by wise and sober regulations. Indeed, it would be endless to follow the various meanings assigned to this hackneyed term among the abolitionists; while on the other hand, the southern people see nothing in it but murder, insurrections, and general devastation. And yet how easy is it to decide on the proper means between these extremes! It is simply this, "Begin now or as soon as possible the work of emancipation, continue in it till it is completed for the best interests of the slaves first, and then of their masters and the country." The system of slavery is sinful, and is based on sinful principles, continued by sinful laws, supported by sinful feelings and acts, and tends to evil, and to evil continually. And every one who knowingly and by his deed approves or aids in carrying out this system, is a sinner. But this will not apply to all slaveholders, though we fear it will apply to very many of them.

Mr. Scott seems to have exhausted his stores before he got through these numbers, as the last of them are short. The resources of Bourne and Garrison were gone, and other material seems to have been wanting.

3. Mr. Thompson, after some success in his line, and much defeat, arrived in Liverpool on January 4th. Mr. Garrison, who seems to have lost, in Mr. Thompson, his principal aid, was at a loss for words to portray the glories of the man. He calls him "the paragon of modern eloquence—the benefactor of two nations—the universal philanthropist—the servant of God, and the friend of all mankind." He then compares him with Lafayette, and gives him the medal. In Glasgow, on January 25th, he is praised, by a resolution, for "having, with blameless propriety, distinguished talent, and

noble self-devotion, prosecuted the object of his mission in the United States, in the face of national pride, interested denunciations, and lawless violence." On March 1st, at a meeting of the Glasgow Emancipation Society, he is praised for intrepidity and devotion to his cause. In Edinburgh he is eulogized for his noble deeds in America, and excused for his early return home before finishing his three years deputed service, because, "by the verdict of his transatlantic friends, the best judges in this matter, his remaining longer would, without promoting the cause, have compromised his safety." In Exeter Hall, too, August 18th, as the best cover for a complete defeat, he was, by resolution, praised for "his philanthropic and self-denying labors in the United States."\* The antislavery societies of this country, after his departure, fully indorsed the entire course of Mr. Thompson; and the American Antislavery Society express their great regret for the loss of his services, with which they could not be induced to part, "but for the urgent advice of his friends, who were unwilling that a martyr for American liberty should be any other than an American citizen."

The proceedings of Thompson, and the indorsement of them by the American and British abolitionists, gave very general dissatisfaction in this country. The slaveholders took great advantage from it, and multitudes were deterred from any act, word, or testimony regarding slavery, just because they were unwilling to be placed in such company. These, therefore, waited for a proper season, and this season has in some degree arrived.

4. The state and progress of the abolition, or antislavery cause this year, demand a brief notice, as they are necessarily connected with Church matters.

The Report of the American Antislavery Society, read at its anniversary, May 10th, 1836, contains a summary of the proceedings and events of the year. Of opposition measures, there are notices of the violation of the mail, the application of Lynch law, destruction of the colored school at Canaan, mobs at Boston and Utica, attempts of Congress to muzzle the press and prevent free discussion, especially the attempt to fetter the right of petition in reference to slavery in the District of Columbia. But the progressive movements of the Society showed that there were now 523 antislavery societies organized, being an increase of 323 in the course of the year. The amount of increase of the funds was \$15,311, and the pledge of last year to raise \$30,000 was fully redeemed. With these funds, the Society kept a number of agents in the field, and extended their publications, so as to amount to the following list for the current year:

PUBLICATIONS OF THE AMERICAN ANTISLAVERY SOCIETY,  
FOR THE YEAR ENDING MAY, 1836.

Human Rights, copies of .....	240,000
Antislavery Record .....	385,000
Emancipator .....	210,000
Slave's Friend .....	205,000
Quarterly Antislavery Magazine .....	5,500
Life of Granville Sharp, bound .....	2,000
Antislavery Record, Vol. 1, bound .....	1,000
Mrs. Child's Appeal, bound .....	1,000
Slave's Friend, Vol. 1, bound .....	1,000
Occasional pamphlets .....	8,500
Circulars, Prints, etc .....	36,800

Total number of impressions for the year...1,095,800

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 42.

\* See Letters and Addresses of Thompson by Garrison, Preface, pp. 8, 9.

This amount was exclusive of publications of other societies and individuals, which were purchased and circulated by the American Antislavery Society. The issues of this year were nine times as great as those of last year, at only about five times the expense. Fourteen antislavery agents, as lecturers, were employed, and among them Rev. George Storrs. It was resolved at the conclusion of the anniversary to raise \$100,000 for the ensuing year, and to have fifty agents in the field.

Beside the publications of the Antislavery Society, many others were issued by individuals, of which the following comprise a part; namely: The Trial of Reuben Crandall, M. D.; Lectures on Slavery, by Rev. B. Godwin, D. D., from the London edition, with additions; Songs of the Free and Hymns of Christian Freedom; The Enemies of the Constitution Discovered; Lectures of George Thompson in England; Appeal to the Christian Women of the South, by A. E. Grimké; and others of similar character.

5. We find that several conferences expressed themselves on the subject of abolition and slavery, during the current year.

The Baltimore conference, this year, published the following in the Washington Globe, National Intelligencer, and the papers of the Church:

"WHEREAS, great excitement has pervaded this country for some time past on the subject of abolition; and, whereas, such excitement is believed to be destructive to the best interests of the country and of religion; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved*, That 'we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery.'

"(2.) That we are opposed in every part and particular to the proceedings of the abolitionists, which look to the immediate, indiscriminate, and general emancipation of slaves.

"(3.) That we have no connection with any press, by whomsoever conducted, in the interest of the abolition cause.

"*Resolved*, That the foregoing preamble and resolutions, signed by the members of this conference, be sent to the editors of the Christian Advocate and Journal, N. Y., Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati, Zion's Herald, Boston, and Christian Sentinel, of Richmond, for publication in those papers.

"A true copy, with the omission of the names.

"THOMAS B. SARGENT, *Secretary*."

The New York conference adopted the following report:

"The Committee to whom was referred the subject of abolition, beg leave to report:

"That, having deliberated together on this subject, they are of the opinion that it is the duty of the members of this conference wholly to refrain from all abolition measures and movements, as being incompatible with their duty as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ, and as promoters of the peace and welfare of the Church to which they belong. They, therefore, recommend to the conference the adoption of the following resolutions:

"*Resolved*, That this conference fully concur in the advice of the late General conference, as expressed in their pastoral address in the following words. [Then follows the address.]

"*Resolved*, That we disapprove of the members of this conference patronizing, or in any way giving countenance to a paper called 'Zion's Watchman,' because, in our opinion, it tends to disturb the peace and harmony of the body, by sowing dissensions in the Church.

"*Resolved*, That, although we would not con-

demn any man, or withhold our suffrages from him on account of his *opinions*, merely, in reference to the subject of abolitionism, yet we are decidedly of opinion that *none ought to be elected to the office of a deacon or elder in our Church, UNLESS he give a PLEDGE to the conference that he will refrain from agitating the Church with discussions on this subject; and the more especially as the one promises 'reverently to obey them to whom the charge and government over him is committed, following with a glad mind and will their godly admonitions,' and the other, with equal solemnity, promises to 'maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in him, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian people, and especially among them that are or shall be committed to their charge.'* All which is respectfully submitted.

"D. OSTRANDER, *Chairman*."

At a subsequent session of the same conference, they resolved,

"That, in the judgment of this conference, it is incompatible with the duty which its members owe to the Church, as its ministers, for them to be engaged in attending antislavery conventions, delivering abolition lectures, or forming antislavery societies, either in or out of the Church, or in any way agitating the subject so as to disturb the peace and harmony of the Church, and that they be, and hereby are affectionately advised and admonished to refrain from all these things."

The resolutions of the New York conference found no fault with its members for their *opinions*, or the *expression* of opinion, but for *agitating the Church with discussions*, such as was then current with the ultra-abolitionists; and the course of most of the abolitionists of the times was ultra. Mr. Scott passes strictures on the doings of the New York conference; but we think not well founded.\* Nevertheless, it has been questioned by some whether the decision of the New York conference was well timed, or, indeed, exactly sound in sentiment. Yet, as far as many of the Methodist abolitionists of the times were entitled to even-handed justice, they had little room to complain, as they had almost no sense of right in regard to others, if we are to judge from their publications; for instance, those of Scott, Storrs, Sunderland, and some others.

6. The New England conference sat this year at Springfield, Massachusetts, July 13th. The report on slavery and abolitionism was presented at the late hour of twelve on the last night of a laborious session. Out of a regard to the feelings of a minority, the report was withdrawn, though a majority would have voted for it had it come to a decision. The report itself, with some exceptions, is nothing more than what every true Methodist believes, and which our preachers, from the commencement, believed and inculcated. The committee declare that due subordination to the authorities of the Church is a duty, according to the laws of Christ and our own voluntary submission; yet, admonitions should not interfere with the rights of conscience, the word of God, or the principles of our Discipline. They also state, "We also rejoice in the success which has attended the labors of our missionaries among the slaves of the south; and we would assure our brethren engaged in this holy work, that we are most deeply impressed with the high value of their efforts, and do truly sympathize with them

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 136, col. 1.

in their labors and sufferings, and shall endeavor to bear them in the arms of our faith and prayer to our common Father in heaven."

In their resolutions, eight in number, they declare, the savage principle that *might makes right* is the foundation of all oppression; that any attempt of slaves to gain their freedom, by violent means, is a sin against God; and they will not countenance nor aid them in any such attempt. In the third resolution they say:

"Resolved, That slavery, the holding and treating men as property, is *sin*." And then add this note: "This is evidently true of slavery as a system, and of slaveholding in general. At the same time, there may be circumstances which palliate, and, in some instances, entirely remove the guilt of slaveholding. In the latter cases, however, the *principles* of slaveholding are surrendered." As a proof that the Bible does not sanction slavery, the committee ask a number of questions, such as the following: "What passage authorizes the act by which a man is prevented from having his own wife? What passage authorizes the taking from that mother her own children?" If any thing is true, it is true that the system of slavery is wrong—morally wrong.\*

The course of Mr. Scott, at this conference, was examined into. The report of a committee in his case, adopted by the conference, declares, that Dr. Bangs, as stated by him in a letter to the committee, disclaims having charged brother Scott, in the *Advocate*, No. 510, with the *crime* of falsehood, but that he was unintentionally led into unfair and incorrect statements in his printed address to the General conference; that the General conference did not intend to fix on Mr. Scott the sin of falsehood; that the discrepancies arose from the fallibility of human judgment, in an ardent zeal to promote honest views; that all should avoid the use of harsh epithets which impugn the motives of an opponent, where only an unintentional mistake has been committed; and that, in view of all these facts in connection with this case, brother Scott's character for truth and veracity stands fair and unimpeached.† This places matters about right, as to the *intention*; and yet, the evil effects of haste, want of study, and unsafe associations, do vast mischief; and while, in the judgment of charity, we are bound to exercise forbearance, yet the harm done by unwise measures is sometimes as great as that done with malice aforethought. Messrs. Scott and Sunderland have both been represented as writing with unwarrantable freedom, we presume with no bad intentions; yet their hasty and rash statements involved great mischief to themselves and others; and the harm resulting can not be done away, any more than Esau could regain his birthright by his tears;‡

7. The election of non-slaveholding bishops at the General conference, gave great umbrage to the southern preachers. Accordingly, on the evening of the day in which the election took place, the southern preachers had a meeting, at which it was agreed, that there must be a southern General conference, a southern Book Concern, etc. At least, this was the declaration of Mr. W. A. Smith, in a letter to the editor of the *Pittsburg Conference Journal*, in the fall of the year, or last of summer.¶

Mr. Smith, after the adjournment of the General conference, traveled north, through Ohio, New York, and then on to Richmond. During

his northern travels, he found very little affinities for slavery among his Methodist friends, as he stated in his letters of travel published in the *Christian Sentinel*, of which he was then editor, or one of its editors. On the 30th of July he published a Circular, addressed to southern men, in which he loudly calls on them to rally around southern interests. The Circular, however, seems to have been designed only for individuals, as is plain from its conclusion; namely, "The reasons for not addressing you through the columns of the *Sentinel* are apparent; and as a private communication, your own prudence will suggest the use to be made of it—no improper one, I hope." According to his scheme, the General conference was to have branches of the *Christian Advocate* in different places, and Richmond was one of them. Respecting this the Circular says:

"You are aware that the General conference have proposed to make the *Sentinel* a branch of the above paper. This arrangement contemplates that the subscribers to the *Advocate*, within our bounds, hereafter take the *Sentinel* in place of the *Advocate*. It will be for our next conference to accept or reject the proposition of the General conference. For one, I shall vote against it, and am in favor of southern men taking a southern paper—the *Sentinel* as it is, the paper of this conference. And if you concur with me, you will endeavor to effect this object forthwith."

On the subject of the General conference and slavery, the Circular holds the following language:

"This is a delicate and painful subject. It is true the conference voted promptly against the wild schemes of the abolitionists. Unfortunately, however, it is equally true that a large majority voted on the principles of abolitionism in the election of bishops, thus favoring the unrighteous prejudices of abolitionists, and proscribing from this highest office in the Church men admitted, in private conversations, to possess, superior qualifications to those appointed, simply because of their connection with slavery. Will the southern Church submit to this? Can they, in justice to themselves, submit to a continuance of this proscriptive system? They will not, they can not. The general union of the northern and southern Church, however desirable, can not be perpetuated at the price of proscription. If the General conference do not recede from this position, I am free to declare to you that I will, on all suitable occasions, seek to establish a southern General conference. Will the General conference recede from this position? Some think they will. For myself I entertain but little hope. I conversed freely and extensively on the subject at Cincinnati; have done the same on my late tour through several northern conferences, and I see but little reason to believe that they will. Should they not at the session of 1840, the establishment of a southern General conference will be the only alternative. In view of these facts, it was the current opinion of all the delegates from conferences in slaveholding states with whom I conversed, that it was the duty of these conferences to seek, without delay, the permanent establishment of conference papers, embracing the entire reading community within their limits, who could be influenced to take a religious paper, and of a bookstore. In this case, if the present difficulties should, by possibility, be amicably adjusted in 1840, which is much to be desired, then no injury would follow to the general union, by an extensively-circulated

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 122, col. 4. † Z., Vol. VII, p. 122, col. 3.

‡ Z., Vol. VII, pp. 122, 146. ¶ See Scott's Appeal, p. 14.

conference paper and a well-established bookstore. But under a different result—a result generally calculated on by most of those with whom I have conversed—our paper and bookstore would give us a position of independence, the want of which would be sensibly felt. A part of this communication I have felt it my duty to make to you as one with others whom you have appointed to publish the Sentinel, and the remainder as one of your representatives in the late General conference, in regard to facts which will not meet your eye upon the face of the journals of that body now publishing; and the whole at this time, because of their connection, directly or indirectly, with the interests of the Sentinel. This I sincerely trust you will seriously and prayerfully consider, and not lay down this communication till you have determined upon a course of action, and then pursue it with diligence, and all cause to fear for the success of the paper will be at an end."

The following is an extract from an article published in the Virginia Conference Sentinel, of which Mr. Smith was publisher. It is signed "A Voice from Virginia." Here the General conference is charged with "gross dissimulations!" "It was hoped, Mr. Editor, by the friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church throughout the south, that the resolutions which were adopted by the last General conference, condemnatory of the principles and conduct of the abolitionists, were indicative of a determination on the part of the Methodist ministry throughout the north not to interfere with the domestic institutions of the south, but to avoid every thing which might excite sectional jealousies, or tend to interrupt the peace and harmony of our union. But, alas! sir, before the adjournment of that body, palpable evidence was given that those resolutions were gross dissimulations, and our fond hopes of unanimity and brotherly love were forced to give place to the strong and obvious conviction that proscription was the order of the day. The election of bishops settled that point beyond a reasonable doubt. No one denied that the most prominent candidate of the south for the Episcopate was possessed of superior qualifications for the office over two of those elected; but because he was a slaveholder this was a disqualification enough. It was in vain that the southern members warned their northern brethren that this was a spirit of proscription, and that they could not submit. Insult is heaped upon injury, and they are told, in the language of the Pittsburg editor, that they should not attempt to force themselves as ambassadors of Christ upon those who can not receive them as such. We ask, Mr. Editor—and we do it seriously—will our southern conferences send delegates longer to an assembly where a bigoted and reckless majority silence all their appeals for justice and right by their fanatical clamors, and even trample upon their feelings, as men and ministers, with the utmost indifference? We trust not. We hope, sir, if delegates are sent again, it will be to fix the boundary between northern fanaticism and southern rights. Such sentiments as are held at the north in regard to us and our institutions, imperiously demand that such a course should be pursued."\*

From the foregoing it will be seen that Mr.

Smith advocates a southern General conference, an independent press, and, in short, all that would, in the issue, form a separate, independent Church. His correspondent more than seconds the movement, and neither of them are sparing of harsh and unfounded censures. The great reason for this contemplated secession from the Church is, the supposed proscription of requiring a bishop to be free from slavery, because, in the estimation of the Church, such an appointment would favor slavery, or would not disapprove of it; and such a bishop would not be received in the free states, for the good reason that the Discipline of the Church always did condemn slavery, and even encourage freedom when it could not demand it or enforce it. Mr. Smith, however, declared that the plan was not his, but it was a southern one; and we never saw his statement contradicted by any southern man. For the Discipline requires of all ministers that they should be free from slavery, or if they become owners of slaves—by marriage or inheritance, not purchase—they should emancipate them if *practicable*. And certainly it would be practicable for a bishop to set slaves free by removing to a free state, or sending them to Africa or to a free state, as thousands of others have done, especially as slavery is a great moral evil, and its extirpation a matter aimed at by the Gospel, our Discipline, and the exercise of justice and mercy.

3. We have seen that Dr. Fisk was chosen by the General conference as their delegate to the British conference. Dr. Fisk was then in Europe. The abolitionists of this country, whether Methodist or other, had greatly at heart to hedge up the way of Dr. Fisk in England, by prejudicing the public, and especially the members of the British conference and the Methodist community, against him.

Accordingly, early in August, a memorial on slavery was prepared, and sent over to the Wesleyan conference, purporting to be signed by eighty-nine ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. All we ever saw, or had the opportunity of seeing, of this address, is in Matlack's History,\* in which we find an extract from it and some account of the contents, both of which we give below as matters of current history:

"VENERABLE FATHERS AND BRETHREN,—The undersigned, members of the Maine, New Hampshire, Oneida, New England, Genesee, Black River, and New York conferences, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States of America, respectfully beg leave to address you upon the subject of American slavery. We are emboldened to do so from a consideration of the Christian joy which you were pleased to express in your last address—presented by your excellent representative, the Rev. W. Lord, to our General conference at its last sitting, in May last—that the Methodist connection in this country had 'already begun to resist and condemn this baneful system;' and especially as our General conference refused to publish the address of our British brethren, by which our people might obtain a knowledge of the fraternal solicitude which is felt by them for us, in relation to this subject, we think it proper to take this method for giving you information of a few facts, which we trust will show our fathers and brethren in England, how much the professed

\* Scott's Appeal, p. 369.

\* Matlack's History, pp. 155, 156.

followers of Wesley in this country need their prayers and Christian admonitions.

"In our different annual conferences, as you are aware, probably, we have now about three thousand traveling ministers, and out of this number we are not aware there are three hundred who are abolitionists, who believe that holding and treating the human species as *property* is a *sin* against God, which ought to be *immediately* abandoned.

"In our views of this great evil we do not differ from Wesley, Clarke, Watson, Coke, and the sentiments which have been put forth from your venerable body. But there are a few facts in relation to the system as it exists in this country, and especially as it is countenanced and defended in the Methodist Episcopal Church, with which we wish our brethren on the other side of the Atlantic to be acquainted."

"It then speaks," says Mr. Matlack, "of, 1. The number enslaved. 2. The slave-trade. 3. The moral condition of the enslaved. 4. The course taken by the Methodist Church of this country in relation to this subject. 5. The present state of the Methodist Episcopal Church—its connection with the slave system. 6. The political bearing of this subject. And, 7. The influence which may be successfully exerted against this system from abroad."

It appears that the abolitionists of the United States, in connection with a similar class of abolitionists in England, made it a common cause to hem up the way of Dr. Fisk. The Methodist abolitionists sent their circular to the conference, and private letters, as far as they could, to sundry individuals. Other abolitionists of the United States also sent letters on the same subject to England.

Mr. Fisk arrived in Birmingham, the seat of the conference, on Thursday, 21st of July, the week before conference sat. When in the stage, on his last day's journey to Birmingham, a passenger informed him that his name was already called in question, in a public assembly in Birmingham, and that he was likely to meet with a rough reception from the people of Birmingham. The following is Dr. Fisk's account of this matter: "It appeared, on further information, that the Baptists had, but the night before, held a missionary meeting, to which a Mr. East, a dissenting minister of Birmingham, and a Mr. Sturge, a Quaker, had been invited. At this meeting Rev. Mr. East, Mr. Sturge, and others, introduced the abolition question, and succeeded in turning the appropriate business of a missionary meeting into a clamorous and disorderly antislavery discussion, during which the United States, of course, and especially the Christian Churches of the United States, came in for a large share of rebuke and censure. In the course of the discussion, Rev. Dr. Hoby, colleague of Dr. Cox in a delegation to the Baptists, and other Christian Churches in America, during the summer of 1835, who was present, and who is pastor of a large Baptist Church in this town, was arraigned and censured for the course he had pursued on the slave question in America. The meeting closed in great confusion, by passing a resolution, the substance of which was, that every slaveholder, *under any circumstances*, ought to be excluded from Christian communion. In vain did Dr. Hoby try to get a modification of the resolution. In vain did he state that some of their American brethren were so situated as not to be *allowed* to liberate their slaves without

expatriating them. The public ear was deaf to any thing, and the resolution was carried with acclamation. One of the speakers affirmed, at the same time, that Dr. Hoby had made a *pro-slavery* speech, and had quoted Scripture in favor of slavery. This latter charge grew out of reference to the apostolic practice of confining their labors to preaching the Gospel, and insisting upon the observance of all relative duties without throwing themselves rashly into collision with the laws of the land. During the discussion the Methodists were highly censured, and Mr. Sturge informed the meeting, that at the General conference resolutions had been passed in favor of slavery, violent things had been said, and that finally *the bishop who presided there had been sent, as the representative of the pro-slavery party, to the British conference, about to be held in Birmingham, who was himself a slaveholder and an abettor of slavery*; and that it should not be his fault if the conference were not well apprised of the character of the man who had been sent to them. Some one cried out in the meeting, 'What is the name of this delegate?' The answer was, 'Bishop Fisk.' Mr. Sturge kept his word, and sent *printed circulars to all the members of the conference*, reiterating the charges against the Methodist Episcopal Church and against me."\*

After the attempt at the Baptist meeting, and Mr. Sturge's circular to the conference, the memorial from the abolition Methodist preachers of New England was circulated, of which Dr. Fisk gives the following account: "A memorial came from certain ministers of the New England, New Hampshire, and a few of some other conferences, praying the British conference to interfere with their counsel and admonition on the question of American slavery, and especially with the Methodist Episcopal Church, which they represent as having proved recreant to their principles on this question. They mention the Wesleyan University by name, and refer to the 'Counter Appeal,' as a *labored defense of slavery*, a number of copies of which they sent out that the conference might know what sort of sentiments were current among the Methodists in America; and gave their British brethren to understand that the Methodist Church in America was responsible for a large portion of the guilt of slavery, and that the non-slaveholding states were as much involved in this evil as the south. To this document were attached, I think, about eighty-five names. I could mention some of them, but I forbear.

"Some of them have been my most intimate friends, and have lived with me and under my care, like my own sons, and yet they now come forward, and deliberately declare to their brethren in England that I have signed 'a labored defense of slavery'; and this, too, while I am in a land of strangers, and among a people where they know the greatest sensibility on this subject prevails. They send these statements to the very official body to which I was officially deputed by the highest ecclesiastical body in our connection—and all this for what? What spirit is this? Is it that of virtuous philanthropy? Or is it, rather, the fruit of an excited feeling that binds the judgment, and hardens benevolence and humanity itself into

\* C., Vol. XI, p. 14, col. 6. W., 111; whole number, 128, October 7.



indifference to every claim not in immediate unison with what is, to them, the all-absorbing excitement? It affords me some relief to see that the names are all in *one handwriting*, from which I infer that only a general consent had been given by the great whole to have their names put to some kind of memorial to the British conference, without their knowing the precise character of the document itself; for had they read it themselves, I can hardly think some of them would have signed it. I have also the satisfaction of knowing that the British conference are men of too honorable feelings to countenance such a procedure. They said it was not for them officially to encourage representations from individuals and portions of conferences when they are in official interchange and correspondence with the entire body. And this they decided spontaneously, at a time when I was absent from the conference, so that the document was not permitted to be read. Thus these repeated efforts to prejudice the Wesleyan conference here against me, and against the General conference and the Church at large, have failed. But it has not been for lack of vigorous and reiterated effort on the part of some of our own body in the United States. I am sorry to be obliged to say this. Nor do I say this with a design to convey the idea that any of our Methodist brethren in America have a malignant wish to injure either their own Church or me as an individual. They are good men; their zeal originates from a desire that oppression and wrong should cease. I know most of them well, and have known them long; and their course in this matter only adds another lamentable proof of the weakness of poor human nature, and especially of the blindness of human sympathy, which, in fact, is not only blind, but, when highly wrought, whether on false ground or true, and misdirected, is absolutely maddening, and in numerous instances produces a monomania. I refer to this subject the more because I think, when the course is reviewed, there are some, at least, who will see that such measures have in them more of passion than of benevolence, and that a course thus supported, and thus urged forward, will be sure, if it gains some warm friends, to alienate many and make many more violent enemies.\*

Notwithstanding the various attempts of American abolitionists, whether Methodist or other, to hedge up the way of Dr. Fisk, he had, nevertheless, a full opportunity to present the whole subject before the British conference; and his accusers failed in their attempt to prejudice the minds of the preachers against him. The part of Dr. Fisk's address before the British conference relating to slavery is as follows:

"Another cause of deterioration in America, is our agitation on the subject of *slavery*. Perhaps it may be proper for me to say a word on this subject in relation to myself. My name got to Birmingham before me. A circular has been distributed representing me as an abettor of slavery, and as a slaveholder. If the gentleman who is the author of that document had read his Bible more, and meddled with the affairs of other people less, he would have learned not to 'bear false witness against his neighbors.' I have been educated in a different school—one of abhorrence of slavery; and never having lived in the slave-

holding states, I had scarcely seen more than five or six colored persons till I grew up to manhood; and all I have seen in traveling in slaveholding states since that time, has tended to strengthen and confirm my early impressions. In my opinion, *slavery is evil, only evil, and that continually*. The intimations of that circular are wholly unfounded. I do not believe that any such party as a pro-slavery party exists in the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. Some differences of opinion exist as to the best means of getting rid of slavery; and whether I, or those who think with me, have formed a right opinion on that subject, may be a debatable matter. On both sides a difference of opinion exists as to the best modes of getting rid of this evil; and it is to be lamented that this difference of opinion is greatly retarding or injuring the general work. In the practical difficulties we have to contend with on this subject, no man can sympathize who has not had personally to deal with them. We need your pity, not your censures; if we deserve censure we have it plentifully from other quarters. But censure and vituperation are not likely to bring about the consummation we all desire. By the original Constitution of the United States, the Congress have no more power to deal with that question than the Parliament of Great Britain—neither have the non-slaveholding states. You know the excitement which existed between the north and south on the traffic question. Just as that was healed the other agitation commenced, and political men have said that this is another instance of interference with the southern states. The progress of emancipation gradually advanced. Several states have emancipated their slaves. Two or three were on the eve of adopting some efficient measure in reference to the abolition of slavery. Many think that in point of *interest* even such a measure is expedient. This impression and other considerations will tend to work emancipation slowly, it may be, but surely. The attempt to propel the wheels has produced great present resistance. The day will come, we trust, when we shall join with you in the triumphs of emancipation; but they who have so lately freed themselves of the evil, which was not so interwoven with the state of society here as in America, ought not to censure us so severely, or indulge in accusations which only chafe and irritate. I am glad to be permitted to speak thus freely. My personal reception has been different from what I expected. I have not met with a rod or club at every turn. In spite of outdoor influences you have waited for explanation, and you have treated me as a brother. For the purpose of relieving the mind of any brother, I will read, from our book of Discipline, our rule on this subject. I wish to go to official documents. I am asked why our conferences have not passed a resolution opposed to slavery. I answer that the standard doings of the conference are such as not to require any new declaration on this subject. If any body of men have meliorated and softened the state of slavery, done any thing to prepare the way for emancipation, it is the Methodist body. [Here Dr. Fisk quoted the section on slavery from the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church.]

"Our General Rules, I have said, are the same as yours. Only one condition is required of the members of our society—'a desire to flee from the wrath to come;' but that desire is to be evinced by the observance of certain practices and the forsaking of others. The *buying and selling of men, women, and children, with intent to enslave them, is*

\* C., Vol. XI, p. 81, col. 5.

one of the forbidden practices. No conference has the power to alter our essential laws, but the General conference—held every four years—and that only when three-fourths of the annual conferences have first recommended the change.”

We now quote the part of Mr. Lord's address before the British conference which refers to slavery:

“I can respond generally to the sentiments expressed by Dr. Fisk. He has adverted to a topic to which I shall shortly allude. I felt myself in the American conference, on this subject, placed in delicate circumstances. I had to present your address, and I felt it my duty to reiterate the sentiments it contained. I was not, I assure you, treated in any uncourteous manner. The passages which related to this subject were listened to with the deepest attention and silence, but no marks of disapprobation were shown. In the discussion, some, it is true, expressed themselves earnestly, and with undue warmth. There was, however, more self-control than, considering the subject, I expected. Though I approve of the sentiments, and am convinced of the sincerity of the friends of abolition, yet, in some respects, they have acted, in my opinion, injudicious. I should rejoice if our brethren were to lift up their voices against the evil, but in southern states it would be at the sacrifice of life. They must be prepared, as our brethren were in the West Indies, to suffer martyrdom in the cause.”

Dr. Bunting, the President, expressed himself in the following terms:

“He would state his opinion on the great matter to which reference had been made. It must be admitted that there was a great difference between having to emancipate 800,000 slaves at a distance, and separated by local situations, and those localities being favorable for their emancipation, and emancipating two or three million of people living among them, man to man, and house to house, and so connected with their domestic life; and he was not a candid abolitionist who did not admit that, though slavery was the same all over the world, the facilities for terminating it might be different; yet he must say it would have been gratifying to him to have learned that the American conference had expressed its opinion on the moral question—if they had taken occasion to pass condemnation on slavery. Die it must, and happy should he have been if they had passed sentence of death upon it. So far they [the British conference] had gone. Individuals had gone further, but the conference had not. Slavery was always wrong, essentially, eternally, and incurably wrong, and it was one of its evils that it could not always be done away with at once, without great evils resulting to society in general. As to the manner, the time, the terms, the securities, etc., they were political questions, and belonged to statesmen; and he blamed not his American brethren for not having meddled with them; but he should have been highly gratified if it had pleased their conference to condemn *the thing* so as not to be misunderstood. He said not this in his official capacity; he assumed no right to dictate; his observations were intended to be entirely friendly and fraternal.”\*

Dr. Bunting himself seems to have adopted the error that the Methodist Episcopal Church had just begun to entertain correct views of slavery. This misconception was embraced in the address of the British conference to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1835,

and received very generally by others. The true state of the matter is, that before the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Methodist societies in America were strongly antislavery. At its organization, a new rule against slavery was introduced into the General Rules of Mr. Wesley, in order to meet the question of slavery in the United States; and the section on slavery, published in our Discipline, pronounced slavery to be a moral evil, in as strong terms as Mr. Bunting ever used. So that the British conference, Dr. Bunting, Mr. Lord, and others owe yet an apology to the Methodist Episcopal Church for misrepresenting them to the public, or rather for taking up the unjust misrepresentations of others. The truth is, the American Methodist Episcopal Church has always been in advance of British Methodism in regard to slavery, both as to Scriptural views, in regard to the moral character of slavery, and in Scriptural measures in treating it ecclesiastically. The reason is, in America it was in our midst, and we knew it; in Britain it was distant from them, and they knew it only in part. And indeed any one must see, that compares our Discipline with the instructions of the Wesleys to their West India missionaries, that our British brethren have rather copied the example and course of the American Church, than led the way.

Dr. Fisk was of the opinion that that class of British abolitionists, corresponding to the Garrisonian and Thompsonian school, in this country, can have no claim in effecting emancipation in the West Indies, but, on the contrary, they had nearly succeeded in preventing it. We will abridge his account of it. He states that emancipation in the West Indies was not immediate and absolute, but gradual; and that, so far as the interests of the masters are concerned, it is not emancipation, but a ransom; and the British Government would not have consented to the measure except on the ground of compensation.

So far was it from being the fact that Mr. Thompson and his associates were the principal agents in accomplishing the work, that their precipitancy had well nigh ruined the cause after it was decided on by the King's ministry to make it a Government measure; so that whatever impulse this agitating party gave to the cause, it was of so irregular and heated a character that, but for the wise and the prudent, the measure would have been thwarted after all. These wise and prudent men were the first in the field. The ultraists opposed them, and branded them as traitors. It was said of Buxton and others that they had gone over to the slaveholder's interests, and some of the leading Methodists came in for a share of the abuse. “It was a missionary,” says Dr. Fisk, “of the Wesleyan connection—the Rev. Mr. D., [Peter Duncan,] of Scotland—whose testimony decided the question in the minds of some of the leading men in the house of lords, in a committee of that house, appointed to investigate that subject, and this was, in part, the means of carrying the bill through the upper house. And yet Mr. D., and the excellent men who brought him forward on that occasion, were denounced and calumniated because they approved of compensation and apprenticeship.” Indeed, the testimony of Rev. Messrs. Barry and Duncan, Wesleyan missionaries, gave preponderancy to the cause of redemption in the West Indies,\* as any one

\* C., Vol. XI, p. 25, col. 2.

\* W., Vol. III, p. 157.

may see who will peruse their testimony before the Committee of the house of lords.

The British conference, in their session of July and August, 1836, in their address to the American Methodist General conference, express themselves very plainly and very kindly on the subject of slavery. They then seemed to be fully aware, through information from Dr. Fisk, that the Methodist Episcopal Church had all along borne testimony against slavery; but they think there is much need to *act upon* their testimony, and make it a more practical part of their economy. We will remand, however, their address to our list of important documents.\*

9. But the ultra-abolitionists of Britain and the United States were exceedingly zealous and active, and too successful in stirring up the British Churches against their sister Churches in this country.

The British Baptists sent a scorching address to the triennial Baptist convention, in which they belabor them severely on account of their pro-slavery tendencies. Part of the address is very just, and part of it unreasonable.† Dr. F. A. Cox is thoroughly castigated because he would not get on the platform with Mr. Thompson, at the antislavery anniversary, in May, 1835. Mr. Thompson misrepresented him in England, and drew down the wrath of many of the Baptists on him.

The United Secession, too, sent letters of reproof and exhortation to their brethren on this side the water.‡

Rev. R. J. Breckenridge, a distinguished Presbyterian of the United States, and George Thompson had quite a discussion on the points at issue in Glasgow. Mr. Breckenridge fully sustained his ground by referring to the evils in the British Government that were identical in moral character with slavery.¶

Still, all this can readily be accounted for. Some individuals, and some bodies of Christians, became the apologists for slavery, and the whole, through the ultraism of certain abolitionists, were charged with the opinions of a few, or a part. By this means the greater part of European Christians believed that all the American Churches had become pro-slavery; and hence the declaration of their sentiments, their exhortations, and denunciations.

10. Many occurrences, too, in the United States gave rise to the formation of an unfavorable opinion concerning the American Churches.

The Charleston Baptist Association presented to the Legislature of South Carolina, in 1836, a memorial, in which the Church entirely gave up the great moral standard, and substituted for it the "doctrines of men." We make the following extract:

"The undersigned would further represent, that the said Association does not consider that the holy Scriptures have made the fact of slavery a question of morals at all. The question, it is believed, is purely one of political economy. It amounts, in effect, to this: *Whether the operatives of a country shall be bought and sold, and themselves become property, as in this state; or whether they shall become hirelings, and their labor only become property, as in some*

*other states?* In other words, whether an employer may buy the whole time of the laborers at once, of those who have a right to dispose of it, with a permanent relation of protection and care over them, or whether he shall be restricted to buy it in certain portions only, and subject to their control, and with no such permanent relation of care and protection? The right of masters to dispose of the time of their slaves has been distinctly recognized by the Creator of all things, who is surely at liberty to vest the right of property over any object in whomsoever he pleases."\* This renders to Cæsar not only his own, but what also belongs to God.

The Biblical Repertory, in an article designed for the General Assembly of 1836, containing many excellent things, has the following extraordinary reason for slavery, which is of a piece with many things in the article, which, as a whole, professes to be antislavery: "Because masters may treat their slaves unjustly, or governments make oppressive laws in relation to them, is no more a valid argument against the lawfulness of slaveholding than the abuse of parental authority, or the unjust political laws of certain states, is an argument against the lawfulness of the parental relation or of government." The error in the above is, that God never ordained or sanctioned slavery, though he both ordained and sanctioned government and the parental relation. By such real or semi-pro-slavery declarations as the above, the pro-slavery men have triumphed and became bold; while these neutrals get little credit in the end from either side. Such was the article in the Repository, published as a tract, and distributed among the members of the Assembly in 1836.‡

Great advantage, too, was taken of the honest views of good antislavery men, in what might be called, not apologies for slavery, but mere acts of justice to a certain class of slaveholders. The case of Reed and Matheson is one in point. The Harpers published their narrative. In it, however, were some things disagreeable to the south. The southern press complained, and the cautious publishers issued an apology for their publication.‡

11. The strong pro-slavery sentiment was developed, not merely by the accommodating booksellers and the easy divines, but even legislatures in the south exceeded even the mobs and the partisan slaveholders and their apologists, by their wild and barbarous enactments. A few specimens must suffice.

"Resolved, That the Legislature of South Carolina, having every confidence in the justice and friendship of the non-slaveholding states, announces her confident expectation, and she earnestly requests that the governments of these states will promptly and effectually suppress all those associations within their respective limits purporting to be abolition societies," etc. (Adopted December 16, 1835.)

"Resolved, That our sister states are respectfully requested to enact penal laws prohibiting the printing, within their respective limits, all such publications as may have a tendency to make our slaves discontented." (Assembly of North Carolina, December 19, 1835.)

\* Z. Vol. VII, p. 205, and Document, No. 24.

† Z. Vol. VII, p. 205. Also Antislavery Quarterly Magazine for 1836, p. 90.

‡ Slavery in America, p. 118. [C., Vol. XI, p. 40.

\* Antislavery Magazine, Vol. II, p. 103.

† View of the subject of slavery, contained in the Biblical Repertory for April 1836. Pittsburg. For gratuitous distribution. ‡ Slavery in America, p. 142.

"Resolved, That the non-slaveholding states of the Union are respectfully but earnestly requested promptly to adopt penal enactments, or such other measures as will effectually suppress all associations within their respective limits, purporting to be, or having the character of, abolition societies." (Virginia Legislature, February 16, 1836.)

"Resolved, That it is deeply incumbent on the people of the north to crush the traitorous designs of abolitionists." (Legislature of Georgia, unanimously.)

"Resolved, That we call upon our sister states, and respectfully request them to enact such penal laws as will finally put an end to the malignant deeds of the abolitionists." (Alabama Legislature, January 7, 1836.)

Agreeably to such resolutions as the foregoing, the governors of several southern states sent circulars to the governors of northern states, requesting them to lay these resolutions before their respective legislatures, in order to enact laws to proscribe the abolitionists, and crush free discussion on slavery. A committee of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, when the case was referred to the Legislature of this state, drew up a full statement of the reasons why no penal laws should be enacted, and no condemnatory resolutions passed by the Legislature, respecting abolitionists and antislavery societies. This is one of the ablest productions of the times or any time, and should, from its firmness, solidity, and temperate character, redeem much of what has been said unwisely by the abolitionists. It presents the following grounds of their protest: 1. The facts of the case, that they have published nothing insurrectionary, and have sent nothing to the slaves. 2. The constitutions of our country, and the great principles of our common law. 3. The nature and inalienable tenure of human rights. 4. The futility of the proposed legislative action as a means of good, and its tendency to produce evil. 5. The unlimited despotism of the southern demands. 6. The present condition of northern freedom in consequence of southern aggression, and the necessity for a course of northern action far different from the policy insisted on by the south. This statement, in forty-eight pages octavo, contains an amount of matter that outweighs ten thousand

such resolutions as those we have quoted. The doings of these states made many abolitionists, and the pamphlet, or its material, will continue to manufacture thousands of antislavery men till slavery is no more.

12. The subject of the incidental decrease in the Church in 1836, was seized on by the abolitionists on which to make capital. Bishop Hedding mentioned the decrease in his opening address to the General conference. He thought there might be various causes for it, but advised close examination, holiness of heart, and the faithful exercise of Discipline.\* Mr. Scott, in his speech before the General conference, directed attention to the course of the Church in reference to slavery as the cause of the diminution of members. Mr. Scott, on November 25th,† argues out his assertion with great zeal, in a column and a half, and gives certain data to show that the loss has been mostly with the anti-abolition conferences, and the gain in New England. Rev. J. W. Chase, December 22d, replies to Mr. Scott;‡ and makes Mr. Scott's arguments and statistics to appear trivial enough. But no stone was left unturned in these days to undervalue, and even censure and severely condemn, every thing pertaining to the Church that did not look in the direction of immediate abolition in all respects.¶

13. The Rev. Timothy Merrit, on December 12th, writes to Dr. Bangs that he had now, at last, enlisted himself on the side of abolition. Up to July he had been four years assistant editor of the Christian Advocate. He now proceeds to define his position in Zion's Herald, as the Advocate, being considered neutral, was not the place to do it. He declares the following truism to be his creed, as if it were a new revelation: "Slavery, as it exists and recognized by law, is a sin, a great sin."§ He does not yet know whether slavery is to be gradually or immediately abolished, and seems to wish to say something without well knowing what, or how to say it. Mr. Scott, December 23d, is pleased with Mr. Merrit's debut, and considered him in nearly the same position that he himself had been about two years before that time. Still, he considers Mr. Merrit in a hopeful state, and seems almost prophetically to say he will yet be of some service to the cause.¶

## CHAPTER X.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1836.

1. THE General conference sat in Cincinnati on Monday, May 2, 1836, the first day being Sabbath. On the first day of the session, Wm. Lord, delegate from the British conference, was introduced to the conference. In some remarks he offered, he alluded to slavery in the following terms, because the subject was introduced by the Wesleyan conference into their address, which he then presented to the conference. Mr. Lord said: "I must now say one word upon another subject: I mean slavery. I know it to be a delicate subject; but I should not be doing justice to the body I have the honor to represent were I to omit all reference to it.

But I will only observe that I most earnestly hope that the prudence and wisdom of this great body will be able to devise such plans as will bring this great evil to a termination, and to as speedy a termination as will be safe."\*\*

On the 3d of May the address of the British conference was read. The part of it pertaining to slavery is as follows:

"It has already come to your knowledge, as a matter of public notoriety, that, by the bless-

\* W., Vol. III, p. 10.

† Z., Vol. VII, p. 206.

‡ Id., p. 206, col. 1.

† Z., Vol. VII, p. 194, col. 1.

¶ Id., p. 206.    § Id., p. 202.

\*\* W., III, p. 18, col. 3, *infra*.

ing of God on the efforts and influence of our connection, and on the combined endeavors of the religious public of our beloved country, a great measure for the emancipation of the slaves in all the territories of Great Britain was eventually conducted to a successful issue in the imperial legislature, and has since been carried into practical effect in all the colonies of the empire with various degrees of completeness, but universally with safety and advantage, and with results which nightly encourage us to go forward in our earnest attempts to enlighten and evangelize the whole population, to which favorable access is thus freely opened. Our American brethren will, doubtless, allow us fraternally to express our conviction that great Scriptural principles are opposed to the continuance of slavery in a Christian state; that the permission of it is one of those deviations from natural equity and evangelical truth which calls for further deviations to abet and maintain them; that it is contrary to the precepts of Christianity, and violates and counteracts the principles and obligations by which the Gospel urges those precepts. We trust that your connection, having already begun to resist and condemn this baneful system, will, in its own way, be freely and Providentially led to such practical steps as shall produce a consentaneous opinion, feeling, and purpose among your own people, and will then have the glory of the public opinion of your great and increasing population to such decided views as will result in a unanimous rejection of slavery and social mischiefs, on the ground of its repugnancy to the laws of Christ.\*

Our British brethren, in the above, as well as in their Address of 1834 to their people, considered "earnest attempts to enlighten and evangelize the whole population," as a much more glorious work than to be instrumental even in abolishing slavery, though our abolition friends seem to think the latter of more importance. That "slavery is opposed to great Scriptural principles, contrary to the precepts of Christianity, and violates and counteracts the principles and obligations by which the Gospel urges these precepts," the Methodist Episcopal Church has all along, from its organization, declared and acted on. Yet it seems as if our British brethren supposed we had only begun to resist and condemn this hateful system; whereas, the American Church condemned slavery long before our British brethren did. Mr. Lord, too, seems to think the General conference could devise such plans as would bring this great evil to a termination, just as if the conference could repeal all the constitutional and statute laws that uphold slavery in the several states. His language would mean this. We presume, however, that his expression is a loose one, and must be taken in a lax sense, and that his meaning was that the Methodist Episcopal Church would use only such measures as were within her proper sphere.

When the Address of the British conference was read, Dr. Bangs moved that a Special Committee of three be appointed to prepare an answer, as speedily as possible, and provide for the appointment of a delegate to represent us at the British conference. Mr. Scott moved to have the Address printed in the periodicals of

the Church. Dr. Bangs opposed this, and the motion to print was laid on the table till the Committee appointed to answer it report to the conference.

2. On May 4th Messrs. Bangs, Capers, and Morris, the Committee appointed to draw up the reply to the British conference, reported. As the time allotted to them was short, and the report not being satisfactory to the conference, it was recommitted. The Address was adopted, though it did not censure abolitionism nor condemn slavery; but barely stated to our European brethren the state of the question among us. When the resolution, calling for the printing of the Address to our Wesleyan brethren, in connection with their Address to us, which was laid on the table, was called up, the vote stood 59 to 59, and therefore no decision was made, as our bishops never give a casting vote; and when the vote is equal there is no decision made, and the matter stands just where it did before any such vote was given.\* We give here that part of the Address to the British conference which refers to slavery:

"In common with sister denominations of Christians in our country, we have been less or more agitated with the perplexing question of negro slavery; and although we receive with respectful deference what you, our elder brethren, have said to us in relation to this question, yet we are assured that, from the known prudence by which your body has ever been distinguished, had you been as well acquainted with this subject as we are; could you have viewed it in all its aspects as it presents itself to us who are in the midst of it, interwoven, as it is, in many of the state constitutions, and left to their disposal by the civil compact which binds us together as a nation, and thus put beyond the power of legislation by the General Government, as well as the control of ecclesiastical bodies; could you have critically analyzed its various ramifications in our country, so as to have perceived all its delicate relations to the Church, to the several states, and to the Government of the United States, we can not doubt that, while expressing your decided disapprobation of the system of slavery itself, your tone of sympathy for us would have been deeper and more pathetic. While on this subject it may be pertinent to remark, that of the colored population in the southern and south-western states, there are not less than seventy thousand in Church membership, and that, in addition to these, who are mingled with white congregations, we have several prosperous missions exclusively for their spiritual benefit, which have been, and are still, owned of God to the conversion of many precious souls. On the plantations of the south and south-west our devoted missionaries are laboring for the salvation of the slaves, catechising their children, and bringing all within their influence, as far as possible, to the saving knowledge of Jesus Christ; and we need hardly add, that we shall most gladly avail ourselves, as we have ever done, of all the means in our power to promote their best interests."

3. At the opening of the session a Committee on Slavery was appointed, composed of J. Davis, J. A. Merrill, J. F. Adams, W. A. Smith, L. Pierce, D. Daily, and G. S. Holmes, to whom all papers, petitions, and memorials on slavery should be referred. J. A. Merrill presented a petition,

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 981.

\* W., Vol. III, p. 46. Z., Vol. VII, p. 78. Matlack, p. 117.

signed by about 200 Methodist preachers, principally from the New England and New Hampshire conferences. Mr. Scott presented a memorial signed by 2,284 members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and by others, from the bounds of the New England and New Hampshire conferences, principally. On the 21st of May the chairman of the Committee presented the following report, which was adopted:

"The Committee to whom was referred sundry memorials from the north, praying that certain rules on the subject of slavery, which formerly existed in our book of Discipline, should be restored, and that the General conference take such measures as they might deem proper, to free the Church from the evil of slavery, beg leave to report, that they have had the subject under serious consideration, and are of the opinion, that the prayer of the memorialists can not be granted, believing that it would be highly improper for the General conference to take any action that would alter or change our rules on the subject of slavery. Your Committee, therefore, respectfully submit the following resolution:

"Resolved, *etc.*, That it is inexpedient to make any change in our book of Discipline respecting slavery, and that we deem it improper to agitate the subject in the General conference at present.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"JOHN DAVIS, *Chairman.*"\*

4. On Tuesday evening, May 10th, Messrs. G. Storrs and S. Norris, members of the General conference, attended an abolition meeting in Cincinnati, and delivered addresses. This was generally considered by the other members of the conference as taking part unduly, under the circumstances, in a cause at variance with the sound, Scriptural, and uniform policy of the Church. Accordingly, on Thursday, May 12th, Mr. Roszell presented a preamble and resolutions on the case of the two members, which produced considerable excitement and discussion, till the time of adjournment. The afternoon session, too, was mostly occupied with debating Mr. Roszell's resolutions. On Friday the discussion was continued. Mr. Scott occupied more than two hours of the time, maintaining a plain truism, that the principle of slavery is bad under all circumstances, and on all hands. He then proceeded to present to the conference his views on abolitionism. The first resolution passed by a vote of 122 to 11. The second resolution was divided into two parts, and the vote taken first on the part which expresses decided opposition to modern abolitionism—ayes 120, nays 14. On the second part of the resolution, which disclaims all right, wish, or intention to interfere with the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it exists in the slaveholding states, the vote was unanimous; namely, 137 ayes; nays, none. The preamble and resolutions are as follow:

"Whereas, great excitement has pervaded this country on the subject of modern abolitionism, which is reported to have been increased in this city, recently, by the unjustifiable conduct of two members of the General conference, in lecturing upon, and in favor of that agitating topic; and whereas, such a course on the part of any of its members is calculated to bring upon this body the suspicion and distrust of the community, and misrepresent its sentiments in regard to the point

at issue; and whereas, in this aspect of the case, a due regard for its own character, as well as a just concern for the interests of the Church confided to its care, demand a full, decided, and unequivocal expression of the views of the General conference in the premises; therefore,

"(1.) Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General conference assembled, That they disapprove, in the most unqualified sense, the conduct of the two members of the General conference who are reported to have lectured in this city, recently, upon and in favor of modern abolitionism.

"(2.) Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General conference assembled, That they are decidedly opposed to modern abolitionism, and wholly disclaim any right, wish, or intention to interfere in the civil and political relation between master and slave, as it exists in the slaveholding states of this Union.

"(3.) Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences in General conference assembled, That the foregoing preamble and resolutions be published in our periodicals.

"THOMAS L. DOUGLASS, *Secretary.*

"Cincinnati, O., May 14, 1836."\*

Fourteen members, from New Hampshire and New England conferences, drew up a protest against the action of the conference, in the case of Storrs and Norris, presented it to the conference, and requested it to be spread on the journals, and published in the periodicals. This was laid on the table, and not taken up afterward.† The protest complained that the proceedings in the case were unconstitutional and anti-Methodistic, and unwarranted by the Discipline of the Church, and in opposition to the plain letter of it." The reason for this is, that the conference pronounced the conduct of the two members unjustifiable; that, at the most, it could be no more than an imprudent act, and that they should be dealt with as the Discipline directs; but, as matters stood, they were censured as if expelled, from which they had no appeal. But the brethren did not consider that Messrs. Storrs and Norris were not expelled, and that their course was one which was believed to be contrary to the proper duties of members of that body, such as producing agitation, and bringing on the conference the suspicious and distrust of the community, *etc.*, as expressed in the preamble. The truth is, the abolitionists of the times were deeply imbued with the rankest ultraisms, and any countenance to them would have periled all sober steps, in any direction, for the benefit of the Church, as the subsequent events go clearly to show.

5. Petitions from the Lancaster and Westmoreland circuits were presented against the action of the Baltimore conference, which always refused to receive slaveholding traveling preachers, or to ordain local preachers who were slaveholders. The complaint is, that slaveholders may hold offices in the Church, where the laws will not admit of freedom; that in Virginia the laws do not admit of freedom, except in a few cases of little practical use. They therefore request, that the Baltimore conference be instructed to do away these disabilities, in regard to preachers to be ordained, and to admission of candidates into the traveling connection. The Committee on the Judiciary decided that the Baltimore conference was free to act in this

\* W., Vol. III, p. 62.

\* W., Vol. III, p. 14, col. 3.

† See, for the Protest, Z., Vol. VII, p. 107, col. 1.

matter, and that it would interfere with their liberty to direct a different course.\*

6. Mr. Scott prepared a pamphlet containing his speeches before the conference, and strictures on the other speeches in the opposition, with some other matter, all hastily composed in the bustle of conference business, and entitled, "An Address to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by a member of that body," and dated Cincinnati, Ohio, Thursday, May 19th, 1836, in 16 large pages octavo, small print, double columns, taken, we believe, principally from the columns of the Philanthropist; the editor, Mr. Birney, making common cause with Mr. Scott, and all on the true Garrisonian mode of operation. On Monday, 23d, the pamphlet was circulated among the members of the conference; the perusal of which produced general indignation, as the pamphlet was without name, and so worded that every one would infer that another than Mr. Scott must have been its author. Mr. Winans, especially, was handled pretty severely.

On the 24th of May the election of bishops took place, and the choice was very unsatisfactory to the south, none of them being slaveholders, and none of them from the south. The dissatisfaction was heightened by Mr. Scott's pamphlet. Toward the close of the session, Messrs. Winans and Stamper presented the following resolution:

"Resolved, etc., That a pamphlet, circulated among the members of this conference, purporting to be an Address to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by a member of that body, containing reports of the discussion on modern abolitionism, palpably false, and calculated to make an impression to the injury of the characters of some of the members engaged in the aforesaid discussion, is an outrage on the dignity of this body, and meriting unqualified reprehension."† After reading the resolution, Mr. Winans attempted to show the propriety of the resolution, in a series of written remarks, which went to say that the Address had no less than three direct, flagrant falsehoods, beside many others, both direct and inferential. He left no room for unintentional error, and whatever in the pamphlet he deemed inaccurate, was put down and stigmatized as a falsehood. Mr. Scott then acknowledged he was the author of the pamphlet, and at his request the consideration of the resolution was postponed till next day.

On the 25th the resolution was discussed, and Mr. Scott made a speech of considerable length, and Mr. Winans made a few remarks in explanation. In the afternoon a motion was made to refer the pamphlet to a committee, which failed. The resolution was then read, 97 in favor and 19 in opposition, and ordered to be published in the Christian Advocate and Western Advocate. Many did not vote at all, as the whole number was over 150, and few had yet left for home.

As to the Address of Mr. Scott, it is really an anomalous production. We have a copy of it now before us, and we will endeavor to give some account of it. He addresses the conference as "Fathers and brethren," and refers to brother Scott as a third person. He begins with noticing slavery in its purely-political aspect. He says, "The great question now pending, is the justice or injustice of more than two millions of our American citizens to the inalienable rights of freedom." We give his own italicizing. And a few lines after he states it thus, "Any interference of

this General conference, or any of its members, with the political relations of master and slave, would be both inexpedient and improper." Thus Mr. Scott sets out, by stating the question in its political character, as the "great question now pending," and, presently, this view of it does not belong to the conference. It is true, he does this, doubtless, by reason of haste, in thoughtlessness, as he did, avowedly, in his former discussions on the subject, in Zion's Herald, as we have shown in a former chapter. But, then, this is his way, his habit; and who can wonder at the difficulties into which he has fallen, and the immense trouble he gave the General conference in this way, and the vast harm he did to others by such rash measures, from the day he sat down at Garrison's and Thompson's feet, down to the very day of his death, his dying address not excepted?

In the pamphlet, following the above, we have a noble declaration: "The subject of slavery involves GREAT MORAL PRINCIPLES; and with these, as Christian ministers, we have something to do. Slavery takes away the key of knowledge—withholds the holy Scriptures—crushes the intellects of God's intelligent creatures—exposes to insult, without protection, a million of the females of this land—separates husbands and wives, parents and children—places the religious privileges of the slaves at the disposal of masters." Hence, he concludes, and very justly, that the principle of slavery, aside from all circumstances, "is evil, ONLY EVIL, and that CONTINUALLY." After this, Mr. Scott proceeds to argue on immediatism, and other points, in such strain as he did in the articles he published in Zion's Herald; or rather his famous address is made up of selections from his former articles, with some other matter involved. He concludes by saying, "My view of abolitionism is as strong and as incendiary, as can be found in the Garrisonian school, because it is the very same. I have read all the abolition authors; and therefore know what abolitionism is."

As there were no official reports of the speeches at General conference, little reliance can be given to those reports in Matlack's History, and Scott's Life, taken from the Philanthropist. Mr. Birney, the editor at the time, was a violent, one-sided, Garrisonian abolitionist. His historical statements, not for want of honesty, we will allow, but through partyism and partial views, are as apocryphal in the Philanthropist, as they are in his famous pamphlet, entitled, "The American Churches the Bulwark of American Slavery." Especially is Mr. Birney unfair to the Methodist Episcopal Church, from the time he made common cause against her with Messrs. Scott, Garrison, and numbers of infidels. Dr. Bangs, on June 17th, declares as follows on this subject: "I think it proper to warn our readers against receiving the reports of the speeches in the General conference on the subject of abolitionism, as published in the Philanthropist, and the Address to the General conference by a member of that body. In some parts they are mere caricatures, and greatly colored."\*

Nevertheless, though the conference passed the condemnatory resolution on the anonymous Address, the resolution expressed the truth; that is, that the Address was injurious to the character of some members of the conference. It was an outrage on the dignity of the con-

\* Document, No. 22.

† W., Vol. III, p. 65, col. 6.

\* C., Vol. X, p. 170, col. 6, *infra*.

ference thus to circulate an anonymous pamphlet to the members of the body, when the abolitionists had as much time allotted them to defend their cause as they desired to occupy. And if such an attack on the members of the conference, and the utterly-irregular and unfair mode made of doing it, does not deserve "unqualified reprehension," we must think nothing, however wrong, should be reprehended. Mr. Scott, however, in *Zion's Herald*,\* complains that his name, at his request, was not inserted in the resolution. But why complain, when he saw fit to write an anonymous pamphlet, and thus send out to the world his irresponsible allegations? The thing seems to be a rash abolition maneuver to increase agitation, and make a noise, and utter doleful complaints, because the foolish ruse was not received as the product of wisdom and prudence.†

7. The General conference, in their Pastoral Address to the members and friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church, declare very clearly their views on the subjects at that time agitating the Church and the country. They consider it only as it concerns the cause of the Church, in Church matters, but not in regard to civil matters. In this Address the conference disapproves decidedly of the measures employed by the abolitionists; that the subject of slavery can be regulated only by the several state legislatures only, and put beyond the control of the General Government, as well as of all ecclesiastical bodies; that abolition movements are unlikely to do the slave good, and do him harm by hedging up the way of the missionary. The conference then exhorts to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing their publications, especially those that are inflammatory; that those who speak or write against slavery ought to do so in respectful language, so as to express sympathy for their brethren who are necessarily and reluctantly associated with slavery; that the safe way is wholly to refrain from this agitating subject. The conference then declares its abhorrence against all mobs or violent opposition to abolitionists; that all should be subject to the powers that be, and all should live peaceably, as good Christians.

This Address gave great occasion to the abolition press to censure the General conference, though, we think, without reason or just cause. A few words and expressions in it were culled out, and commented on with great severity and unfairness. Happy would it be for those concerned, had they all taken the advice contained in this Address. But they were not the men to be either advised, instructed, or reformed. They persisted in their course, and ended mostly in secession. Yet we must say that even the Address itself would have been more efficient, had it been differently worded, and a little better guarded!‡

8. The British conference published, in their Minutes, a fraternal, yet plain response to the Address of the General conference to them. They claimed no right to suggest any thing beyond what fraternal relationship would warrant; yet they thought it their duty to give their moral weight to those views held by Mr. Wesley, which had repeatedly been professed by the British conference, avowed in the American book of Discipline and other public documents, and in strict accordance with our merciful and righteous Christianity. In their former Address they intended "to affirm the principle that slavery is a system of oppressive evil, and is in direct opposition to the spirit of our divine religion. Slavery, in itself, is so obviously opposed to the immutable principles of justice, to the inalienable rights of man, of whatever color or condition, to the social and civil improvement and happiness of the human family, to the principles and precepts of Christianity, and to the full accomplishment of the merciful designs of the Gospel, that they can not but consider it the duty of the Christian Church to bear an unequivocal testimony against a system which involves so much sin against God, and so much oppression and wrong, inflicted on an offending race of our fellow-men." The Wesleyan conference and their people, in common with others, took this course during the discussion on West India emancipation, and the conference had the means of knowing that the blessing of God has been graciously vouchsafed to this act of national justice, in the extension of the Gospel, in the conversion of great numbers of the negroes, and in the improved state of society in the colonies. It is the duty of Christians, not only to embody their principles in their formularies of doctrine, but to *act upon them*; and as the American Church have done much in conferring the blessings of religious instruction on the slave population of their country, the men who have thus laid the foundation for a peaceful state of society, founded on freedom, can not but have the right to recommend and support all proper and lawful measures for the consummation of their own great work. In all cases it is most safe, and in the end most advantageous, that Christian Churches should act on the principle of *religious obligation and duty*. The conference concludes by "expressing its anxious and earnest hope that our American brethren will feel it their duty, in union with other Christians, to adopt such measures as may lead to the safe and speedy emancipation of the whole slave population of their great and interesting country."<sup>\*</sup>

The answer of the British conference is a calm, Scriptural view of the subject, which in most, if not all of its parts, conveys sentiments at once Scriptural and patriotic, which in their results must be both safe and advantageous.

\* *Z.*, Vol. VII, pp. 102, 105.

† Document, No. 23.

\* Document, No. 24.

‡ Document, No. 23.



## CHAPTER XI.

## EVENTS OF 1837.

1. THERE are several occurrences of this year which will call for our special attention, in presenting the influence of the controversies respecting abolition and slavery on the state of the Church. Zion's Herald was the principal medium of communication between the abolitionists and the antislavery men. These terms now became fixed to designate two classes of opponents. The abolitionists were those who made common cause with the antislavery societies, in connection with Garrison and the other abolitionists. The antislavery men were those who were principally colonizationists; were opposed to slavery, but disapproved of the measures of the abolitionists, though aiming at the same object—final emancipation. Dr. Fisk was the leader in the antislavery ranks, aided by Professor Whedon. Mr. Merrit now became the leader in the abolition cause, aided by Rev. F. P. Tracy, and more remotely by Rev. C. K. True and J. Hazleton. Mr. Scott had exhausted his store of information, and run his race as a controversialist, but was industriously engaged in promoting his former views, by the most availing measures in his power.

2. In the preceding chapter we have seen that Mr. Merrit, in his address to Dr. Bangs, more than intimated that he was on the eve of uniting with the abolitionists. This seems to have very much grieved Dr. Fisk, as they had lived heretofore in the enjoyment of reciprocal friendship, founded not merely in congeniality of feeling, but also similarity of views. Dr. Fisk, however, thought they might agree to disagree, and accordingly he addressed Mr. Merrit, in Zion's Herald, in a communication dated January 2, 1837, in reference to Mr. Merrit's address to Dr. Bangs, of December, 1836, which he calls an *unfortunate publication*. He states that for two reasons he could hold no controversy with a great portion of the abolitionist writers of the day. First, because opposition and controversy are the elements in which they act. Secondly, because "most of their leaders frequently substitute sophistry for reasoning, declamation for argument, and personal crimination for sound logic. They are skillful in misunderstanding and misrepresenting the views of those who differ from them, and in presenting them before the public with appellations and odious epithets, which may serve party purposes, but add nothing to the cause of truth; that they have not confined themselves to this country, but have proclaimed and repeated it in Europe."\* He complains that Mr. Merrit, in his letter to Bangs, neglects to notice what is the real difference of principle between ultra-abolitionists and those who differ from them. It is not that those who differ from the abolitionists go for slavery. The difference he states thus: that the modern abolitionists say that it is sin, it is a high immorality, for any man, under any circumstances, to sustain the relation of master to a slave; that this is their watchword, their banner motto, the foundation of

all their measures, and their denunciations of others.

Mr. Fisk further states "that the difference in principle between the modern ultra-abolitionists and old-fashioned abolitionism is this, and *only this*—that the adherents to the latter believe that the relation of master and slave may, and *does*, in many cases, exist under such circumstances as free the master from the just charge and guilt of immorality, while the ultras deny this;" that, in support of this principle, the Counter Appeal quoted Scripture. Yet the abolitionists declared the writer and signers of the Counter belonged to the pro-slavery party, and had the temerity to quote Scripture in favor of adultery, cruelty, and robbery.

Mr. Merrit, in his letter to Bangs, said, "We are bound to do something—not to take sides with the oppressed, and to have a hard heart, is the same thing." Dr. Fisk replies, "I ask which is the best—to do nothing, or to take *wrong measures* for the sake of doing something? Beside, is there no way of doing something without joining the modern abolitionists?"

Mr. Merrit says, "If the free states should unanimously decide in favor of abolition, such an event would seal the death-warrant of slavery in this republic." Mr. Fisk answers, "The free states have *legally, officially, and unanimously* decided in favor of abolition. They have adopted the *principle*, and set the *example*; what more can they do?" He adds that he does not believe that nothing can be effected in the non-slaveholding states; but he has no faith in modern abolitionism, because he has no faith in bad measures; that he rarely ever knew a cause so badly managed, though he considers the errors as those of good men.\*

Mr. Merrit, Feb. 1st, responds, and after a preliminary, says: "If there be a sinless slavery, then the principle which produces it is sinless; but if the products are sinful, and exhibit every abomination, then the principle is bad. *The tree is known by its fruit*, and not the fruit by the tree." "I confine my remarks to slavery as it exists, and is recognized by law in this country."

Mr. Merrit then defines the sentiments of Methodist abolitionists thus, quoting the Appeal or its defense: "The question is, has one human being a right to hold property in another human being? Can man hold property in man, consistently with the spirit of the Christian religion? We say, no! Our brethren take the affirmative of the question, and joining issue with us, say, yes!" He objects to the charge of Dr. Fisk, in saying that the abolitionists hold that "it is high immorality for a man, under *any circumstances*, to sustain the relation of master to a slave;" because they affirm a man may, consistently with Christianity, sustain the relation of master to a slave or servant. Mr. Merrit then quotes at large, from the address of the Synod of Kentucky, and proceeds to sum up his views, which are as follows:

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 9, col. 1.

\* Z., Vol. VIII, p. 9, col. 1.

"In the primitive Church there was no such relation as master and *slave*, properly so called; but that of master and *servant*, there certainly was." He complains that Dr. Fisk does not explain what these circumstances were which free the master from guilt, and expresses himself thus: "In a country where slavery exists, and where legal emancipation is dangerous both to master and slave, the master has it in his power to make the slave *virtually free*; and that many have actually done so, and thenceforward retained them in their service without guilt." He finally says, that it is our duty, as Christians, to denounce the system of slavery; and wrong to speak of it in softened and palliating terms; that concerts of prayer should be held for the abolition of slavery, and that all should join the abolitionists.

Under date of February 14th, Dr. Fisk replies. He states that the subject of slavery was one which was well adapted to agitation, but in his opinion the measures of the abolitionists tended to prolong the evils of slavery, and to fasten the chains on the enslaved. In commenting on 1 Tim. vi, 1, 2, he states: "Here, then, are *slaveholders*, who have *slaves under the yoke*, and who, nevertheless, are *believers, brethren, faithful, beloved*. If a modern abolitionist had been writing to them, or about them, they would have been called *robbers, thieves, murderers, men-stealers*, and the like, and yet the apostle does not disown them as brethren, does not reprove them, but calls them believing slaveholders, brethren," etc. He says, if the ultra doctrine is embraced, one of three things must follow: either all our southern brethren who have slaves, must, let the laws and state of society be what they may, turn them adrift, or they must be expelled from the Church, or the abolitionists must withdraw, and set up for themselves. He further says, "If the abolitionists promote agitation, excite division, and rend the Church of Christ, I can not help it. I feel that in this matter I have, thus far, done my duty. Others, with myself, saw the coming danger two years ago. We flung ourselves into the breach, where *all the archers shot against us*. What remains, time will unfold." He declares: "Let no man say I am an advocate for slavery. I put slavery where the Scriptures put it; and this is the only safe ground. I then would insist that the believing master should treat his slave, not as a *mere thing*, as some express this relation, but I would enforce upon him the Scriptural duty of treating his slave as a moral and immortal being, and that he is responsible to God for the manner of using his power."

Mr. Merrit, in two long communications in Zion's Herald, of March 29th and April 5th, takes in a wide range of discussion in reply to Dr. Fisk, of February 14th. He thinks Dr. Fisk lost the meekness and gentleness of that wisdom which is from above, and thinks if the balance of acrimonious discussion between the abolitionists and their opponents were drawn, it would be to the disparagement of the latter; and adds, he who steals a man must be called a *thief*, and he who kills a man must be called a *murderer*.

He draws the following conclusion from Dr. Fisk's former letter: "The following positions are gathered from Dr. Fisk's remarks on 1 Timothy vi, 1, 2. 1. That there is but one class of masters, and but one of servants, in these two verses. 2. The masters are all equally beloved and faithful, and the servants are all equally under the yoke. 3. To make out this, the pronoun in the second verse is made to refer to the *condition* of those under the yoke, rather than to their *name*. 4. He asserts slavery with a witness."

Mr. Merrit then proceeds to give remarks on the same passage; namely: "1. We assert two classes of masters, and two classes of servants, in these two verses. 'Let as many servants as are under the yoke,' etc.: this implies that all servants were not under the yoke. 'And they that have believing masters:' this implies that all masters did not believe. 2. It was of the believing masters only, that the apostle says, 'they are brethren, faithful, beloved, partakers of the benefit.' This could not have been said of heathen masters."

Dr. Fisk, in the Herald of May 31st, writes his final letter to Mr. Merrit, not by way of reply, but to excuse himself from further discussion with abolitionists. His principal object of writing was to present to the readers of the Herald a letter from Professor Stuart. He declines controversy with Mr. Merrit, because he can not "carry on a friendly discussion, merely with those who directly slander, and denounce, and revile him personally, but even with those who countenance and sustain them in it." He complains that Mr. Merrit attended and took part in an abolition meeting, in which the Liberator was highly recommended, and the number of the Liberator which contained the proceedings of the meeting, calls Mr. Fisk a "Siamese twin with George M'Duffie; an associate of the robbers of God's poor;" of "the perpetrators of Lynch law; the murderous enemies of impartial freedom; the chief priests, elders, and scribes who nailed the Son of God to the cross," etc.

Mr. Merrit, under date of July 23d, addresses another letter to Dr. Fisk, covering more than six columns of Zion's Herald. He regrets that they should come to an open rupture before they had exchanged the third letter. He thinks Dr. Fisk has frequently, if not generally, used a bitter and acrimonious style in his productions on abolition. He then proceeds with great zeal to support his views, and to castigate his opponent with unsparing severity.

3. It is certainly lamentable that the controversy took this direction. We marked it carefully at the time, and read all the articles on both sides. In writing the history of it now, we have read it all again, and most of it twice, and analyzed much of it, and we must say there was great blame on both sides. The abolitionists uttered the most unfounded statements against Dr. Fisk, and persecuted him up to the very chair of the British conference, calling to their aid all the abolition ultraists that could be mustered, both on this and the other side of the Atlantic. Notwithstanding his frequent avowals, both in this country and Europe, of declaring the system of slavery to be *evil, only evil, and that continually*, the abolitionists, both by day and by night, constantly charged him with being pro-slavery, and classed him with those who avowed themselves to be the upholders of the very system of slavery, though Dr. Fisk held it in utter abhorrence. No man could be more slandered than he was. Nevertheless, Dr. Fisk did not treat the abolitionists with civility. Probably he could not. They were so utterly uncivil themselves, that the way for civil response was very much shut up; and yet we think he might have taken a different course and have done much more good. Beside, he seems to have left his side of the question exposed to dangerous attacks. He did not fully and fairly present the moral character of slavery. In an occasional sentence, of definition or statement, he could have shown, acknowledged, and depicted the system, and so presented its sinful component parts, as to leave no doubt on the minds of any as to what slavery is. This he did not do in that

clear and full manner that would defy cavil. Hence he did not, and indeed could not, maintain his side of the question—on the whole the right side—with that success which the interests of the Church called for, and the cause of truth demanded. Yet who else was there to engage in this conflict equal to Dr. Fisk? There was none in the Church; and had it not been for him the ravages of misguided zeal might have done ten times as much evil as was done. He stood in the gap and had no equal to stand by him.

4. As to Professor Stuart's response to Dr. Fisk's inquiries,\* we have a few words to say. The questions were substantially, 1. Does the New Testament directly or indirectly teach that slavery existed in the primitive Church? 2. The meaning of 1 Tim. vi. 2? 3. What was the character of ancient and eastern slavery? Mr. Stuart replied to the first affirmatively, and concludes, "Paul could not lawfully and properly temporize with a *malum in se*—an evil in itself—and then quotes the law of love, and the reciprocal law. He then changes *malum in se*, into such a *malum in se* as calls for immediate and violent disruption at all hazards. If Professor Stuart had only given the true character of slavery—if he ever studied so much about it as to ascertain it, which is doubtful—how could he teach that slavery was not evil in itself? Yet he teaches that Christianity would destroy slavery. On the whole, the reply of Professor Stuart is neither Scriptural nor consistent with itself, nor in agreement with the apostolic and early usage of the Christian Church. It seems to have been written as a kind of reprisal on abolitionists, and we are surprised that Dr. Fisk either published it, or, at any rate, that he gave it such undue importance. It has been the trophy of the class of slaveholders truly called man-stealers, and has given occasion to ranting abolitionists to sustain their cause. We place it among our documents for the perusal of those who desire to examine it.†

5. The Appeal and its response, the *Counter Appeal*, together with the *Defense* of the Appeal, gave rise to considerable discussion on the meaning of the Greek words rendered servant and master. On the one side were Dr. Fisk and Professor Whedon; on the other, Rev. C. K. True, Rev. F. P. Tracy, and Mr. Merrit. We will notice the productions of each of these gifted men, whose talents and Christian character entitle them to the respect of all men.

Rev. C. K. True publishes, in Zion's Herald of July 1, 1835, a very sensible letter on *δουλος, doulous*. He says the word means primarily *slave*, though it means frequently servant; he then proceeds to criticize the texts taken up by the Counter, and sifts them pretty rigidly. He thinks the assertion of the Counter, that "by apostolic sanction the relation of master and slave was permitted to subsist at Colosse," is a hazardous declaration. At any rate, the primitive Christians would make a sorry figure in the slave market, buying and selling for gain, and then treating the slaves as property; while good men might retain the legal relation of masters, treating the slaves, in the mean time, justly, till the opportunity of emancipation could be seized. And the moral argument of the Counter he considers unsound; because if you annihilate property in man, slavery will be abolished. In short, Mr. True does little more than correct the mistakes of the Counter, and sets the true state of the matter more clearly before the reader. Hence, he had no rejoinder, as far as

we recollect, from any source, for there was little if any reason for response.

Professor Whedon, in the Herald of March 30, 1836, gives a learned article in defense of the Counter, and criticises the word *δουλος, doulous*. He states that the writers of the "Defense of an Appeal," affirm that *doulous* means not *slave*, but *servant*. He maintains that slave is the proper meaning of the word *doulous*, and refers for authorities to Clarke, Edwards, Potter, Watson, etc. He then argues it from: 1. The root of *doulous*, which is *deo*, to bind. 2. The correlative term *despotes*, master, or owner of slaves. 3. The frequent use of *doulous* and *despotes*. 4. Commentaries and critics. 5. The common use of the word.\*

The Rev. J. Hazleton, in the Herald of June 22, 1836, makes some very plain strictures on Mr. Whedon's criticisms. He quotes him as saying, the word rendered master signifies "the possessor of slaves; one who rules over his slaves with uncontrolled power; a despot; a proprietor, as of a horse; lord or master in the most unlimited sense." He then gives the Professor's meaning of servant, or *doulous*; namely, an *owned slave or servant*; and adds from American slave law, "The master may sell him, dispose of his person, his industry, his labor; he can do nothing, possess nothing, nor acquire any thing but which must belong to his master." He then thinks the words master and slave, in the Counter, are made to bear these definitions, and asks the question, Does the law of *love* allow the exercise of such power? He next quotes the Counter thus, "Christianity, by proclaiming the immortal existence of every human soul, and pronouncing all equally responsible, and equally valuable, in the sight of God, stamps the stigma of libelous absurdity upon the principle, that man can, in nature, be a mere article of property." Mr. Hazleton then remarks: "Had brother Whedon amplified on this concession, and shown that the letter of the golden rule, and the spirit of the Gospel, operate with an irresistible tendency to the amelioration, diminution, and destruction of slavery, as a system, holding forth its *perpetuation as an abomination*, it does appear to me that much more good would have been effected in community, and more abundant honor have been bestowed on the Gospel of Christ our Savior." Nothing is more true than this.†

The Rev. F. P. Tracy, in the Herald of August 9, 1837, in a communication of over eight columns, addressed to Mr. Whedon, treats most siftingly the criticisms of the Counter, and its defense. Mr. Tracy takes up Mr. Whedon's definition of master and slave; namely, "A slave is a man owned by another man; and a master is a man who owns another man; and that, under certain circumstances, the Bible justifies the continuation of this relation between two men." He then denies "that the Bible ever justified, under any conditions or circumstances whatever, one man owning, or assuming to own, the soul and body, the personality of another man." He states that the question is not whether *pistai despotei* were Christian *masters or slaves*: it is admitted they were masters, but not *owners of slaves*; and that the opposition substituted *authority for proprietorship, master for owner*. He deems that the *doulai* were of that species of servants who are owned, and furnishes nine reasons for support of his position. He says *doulous* has three meanings: hired servant, slave, or emancipated freedman. Servant, whether hired,

\* Z., Vol. VIII, p. 85, col. 3. † Document, No. 25.

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 50. † Z., Vol. VII, p. 97, col. 1.

owned, or obligated as a freedman, is the genus. The New Testament uses the word *oulos* as a generic term, properly rendered *servant*, giving notice, by the context, what species of servant is meant. To the same purpose Mr. Tracy argues in reference to *despotes*.\*

6. Mr. Scott was stationed this year at Lowell, Massachusetts. From the account which he publishes,† it appears there was considerable revival influence enjoyed by the two Methodist Churches. But he seems at least as intent and industrious in inducing his people to become abolitionists, as to become Christians. He introduced abolitionism into all the judicatories and departments of the Church—the pulpit, the quarterly conference, and the private social circle. In January he says, about seven-eighths of the members, 1,000 in number, were abolitionists; of 25 or 30 official members, only one was anti-abolitionist. Abolition lectures were delivered on Sabbath evenings. In May the quarterly conference of Lowell adopted unanimously the strongest sort of abolition resolutions, and published them in *Zion's Watchman* and *Zion's Herald*.‡ One of the resolutions urged on all to heraldize their annual conferences and the General conference, as this would, of course, under the circumstances, produce more or less agitation in the Church and the public.

A correspondent of the *Herald*,|| J. Davis, from Vermont, writes about three-fourths of a column to show that Mr. Scott was laboring under *monomania*; that is, *insanity on one subject*. As proofs of this, he thinks that as Mr. Scott has exchanged politics for the Gospel, and employs such unsparing sentences of condemnation on his brethren, he must be insane. As specimens of the expressions he uses, he refers to where Mr. Scott calls his brethren Achans, pro-slavery, apologists for slavery, man-stealers, etc. Mr. Scott defends himself vigorously from the charge, in two communications in the *Herald*, of nearly four columns,§ denying all the allegations of Mr. Davis. After, as he says, he has demonstrated that Mr. Davis has scandalized him, in charging him with improper censoriousness toward his brethren, he declares, after eulogizing the British Methodists: "But shame on Methodism in this country! Here it apologizes for slavery—defends it from the Bible—holds hundreds of thousands of human beings in bondage—and has even the audacity to contend, that *bishops ought to be slaveholders*."¶ From this sentence, a person unacquainted with the matter must conclude that the laws of slavery were made, executed, and approved by all the authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The above is a bare specimen of the manner in which Mr. Scott expresses himself; and yet, though he does so frequently, he seems not to be aware of the meaning of the words which he uses. He slanders unsparingly, without seeming to know that he is a slanderer. Although Mr. Scott expressed himself frequently in a very unguarded manner, he sometimes acknowledges his mistakes with great ingenuousness. As an instance of this, we copy the following:

"CORRECTIONS.—Whereas, I wrote several letters to Bishop Hedding, and to the editor of *Zion's Watchman*, and caused them and several anonymous letters to be published in said paper of August 31st, and September 21st, and December 7th, 1836; and whereas, I am now convinced said

letters contain a number of statements which are erroneous and injurious to the reputation of Bishop Hedding, I avail myself of this mode of correcting them.

"The statements that the Bishop exercised 'zeal to put down the abolitionists;' that he showed a spirit of 'disdain,' at the last General conference; that he 'removed a presiding elder from his district, for the simple reason that he could not give satisfactory assurance that he would not agitate the question of slavery and abolition in future, by lecturing and writing on those subjects;' and that 'there seemed to be a decided hostility to the antislavery brethren,' are mistakes; and they are hereby retracted.

"Also those statements which represent the Bishop as 'opposing and aggrieving' the New England conference, at its session in the year 1836; as denying them their 'rights,' acting with 'partiality' among them, and all similar imputations, are admitted to be errors, and are hereby recalled. ORANGE SCOTT.

"*Nantucket, June 13, 1837.*"\*

How could such a man set up for a leader? and stranger still, that he had followers!

On the 30th of June, seventeen days after the foregoing was written, Mr. Scott wrote an explanatory letter respecting his "corrections," in which he stated that he still held to all the *essential positions* of these letters, and firmly maintained them; that his corrections were designed to make all matters of fact strictly correct, and recall some severe or harsh expressions, or imputations. He concludes by observing: "We intend, during the present conference year, to discuss the subjects of the rights of bishops and conferences through the papers *pretty freely*—if Bishop Waugh supposes he has *silenced* us, he is greatly mistaken."†

At this time Mr. Scott was professedly attached to the Episcopacy, yet, in reality, his treatment of the bishops was far from being respectful, or even civil. A writer in *Zion's Herald* accused him of "turning away from abolitionism, to engage in the denunciation of the Episcopacy."‡ Mr. Scott spiritedly denied the charge, and repeated what he had before said; that he did not object to the proper use of the episcopal power, but to its abuse. And he considered it an abuse of episcopal power, that the bishops interfered to the extent that they did in the New England and New Hampshire conferences.¶ Yet he had such views of the rights of conscience, and the justice of his own course, that, in maintaining it, the transition to resistance to legitimate episcopal power was both easy and even certain, as the result soon showed.

As the acts of several of the conferences will throw light on the state of things in the Church, as connected with slavery and abolition, we will present their doings on these points.

7. The Baltimore conference, which sat March 22, 1837, in a report on uniformity of discipline, passed the following:

"Resolved, That in all cases of administration, under the General Rule in reference to 'buying and selling men, women, and children,' etc., it be and hereby is recommended to all committees as the sense and opinion of this conference, that the said rule be taken, construed, and understood so as not to make the guilt or innocence of the accused to depend upon the simple fact of purchase or sale of any such slave or slaves, but

\* Z., Vol. VII, p. 125.

† Z., Vol. VIII, p. 10, col. 4.

‡ Z., Vol. VIII, p. 74, col. 2.

§ Z., Vol. VIII, p. 32, col. 3.

¶ Z., Vol. VIII, pp. 34, 38.

|| Z., Vol. VIII, p. 38.

\* C., Vol. XI, p. 174. Z., Vol. VIII, p. 98.

† Z., Vol. VIII, p. 110, col. 5. † Id., p. 152, col. 1.

‡ Z., Vol. VIII, p. 165.

upon the attendant circumstances of cruelty, injustice, or inhumanity on the one hand, or those of kind purposes and good intentions on the other, under which the transactions shall have been perpetrated; and, farther, it is recommended, that in all such cases, the charge be brought for immorality, and let the circumstances be adduced as specifications under that charge.\*

On the above, the Christian Guardian, of July 10th, passes severe censures, without much accurate knowledge of the real state of the matter. The Guardian laments that American Methodists are "content to enjoy the wages of iniquity, by partaking in the fearful crime of enslaving the innocent," and as "openly admitting the principle, that it is right to traffic in the bodies and souls of our fellow-men." And then adds, that this conduct is unworthy of honorable men, not to speak of Christian men and ministers; that it nullifies, by a sort of side note, a leading rule which forbids, in every way, trading in men with the design of enslaving them or retaining them in slavery. Certainly the explanation of the Baltimore conference would neither encourage nor authorize the enslaving or retaining men in slavery; but to prevent cruelty, injustice, or inhumanity, and to inculcate good purposes in those sales or purchases which were unavoidable, or at any rate that could not be controlled by ecclesiastical discipline. And yet the editor of the Guardian, in censuring the Baltimore conference, utters one of the most pro-slavery sentiments ever broached, and which is the chief argument of slaveholders; namely, "That slavery was permitted to the Jews, but not sanctioned." The truth is, it was neither permitted nor sanctioned. Slavery was condemned, but servitude was so regulated as to prevent its running into slavery. And wherever it existed in or out of Judea, it was neither permitted nor sanctioned, but at once, by statute, transferred into a temporary servitude.†

8. During this year a majority of the preachers of the New England conference were very zealous abolitionists. The conference met at Nantucket, June 7th. The abolitionists had a meeting on the 6th, at which, by a resolution offered by Mr. Scott, it was resolved that, unless they should have the privilege of presenting their memorials on the subject of slavery, and of referring them to a select committee, they would unitedly and utterly refuse to do any business till these demands were granted. This declaration was communicated to the bishop by Rev. J. A. Merrill, the foreman of a committee appointed for this purpose. The plan for compelling the action of the conference was, to lay every other question on the table till their demand was acceded to; and should this plan fail, to adjourn the conference to the commencement of another session, from time to time, till their wishes should be met.

Bishop Waugh, in a letter dated June 8th, informed the abolition brethren that he could not admit the right of a committee to report on the memorial, and of the conference to act on any report from such committee. According to this claim, the conference might act on the Discipline, and sanction or condemn it; and had the conference the right, it was not expedient to exercise it just now, on the subject of slavery and abolition. But he agreed that the conference might act, provided they confined their action on slavery to a respectful petition

to the General conference of 1840, and that this action should not be published to either the civil or religious community, so as to keep up excitement.

The proposal of the Bishop was not acceded to by the abolitionists, and after renewing their remonstrance, the Bishop expressed his regret that his conciliatory measure was rejected; but that he felt it his duty, as president of the conference, to decline putting to vote any question which sought to keep up an excitement on topics which the wisdom and authority of the General conference had sought to quiet and put to rest.\*

On a motion to refer the memorials to a committee, he decided that he was bound by the decision of the General conference to prevent the agitation of this subject, and he therefore declined to put the question, or to allow an appeal from his decision.†

But the abolitionists, on the 15th of June, held the anniversary of their society, adopted a report, and published it in Zion's Herald. They say the question of slavery is with them a question of conscience. They also state, "We do not profess to determine how far peculiar circumstances may palliate crime, nor under how great moral disabilities the soul may obtain present and eternal salvation. We allow that circumstances may palliate, but never can justify the sin of slavery. There may be circumstances, in which the slave may be purchased from the purest benevolence; when the purchase was made only that he might be shielded from the cruelty of those laws, which admit of his civil existence in no other relation; when the purchaser, having already regarded him as a freeman, waits for the first opportunity to do that legally which he had already done in his heart; in a word, when the sole motive in the purchase was the good of the slave. In cases of this kind, there is a surrender both in principle and practice." Here is pretty sound Methodist doctrine. But then these are only *extreme possible cases*, according to the report; for presently the rum-sellers are placed in the same category with Christian slaveholders; the one class upholding slavery and the other intemperance. However, the report is more temperate than what could be expected, and comprises much truth, though it contains a sufficient amount of exceptionable matter.‡

9. The Maine conference sat June 28th, at Hallowell. Mr. Scott and Mr. Storrs arrived on the 29th, at the seat of conference, and commenced a regular course of lectures on slavery during the conference.¶ Indeed, it became the fashion of the times for Scott and others to go from conference to conference, and do their utmost to engage as many as possible in the ultra proceedings of the times.

10. The New Hampshire conference sat July 5th. The same process was pursued by the abolitionists of this conference as at the New England conference. They had a meeting on Tuesday evening, previous to conference, and concluded to ask a committee on slavery. On opening conference, Bishop Hedding delivered an address, in which he stated that the annual conferences received their power from the Gen-

\* Z., Vol. VIII, p. 102. Matlack, pp. 45-55.

† See the correspondence on this subject in Document, No. 26.

‡ Z., Vol. VIII, p. 101.

¶ Z., Vol. VIII, p. 110.

\* C., Vol. XI, p. 137, col. 4.

† Z., Vol. VIII, p. 83. Matlack, p. 68.

eral conference; and as the General conference has not authorized them to act, except on certain specified matters, the president is not bound to put motions on other matters. When the abolitionists brought forward their motion, the Bishop declined putting it that day, but agreed to give them an answer next morning. On Thursday morning the Bishop presented the following conditions:

"(1.) The report of said committee shall not be read or adopted at any time when the president, through ill health or fatigue, is under the necessity of being out of the conference.

"(2.) The conference shall not act on the report of said committee till that part of the conference business is finished which is necessary to prepare for fixing the appointments of the preachers.

"(3.) If, in the judgment of the president, the report of said committee shall contain any article contrary to the Discipline of our Church, or contrary to the advice of the General conference, as expressed in the Pastoral Address of that body, bearing date May 26, 1836, it is understood and admitted that he, the said president, is under no obligation to put to vote any motion to adopt said report.

"(4.) If any preacher shall publish, or cause to be published, the report of said committee, or any part of it, or any statement respecting it, he shall be understood to be under obligation of honor to publish these conditions also.

"(5.) If the conference shall adopt the motion to appoint that committee, the act shall be understood as an agreement to these conditions.

"(6.) If such committee shall be appointed, these conditions shall be spread on the journals.

ELIJAH HEDDING.

"July 6, 1837."

The conference refused to accept the conditions of the Bishop, and there the matter rested for the present.

11. The Pittsburg conference was held in Steubenville, Ohio, July 19, 1837. The following preamble and resolution were passed, with nearly a unanimous vote:

"Whereas, the rule which prohibits the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them, has recently been subjected to various constructions, not only differing from each other, but, in the judgment of many of the ministers of our Church, neutralizing the force and bearing of this plain and important rule; we, therefore, consider it a privilege, and, above all, our bounden duty to offer the following resolution as the sense of this conference respecting the rule in question:

"Resolved, That, in the judgment of this conference, all traffic in the souls and bodies of our fellow-men, under any circumstances, which either originates or perpetuates slavery, is a direct violation both of the spirit and letter of our General Rule on this subject."\*

12. The Genesee conference, held September 20th, adopted a very temperate and strong report on slavery. In reply to seven hundred and fifteen memorialists, who ask the conference to give an official expression of their sentiments on slavery, and to petition the General conference to revise the Discipline so as to relieve the Church of slavery, the conference declares, as to the character of slavery,

"(1.) That, in the judgment of this conference, our Discipline, in declaring that slavery

is a *great evil*, is to be understood as pronouncing, not upon its civil and political so much as upon its *moral* character.

"(2.) That 'the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them,' are terms that, in their obvious import, relate as well to the *internal* as to the foreign traffic in human beings; so that the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention either to originate or *perpetuate* their enslavement, is a violation of the disciplinary interdict."

The conference state that it is now premature to petition the General conference, and then proceed to volunteer these sentiments as a corrective to the abolition petitioners: That the question of slavery is now agitating the Church and the nation; that, as it is now connected with politics, the employment of the Sabbath in its discussion is improper; that its discussion is subordinate to the ordinary work of the ministry; that such discussion of it as is irrespective of private and public character, and labors to turn popular odium on our brethren and our bishops, is a violation of Christian principles, and of injurious tendency; that having resort to the press with the names of our brethren, or well-understood allusions to them, hazarding statements of what they are said to have said or done in private or public, is a breach of ministerial honor and total departure from the spirit of Methodism and the New Testament. Such a practice, especially among ministers, destroys mutual confidence, introduces indiscriminate detraction in the Church, provokes God to leave the Church to its own evil ways.\*

13. The Genesee conference was not alone in its declaration against the intemperate and unjust denunciations of the abolitionists, who now commenced an exterminating war against Church authorities and their brethren who would not go along with them. The Wesleyan Association of Boston, the publishers of Zion's Herald, bore a similar testimony to that of the Genesee conference. This paper had opened, in January, 1835, its columns to both sides of the controversy. The abolitionists occupied the paper principally, when some restraint was thrown on them by the publishers. That class of abolitionists who could brook no restraint, and were strangers to equality and equal rights, when discussion on slavery was concerned, established Zion's Watchman, in January, 1836, and still retained their hold on the Herald, occupying the Herald as much as they were permitted, and employing the Watchman, without the least restraint in regard to the persons and characters of those whom they saw fit to attack.

The publishers of the Herald, under date of July 23d, officially, by their secretary, L. Tomkins, declared themselves against this unjust procedure. The sober-minded Methodists complained that the writers in the Herald contended too sharply, and were lacking in charity. The publishers confess this, and admonish the correspondents accordingly. They say the writers create animosities in the Church, and do away the courtesy due from Christian to Christian; that this injurious spirit is diffused among the readers of the paper. They caution the writers to avoid for the future reflections which have a tendency to bring into disrepute our doctrines, Discipline, usages, economy, or

\* Matlack, p. 60.

\* Z., Vol. VIII, p. 172, from the Auburn Banner.

the public acts of our bishops, presiding elders, or preachers—the Herald was set for the *defense* and *support* of these, but not for their destruction—and add: “We most solemnly believe that a continual controversy on these topics will be blasting in its effects to the best interests of the Church, with which we are connected, and which we so ardently love.”\*

This is what the General conference of 1836 foresaw and provided against. This is now confessed by the sober abolitionists themselves, who, in fact, if not in word, declare that the conference of 1836, on the whole, took the wise and Scriptural course; and, indeed, the occurrences since that time only prove the wisdom of their course, though denounced by the abolitionists on the one hand, and by the pro-slavery men on the other.

14. During the session both of the New England and New Hampshire conferences, and immediately after, the abolitionists were determined to carry their point, in all sorts of agitation, in the pulpit, where they could, by lectures, and by the press. At this time Bishop Hedding deemed it his duty to interfere so far as to deliver an address, on the 31st of August, to the Oneida conference, and the same to the Genesee conference, September 21st. The address was “on the subject of the duties of the president of an annual conference, on the rights and powers of such conference, and on the principles and history of the Church on the act of holding slaves.”†

In some prefatory remarks to the editors of Christian Advocate and Journal, dated September 25th, the Bishop remarks, that by the phrase *owning slaves*, he means, “holding servants in such a sense that the law of the land declares them to be property, or slaves,” and that he enters not into the question “whether a human being *can* be property or not.” He wishes the reader, too, “carefully to mark the distinction that is made between the *slave-trade*, the *system of slavery*, on the one hand, and the simple act of holding a slave in peculiar circumstances on the other.”‡

On the duties of the president of a conference, and the rights and powers of annual conferences, the Bishop remarks, that the duties of both are defined by the Discipline—the president may appoint the day of ordinations, and to close the conference in a week; that the president is not bound to put any motion on any subject, when brought up, but such as are within the limits of the powers of the annual conference; for this is true only of the General conference. The annual conference is not a primary, independent body, though it was originally so, when there was but one annual conference, at the time the Church was organized, in 1784. After this there was the primary General conference, which met once in four years, consisting of all the traveling preachers in full connection, then of all the traveling elders, up to 1808. Since that time the delegated General conference existed, which represents the whole traveling connection, and continues to be the primary body. As the present annual conferences are controlled, divided, dispersed, or annihilated by the General conference, they are neither primary nor independent bodies. He then infers that he is not

bound to put every question on any subject which an annual conference sees fit to bring up. And to excuse himself for not putting such motions to the vote as the abolitionists demand, he gives the following reasons: 1. Such business does not properly belong to the annual conferences. 2. It would be injurious to other conferences. 3. It would injure the slave. 4. It would produce agitation contrary to the advice of the General conference of 1836. 5. It would be contrary to our ordination vows. 6. The admission would completely prostrate the government of the Church, and throw all her great plans and interests into confusion.

Bishop Hedding then proceeds to answer the question, “What right has any member of our Church to own a slave?” On this he premises: “I am ready to disapprove the *slave-trade*, the *system of slavery*, including all the unjust and cruel rights which any laws are supposed to give, and all the injunctive and cruelties inflicted on slaves, as decidedly as Mr. Wesley did. Lest I be misunderstood, before I proceed I beg you to observe that owning, or holding a slave, does not include exercising all the rights which the laws are supposed to give the master over the servant, but only such as are necessary for the good of the servant and the safety of the master, all the circumstances being taken into the account. Now let us answer the question. The right to own a slave is founded on this rule: ‘Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets.’ Matt. vii, 12. All acts in relation to slaves, as well as to every other subject which can not be performed in obedience to this rule, are to be condemned, and ought not to be tolerated in the Church. If no case can be found where a man can own a slave, and in that act obey this rule, then there is no case in which slave-owning can be justified. But if one case can be found where a man may hold a slave, and by the civil law own him, and in that act obey the rule, then there may be ten such cases, or ten thousand; and that there are many such cases among our brethren in the southern states I firmly believe.”

The Bishop further explains, by declaring that slavery is condemned in the parts that compose it. And this is true of the *slave-trade*, of the *system of slavery*, and of all the injustice and cruelty inflicted on the slaves; but it is not true in circumstances where the best possible thing a man can do for his slave is, to hold, protect, feed, and govern him. The Methodists of the south are few compared to the multitude; they can not change the laws and circumstances which render it necessary to keep the slaves.

The Bishop then proceeds to prove in detail, that while the Church condemns the *system of slavery*, and all injustice and cruelty toward slaves, she has never said there could be no circumstances in which a man could own slaves and yet be innocent; nay, the Church has said the contrary. He shows this to be the case in the plainest manner, and proves conclusively that the Discipline and practice of the Methodist Episcopal Church have been in accordance with the views of Wesley, Coke, Clarke, Benson, Asbury, Watson, and the other great expositors of Wesleyan Methodism; nay, he shows that the Wesleyan Methodists had slaveholders in approved communion with them up to the first of August, 1834, or to the very

\* Z., Vol. VIII, p. 119, col. 2.

† For the address see C., XII, p. 10; W., IV, pp. 109, 110; Z., VIII, pp. 173, 177; and Document, No. 27.

morning of emancipation in the West Indies.\*

15. On the 25th and 26th of October, the first Methodist antislavery convention was held in Lynn, Massachusetts. This was the first of the kind. The professed occasion of it was, that the antislavery movement in the Church was obstructed by the bishops, who refused to put such questions to vote as the abolitionists wished to introduce. The call for the convention was signed by about seven hundred male members of the Church, most of them being preachers or official members.

After the call was made, on the 13th of October Messrs. Merrit and Scott issued, in *Zion's Herald*, an "Address to the abolitionists of the Methodist Episcopal Church in New England." This Address was a firebrand. It stated that the circumstances of the times called for such a meeting; that none should be absent who could possibly attend; and that neither time nor distance should prevent; that the meeting should be one of the most important ever held in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The preachers who believed the annual conferences had a right to express their sentiments on a moral subject were urged to come. The members who believed they had the right of petition were urged to be present. Still they affirm that they wished to do nothing contrary to the principles of the Gospel or to Methodism.

The proceedings of the convention were published in *Zion's Herald*, consisting of a "Declaration of sentiments," in a column and a half,† which embraced their views on slavery, the responsibility of the Church, and the measures to be adopted for the overthrow of slavery. A "Report," written by Jotham Horton, was also issued in six columns;‡ a report on "Conference Rights," written by Mr. Merrit, in over six columns.¶ The convention also adopted a set of "resolutions," covering more than two columns.§ Thus the entire official issues to the public, aside from the journal and order of business, comprised about sixteen columns of *Zion's Herald* in small print. It would occupy too much space to insert here the outlines of the position and arguments of the convention. We will, however, remand to our collection of documents extracts from their Report on conference rights, as well as the entire resolutions adopted. These surely will give a sufficiently ample view of the doings of the convention.¶

On conference rights, the convention declares that they do not wish in any way to conflict with the proper duties imposed by the Discipline upon Church officers, and that they have no controversy with bishops as such. They admit that an annual conference can not *force* its president to put *any* question to the vote, whether specified in the Discipline or not; neither can the president *force* the conference to do any business; and that the conference should be the judge, provided it keeps within the provisions of Discipline, as to what business the interests of the Church require to be done. A whole conference may err, and so may one man.\*\*

The true state of the matter seems to be this: The abolitionists were at this time determined

to take a course, without designing it we allow, in reality revolutionary. The bishops exceeded their usual bounds of moderation to prevent this catastrophe. The evil with the most of the abolitionists was corrected; but some soon became past cure, pursued their revolutionary measures, and finally carried them out in secession, and settled down into an unchristian state of mind against their former brethren; and some of them, we fear, continue in that state of mind to this day.

16. During this year the Antislavery Society advanced vigorously in its movements. The whole number of antislavery societies was one thousand and six, being an increase of four hundred and eighty-three for the year. The number of presses friendly to antislavery principles increased. The funds of the Society for the year amounted to over \$38,000, being an increase over last year of over \$12,000. The issues of the press were as follows:

Bound Volumes.....	7,877
Tracts and Pamphlets.....	47,250
Circulars, etc.....	4,100
Prints.....	10,490
Antislavery Magazine.....	9,000
Slave's Friend.....	130,150
Antislavery Record.....	103,000
Human Rights.....	189,400
Emancipator.....	217,000
Total.....	718,267

Upward of seventy agents have been employed, the aggregate of their labors being thirty-two years. Three were devoted to the interests of colored persons in the free states, in view of promoting education and industry among them. Mr. Gerrit Smith and E. C. Delavan attached themselves this year to the Antislavery Society, and wrote letters on the occasion, which gave a fresh impetus to the cause.\* Mr. Smith, too, wrote a very able reply to Mr. Smylie's pro-slavery pamphlet. This produced considerable effect.

17. Toward the close of this year, the subject of "conference rights" became a prominent topic of discussion. The subject was first broached by Mr. Scott, in a letter to Bishop Hedding, after the session of the New England conference for 1836. In this communication the writer complained of the Bishop for opposing an early action of the conference, and disputed the *right* of the Bishop either to cause delay of action or to object to any part of the report. His language is, "The conference had ordered that the report should be prepared as early as possible; but you refused to admit it till after the other business was done. What right had you to say that the report on slavery should not be presented till *all* the other business of conference was finished? What *right*, I ask again, what right had you to refuse to put a motion for its adoption, till you should be satisfied with *every part of it*? Are the members of an annual conference obliged to satisfy *you*, and get *your* approval, before any business is to be done?" These and other topics were dwelt on, and published to the world without the consent of the Bishop.† We have given, however, the most material points on this topic, and the subject became so diffuse as to extend beyond the limits of our work. Indeed, little else belongs properly to the subject beyond what we have inserted, either in our narrative or in the documents

\* Document, No. 27. † Z., Vol. VIII, p. 186.  
 ‡ Z., Vol. VIII, pp. 189, 190. ¶ Id., pp. 193, 194.  
 § Id., p. 200. ¶ For resolutions, see Document, No. 28.  
 \*\* For extracts on conference rights, see Document, No. 29.

\*Z., Vol. VIII, pp. 89, 90. †C., Vol. XII, p. 53, col. 5.



appended. Still, we refer the inquisitive reader to the articles cited below.\*

Indeed, the question of conference rights resolves itself into the following: "Whether an annual conference possesses the right to violate the instructions and spurn the advice of the General conference; and whether conferences may agitate questions of any kind in a way to bring them into collision with other conferences?" The leaders in the abolition ranks avowedly set out to disregard consequences, whatever they might be, that would interfere with their one idea, and the disruption of the Church seemed to be a small matter in their view, compared with the accomplishment of their purposes.

18. The events of the year in regard to slavery and abolition were of the most exciting character. The press, too, groaned under the weight of the newspapers, pamphlets, and books which were written on the subject. As their name is legion we can not enumerate; we must merely classify. We have seen that the issues of the Antislavery Society alone, in books, pamphlets, circulars, prints, newspapers, amounted to the enormous number of 718,267 copies.

The death of Mr. Lovejoy, by a mob, at Alton, Illinois, became the occasion of great zeal in the cause of abolition, and was the means of adding thousands to its ranks.†

The project to annex Texas was also an element of excitement, which became the occasion of diffusing a more general antislavery sentiment in the community. Dr. W. E. Channing wrote a letter to Henry Clay on this subject, which greatly stirred up the public mind.

The Hon. Seth Lewis, a Methodist, one of the District Judges of the state of Louisiana, wrote a "Review of abolitionism, or the question of slavery as it exists in the United States considered," in eighteen pages. It was presented to the Conservative Society of Citizens of Louisiana, and published by their order. The Judge contends that slavery is not sinful; yet he says "it has its root in the weakness, the ignorance, the vices, and wickedness of human nature."

The state of the controversy is this: A few writers, as Smylie and Lewis, wrote feeble essays in justification of slavery. Their absurdities and unscriptural positions were seized on by the antislavery press to portray more darkly still the picture of slavery, by which it was

rendered more honorable than formerly to unprejudiced and intelligent minds.

19. The missions among the slaves were prosecuted with their usual zeal and success by our southern brethren during the year, or rather their former labors were continued with increased activity and self-denial. As a specimen we give an extract of a letter from Rev. N. Talley, of the Charleston district, South Carolina conference, from the Southern Christian Advocate, and copied in Christian Advocate of August 25, 1837:

"I am happy to say that the missions of this district are in vigorous and hopeful operation. While the master rejoices to encourage our labors for the good of his servants, the servants rejoice to be rescued from their corrupt superstitions by the truth of the Gospel. Many appear to have been truly awakened and converted by its ministry among them, and exhibit the fruits of honesty and righteousness, sobriety and truth. Some have died in the faith, having consistently maintained their profession in life, and triumphed, giving glory to God in their expiring moments. In his cross-bearing duties, the missionary often finds a sweet refreshment in the affectionate gratitude of his humble flock.

"We have under our care, in the Charleston district, six missions, which are served by nine missionaries; and there are two thousand, two hundred members of the Church belonging to these missions. There are also fifteen hundred children constantly under catechetical instruction. The number of plantations visited is upward of one hundred. We have found it very advantageous to have houses erected exclusively for worship. Some gentlemen have put up chapels which are really neat and commodious, and have not regarded the expense. It would contribute much to the usefulness of the missions to have chapels erected at every place.

"Our attention has been particularly given to the children. They are instructed orally, altogether; yet in most of the missions their improvement is highly gratifying. Many can repeat the whole of the catechism, including the commandments, the apostles' creed, and the Lord's prayer, and the hymns attached to the catechism. They sing most sweetly; and their personal appearance, when met for instruction, is clean and becoming. The missionaries always insist on this.\*"

The fruit of these missions is *honesty, righteousness, sobriety, and truth, and cleanliness of person*. They also learn much Christian knowledge from the catechisms and preaching.

## CHAPTER XII.

### EVENTS OF 1838.

1. THE subject of conference rights and episcopal power over annual conferences, had been discussed at some length, the preceding year. It was continued for the first four months, in this year, in the Christian Advocate and Journal, and in Zion's Herald. Nothing was said on the subject in the Western Advocate, as this topic was not elicited by any acts, either of the western

conferences, or the bishops while presiding in them.

Rev. Moses Springer and the editor of the Maine Wesleyan Journal wrote temperate articles on conference rights, but which seemed to take a middle ground among the controversialists. The following sentence was quoted from Bishop Emory, and commented on with zeal:

\* C., Vol. XII, pp. 33, 43, 50, 54, 58, 61, 73, 89.  
† Z., Vol. VIII, pp. 190, 191, 197, 198.

\* C., Vol. XII, p. 2, col. 3, of Aug. 25, 1837, from Southern Christian Advocate.

"The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church have no control whatever over the decisions of either the General or annual conferences; whereas the bishops of the Protestant Episcopal Church have an *absolute negative* in their general conventions."

It is true, the bishop has no control over the annual conferences, either in their making a decision or over that decision when made, as he has neither vote nor veto; but it is not to be inferred that he has no power to shut out irrelevant matter that interferes with the regular business of conference, or shut out unconstitutional subjects.

Dr. Fisk took up the subject and discussed it with great clearness. Mr. Scott had decided, "It is the prerogative of the conference to decide *what* business they will do, and *when* they will do it." The Lynn convention, which met October 25th and 26th, 1837, decided that "some of our bishops have usurped and exercised powers which do not belong to them; and that they have exceeded, in some of their acts, their constitutional prerogatives." Yet the convention declares, in its "claims set up," that "it has never contended that the bishop is *obliged* to put *any* resolution that may be offered." Dr. Fisk presents the following views of the subject:

That *Methodist usage* is against the doctrine of Scott and his adherents. The doctrine was never publicly advocated till it came up in connection with abolitionism, and the bishops have often refused the introduction of miscellaneous matter, and this greatly promotes the safety, durability, and efficiency of the Church. He asserts the "Church will not suffer the bishops to be parties in any transaction that will compromise the unity of faith, the uniformity of discipline, or the bonds of peace, on which account the Discipline says the bishop is *amenable* to the *General conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary*; and this improper conduct is a violation or neglect of any of his duties, one of which is to *oversee the spiritual and temporal concerns of the Church.*" Dr. Fisk concludes his very sensible letter with a high eulogy on our ecclesiastical polity.\*

Bishop Hedding writes a very able letter, on December 11, 1837, addressed to Rev. Mr. Cox, of the Maine Wesleyan Journal. After quoting the rule on the accountability of the bishops to the General conference, in respect to improper conduct, he says: "I believe this rule is generally understood by the preachers throughout the Church to apply as well to the official acts as to the private conduct of a bishop, to his presiding in the conference, and to his fixing the appointments of the preachers; and if it do not authorize him to decline putting to vote what he believes to be an *improper* resolution, it does not prohibit his making what he believes to be an *improper* appointment."† Bishop Hedding then proceeds to show the impossibility of being governed by the will of twenty-eight annual conferences, and the General conference at the same time, in a number of cases that might occur.‡

The Rev. Phineas Crandall|| gives the following view of this subject. He first divides the acts of an annual conference into the *executive, judicial, and deliberative*. To preside in

the conference he defines: 1. To preserve order. 2. To decide questions of order, subject to an appeal to the body. 3. To put questions to vote. 4. To declare the result of the votings. And after a chain of reasoning, he lays down seven positions as tenable, the last of which is, "If the bishop refuse to put the question, he refuses to *preside*, virtually vacates the chair, and then the conference may elect by ballot a president pro. tem. from among the presiding elders, as provided by the Discipline."

Much was said on this topic in the winter and spring of 1837 and 1838. We have given as much as we deemed to be of any use to general readers. The curious inquirer may consult the references in the margin.\*

2. Dr. Fisk, on January 25, 1838, commenced a series of six letters, addressed "to the ministers and members in the northern and eastern conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The object was to show the "tendency and probable results of the doctrines and measures of modern abolitionists upon the Church." Hence he lays down his proposition as follows, in his first letter:‡ *that the doctrine and measures of modern abolitionism are revolutionary, and must, if persisted in, end in schism and in the dismemberment of the Church of Christ.*

He thinks it of no avail to address those abolitionists who are persons of one idea, or who are monomaniacs. But he considers the great body of ministers and people of a different stamp, who justly look on slavery as a great evil, and are ready to do all in their power to remove it. He lays it down that *abolitionism* does not mean the *abolition of slavery*; but abolitionism embraces the doctrine, spirit, measures, and *doings* of those who, in our country and in our Church, have set themselves to the abolishment of slavery in the United States. He does not hold the party, as such, responsible for all the sayings and doings of each abolitionist. Yet he holds them, both as a *party* and as *individuals*, responsible for the general character of their measures, for their official doings, for the doings of their accredited agents, and for the general course of their accredited papers; and any man who supports a party whose general measures have a given tendency, can not relieve himself from responsibility, by privately saying that he disapproves of this act, measure, principle, or spirit of his party.

In his second letter,‡ Dr. Fisk affirms the schismatic tendency of abolitionism; because, 1. It maintains that to sustain the legal relation of a master to a slave is, in every case, and under all circumstances, sinful. 2. The course pursued by abolitionists is calculated to sow discord among brethren, and to alienate the ministers and members in one section of the country from those of another. These positions are fully sustained by quotations from the writings of abolitionists, and their own avowed acts.

In his third letter, of February 24th,|| Dr. Fisk gives abundant proofs to support his positions, and therefore draws this just conclusion,

\* C., Vol. XII, p. 91, col. 2.

† Bishop Hedding's letter of Dec. 11, 1837, in C., Vol. XII, p. 100, col. 2.

‡ Document, No. 30.

§ Z., Vol. IX, p. 21, col. 1.

\* C., Vol. XII, pp. 89, 91, 97. Z., Vol. IX, pp. 1, 2, 5, 13, 21, 32, 33, 36, 41, 64.

† C., Vol. XII, p. 99. Z., Vol. IX, p. 45.

‡ C., Vol. XII, p. 101. Z., Vol. IX, p. 16, 1838. Z., Vol. IX, p. 49.

§ C., Vol. XII, p. 109, col. 1-4. Z., Vol. IX, p. 57.

"that a change, either in the principles or the administration of the moral discipline of the Church, brought about by popular agitation and popular influence, is subversive of the essential principles of our ecclesiastical constitution."

Dr. Fisk, in his fourth letter, written also in February,\* goes on to show the agitating and schismatic movements of the ultra-abolitionists. Their watchword, like O'Connell, is, agitate! agitate! AGITATE! The cause is similar to the radical reformers of 1828.† Rev. Asa Shinn writes to the editor of the Watchman a letter of sympathy, and hails him as a fellow-laborer in the same field. "You are aware," says Mr. Shinn, "I suppose, that, in 1828, I became one of the Methodist reformers, and that since then I have been laboring in that branch of the Church. All you who are antislavery men in the Methodist Episcopal Church I regard as reformers; and I am confident that, were you personally acquainted with me, you would find no difference of sentiment that would at all hinder us from being fellow-laborers in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ."‡ He thinks if individuals unite with abolition societies, it is on their individual responsibility. But now the Church is dragged in, against her will, as a party in these principles and measures. The thing is *practical radicalism*. The official committee, in its call for the "great central Methodist antislavery convention of ministers and laymen," declares, that unless something is done preparatory to General conference, nothing can then be done. In short, antislavery societies became the element of schism. No matter under what name they may pass—"union societies," as at Baltimore; the "Association," as in England, under the flag of the Warren schism; or antislavery societies, as at present in Methodist conferences—this is to set up an organization in the Church, yet beyond the control of the Church. Then come the periodicals or organs of the revolutionary bodies. In Baltimore it was their "Mutual Rights;" in England it was their "London Christian Advocate;" and now, with us, their "Zion's Watchman." The first organization of the kind took place at the New England conference in 1835; and from this germ have issued all similar associations. To this source may be traced the foreign agents that have hung round other conferences, held private meetings to enlighten young members, and formed similar societies among them. He specifies the schismatic character of these movements, in which a portion of the New England conference were bound to each other by a separate organization and covenant, proposing *what* they will do in conference, *how* they will do it, and *when* they will do it. They inform the bishop of their views and determinations; they purpose to lay every other question on the table; they appoint a committee to "manage the business of the conference;" and if their views were not met, to "adjourn the conference, under the direction of the committee." Thus, by abolitionism, or a conference antislavery society, the business of the conference is prepared beforehand, the business of the conference is managed and entirely controlled, or rather superseded. Mr. Fisk con-

cludes thus: "Can any one be so blind to consequences as to ask why I call these measures revolutionary? Who does not see, the moment our annual conference refuses to do the business assigned it, as a functionary of the Church, that moment she throws herself out of the ecclesiastical pale, and dissolves her connection with the main body? It then only remains for the bishop to take the *remnant*, if any adhere to the body, and supply as he may the wants of the flock."\*

One thing, however, is worthy of note—constant and instant prayer was made to God, during the session of the New England conference in 1837. In these transactions were engaged many true and good men. A secret influence, unperceived by man, we must believe, in answer to prayer, seems to have turned the minds of those concerned. No motion for adjournment was made, the regular business was attended to, and the preachers appointed to their work, two or three abolition agents excepted.

In his fifth letter, dated in March,† Dr. Fisk further shows the revolutionary movements of the abolitionists. He refers to the attempts to organize an abolition missionary society, and the doings of those engaged in it; that men are taken from the itinerant ranks to become antislavery lecturers. Some of them locate for this purpose, but others retain their standing, receive appointments, and never attend to them. Mr. Scott shelters himself under the presiding elder. These agents go from conference to conference, at their annual sessions, stir up opposition to the presiding bishop, and urge the conferences into their measures; and in their letters from these conferences, detail their plans, operations, and success. Pulpits are sometimes occupied without permission of the preacher in charge, or even without asking his leave. Money is wrung from the sympathies of women and children, by a detail of tragic stories, in circuits where the preacher can scarcely be supported. The cycle of operations is, *agitate to get money, and get money to agitate*.

With his sixth, and last letter, dated March 12th,‡ Dr. Fisk closes his series to the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the northern and eastern conferences. In this letter he takes the ground, that abolitionism either goes for nothing, or is opposing Methodism; and that the course of the Church is the true Methodist ground, and Methodism as it is, as it was, as it ever has been, and that, too, in Europe and America. Dr. Fisk fully sustains this position. We need not add here, as this has been sufficiently shown in other parts of this history, and it will still more fully appear in the sequel.

The six letters of Dr. Fisk were answered in Zion's Herald, by Rev. Jotham Horton.¶ Mr. Horton endeavored to show that the principles and measures of the abolitionists were not in their nature schismatic or revolutionary, as was maintained by Dr. Fisk and the Advocate of New York. He declared that neither he nor the other abolitionists had any wish or intention to rend the Church. At this stage of the controversy, this, no doubt, is true. Still the abolitionists were bent on carrying their point, without regard to consequences. They allowed that peace and union were desirable, but purity more so; and

\* Z., Vol. IX, p. 61. It is not in my copy of the C., as some is wanting between pp. 109 and 121 of Vol. XII.

† Meth. Mag., Vol. XI, p. 308. ‡ Zion's Watchman, No. 103.

\* Z., Vol. IX, p. 62, col. 1.

† C., Vol. XII, p. 121, and Z., Vol. IX, p. 69.

‡ C., Vol. XII, p. 125, and Z., Vol. IX, p. 77.

¶ Z., Vol. IX, pp. 45, 46, 49, 57, 60, 65, 73, 81.

abolitionism, the purifying process, ought to be carried out in all its practical operations, whatever the consequences may be to the Church. The answer of Mr. Horton to Dr. Fisk goes on this ground. Hence, a reference to the course of Luther and Wesley, as examples, is constantly resorted to, though without relevancy, as an answer to all arguments and all authority; no matter what has been said against bishops or others in authority, because all is assumed to be covered by the example of Christ and his apostles, Luther, Wesley, and others. But the events of the future, and that not far distant, showed that Dr. Fisk was correct in his views of the results of abolitionism in the Church. Mr. Horton soon after left the Church; and his recent return to it shows that he had the wrong side of the question. Dr. Fisk's articles were called for by the emergencies of the occasion, and did incalculable good to the Church.\*

3. Bishop Hedding's address to the Genesee conference occasioned some discussion. Mr. Horton, one of the abolition coryphees of the times, attacked it in six columns in *Zion's Herald*.† Mr. Horton seems more intent on a general discussion of slavery, as was the usage of abolitionists in those days, than in meeting fairly the argument of the Bishop. "An abolitionist"‡ calls Mr. Horton to task, and gives cases and circumstances in which a man may, for a time at least, hold slaves, in accordance with the law of reciprocal love. Rev. Amos Binney defends the position of the Bishop, and shows that Mr. Horton perverted the Bishop's exposition from its proper meaning and use.¶ The whole of this, however, is of no more historical import than this, that there was a constant aim on all occasions, by the leading abolitionists, to take up every thing relative to the bishops, and make all the capital possible to promote their cause.

4. On the tendency of abolitionism there was much discussion beside that by Dr. Fisk and Mr. Horton. Dr. Lucky, editor of the *New York Advocate*, and Dr. Bangs, contended strongly against the movements of the abolitionists. Rev. James Porter and others were on the opposition. Dr. Bangs writes four articles§ to show the evil tendency of abolition. Dr. Bangs is very severe in his strictures. He was met with great promptness by Rev. James Porter,¶ who maintained that abolitionists were peacenmakers, and that those who provoke opposition are often more at fault than their opponents. The Rev. Bryan Morse, while he declares himself a genuine abolitionist, gives several cases of slaveholding, in which no sin can be attached to the slaveholder.\*\*

5. Mr. Scott pursued his course this year in the abolition cause with great earnestness. In the early part of the year he had a sharp controversy with Dr. Snow, an intelligent layman of Boston. Mr. Snow had sent to be published in *Zion's Herald*, in December, an extract from a sermon by Rev. Hubbard Winslow, who, though strongly antislavery, was opposed to the course of the abolitionists. Mr. Snow made a preface to the extract. Mr. Scott took up the gauntlet against Messrs. Snow and Winslow, and used it with great severity, while Dr. Snow continued his responses with perplexing effect on his opponent. But the coarseness and unfairness of Mr. Scott

drove from the contest Mr. Snow, who terminated the controversy in a final article, declining all discussion with such an opponent.\*

Mr. Scott, under date of Lowell, March 30th, 1838, published "an Appeal to the Methodist Episcopal Church," in 156 pages, double columns, and most of it in small type, in five parts; namely, 1. Slavery and the Church. 2. Bible Argument. 3. General Conference. 4. Conference Rights. 5. Sundry Articles. It seemed to have been intended to be the commencement of a *Western Antislavery Review*, "to be published again in 1839 and 1840, unless some unforeseen circumstances should prevent." The work is principally a compilation from all sources, with original matter interspersed, hastily conceived, rashly expressed, and illogically argued, with little study, method, or order, except the mere headings of the articles. And yet Mr. Scott thinks the matter is unanswerable. Of the selections from Mr. Merrit, penned in his dotage, and of Rev. G. F. Cox, prepared on the eve of his being entangled with Millerism, he says: "The arguments which they contain are *unanswered and unanswerable*." Yet Bishop Hedding and Dr. Fisk had both answered and confuted them. Had we space for the preface of this compound of all things in the line of ultra abolitionism, the reader would see in it enough of absurdity, self-sufficient assumption, contradictions, and uncharitableness, to satisfy him, that the author was not a man to reform either himself or others. In short, he arrogates to himself, in his Address to the Methodist Episcopal Church, more assumption of power and authority, than was ever claimed or exercised by all the bishops in the Church. But the man is a reformer, and, therefore, he may say and do as he pleases; as most of recent reformers think they have a full right to do. Yet the Appeal contains a number of valuable documents, which would otherwise have perished; so that evil is in this case, as in some others, connected with good.

In the summer of 1838 Mr. Scott prepared an "Address to Methodist Abolitionists," intended to be about a column and a half, but which, during the process of preparation, made one full page of *Zion's Herald*. The editor consented to the article, in its first form, in a general way. Mr. Scott proceeded, with the printers, to prepare, and behold an extra of the *Herald* was in readiness, without the knowledge of the editor, or the Wesleyan Association, the proprietors of the paper. The Association vetoed the extra, and forbade its publication. The editor was of the same opinion, and Mr. Scott had to be content with the 200 copies already struck, the object of which was to aid him in abolitionizing individuals, and the conferences which he visited. Under date of July 24th, he wrote a long, angry paper for *Zion's Herald*, on "free discussion," to which the editor attached ample notes, corrective and defensive. Mr. Scott declares, after saying many hard things to the editor, that "he has never been treated worse, even by the editors of the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal*." Mr. Brown, mildly, but firmly replies, that Mr. Scott dragged him before the public in a censorious, reproachful, and disrespectful manner, which was neither magnanimous nor generous. And it is no excuse to say, "this was Mr. Scott's manner," for on this principle a man may do what he pleases, and then plead that it is his manner. He states that

\* C., Vol. XII., pp. 127, 141.

† Z., Vol. IX., p. 37.

‡ C., Vol. XII., pp. 93, 97, 109, 111.

§ Z., Vol. IX., pp. 68, 61.

¶ Z., Vol. IX., p. 17.

|| Id., p. 53.

\*\* Id., p. 117.

\* See, for Scott's and Snow's articles, Z., Vol. IX., pp. 1, 20, 26, 33, 40, 41.

nothing has been so injurious on the great question of slavery as the "unchristian, virulent, and abusive spirit which has from time to time been exhibited on both sides.\*"

The truth is this, Mr. Scott and his associates and aids, had been accustomed to say every thing they could conceive against slaveholders, or those who would not cooperate with them. But now the tables are turned. The same temper and habit lead to the treatment of their own friends who can not go all lengths. Ultraism was the leading element in American abolitionism. Now this has greatly spent itself. Sober men recover from the mania. Hence the distinction between abolitionists and ultra-abolitionists, which now begins to be made, and soon becomes established as the distinctive names of the two sects of abolitionists, by which the original associations are from henceforth to be designated.

6. It is allowed to be the privilege and duty of bishops to address the Church at large on weighty subjects, and for grave reasons. That such men as Dr. Fisk might do the same, especially when urged to it by the fathers and superintendents of the Church, none will object. But this does not go to say that any or every self-constituted reformer should do such things, and insure attention and command respect. Mr. Merrit in his sober moments, in 1835, wrote an address to the abolitionists in the New England and New Hampshire conferences, in view of inducing them to pursue a more sober and Scriptural course on the subject of slavery. After declaring his faith in the moral evils of slavery, he urged that the *practice* of Christians should correspond to that of Christ and his apostles, in words and in deeds. They made no inflammatory addresses, in public discourses or in their writings; neither did they agitate the public mind nor anathematize all slaveholders; while some abolitionists seem ready to call down fire from heaven to consume all who follow not with them.† This letter was not published till Mr. Merrit became an abolitionist. He then, on May 2d, 1838, published it with notes, in which he retracted most of his former sentiments, and regrets that he had not been better instructed. The truth is, he was no longer Merrit of the Christian Advocate; for he became imbued with the entire spirit of an ultra-abolitionist.

Dr. Fisk, in a letter, dated May 3d, and published in the Herald of May 16th,‡ called attention to Mr. Merrit's original letter, and his notes of recantation, in a very kind but plain manner. Mr. Merrit had stated in his notes that there was no word in the Greek language to designate slavery. Dr. Fisk reminded him that the word *douleia*, *bondage*, was such a word, and so employed by Greek writers, and cited Donnegan as authority.

Mr. Merrit seems to have labored under a strange confusion of ideas, in regard to the meaning of the word *master* and *slaveholder*. By the term *master*, he meant one who gives to his servant that which is just and equal; one who compensates his servants for their labor; but still sustains the legal relation of master to his slave. By *slaveholder*, he means one who withholds from the slave the above blessings. The master may, in reference to slavery, be innocent, but the slaveholder must be always and necessarily guilty.¶

What nonsense and confusion of ideas! The terms master and slaveholder are synonymous,

except as they are used in different meanings. The slaveholder who inherits the slave, emancipates him as soon as the law will allow, and treats him as a freeman, as far as he can in justice and mercy, till he can set him free, is an innocent man. The slaveholder who buys for gain, uses the slave for his own benefit or convenience, and not for the slave's good, is a sinner. The man called master, who pursues the one or the other of these two courses, is the sinner or the saint on account of his conduct, and not because he is called master or slaveholder. But in the hot haste of condemning slavery and slaveholders, words and terms generally must be confounded, lest slavery should become innocent!

7. The Georgia conference held its session at Athens, Georgia, Dec. 13, 1837, yet we place its proceedings under the year 1838. The following preamble and resolutions were passed, it is said, unanimously:

"Whereas, there is a clause in the Discipline of our Church which states that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of *slavery*; and, whereas, the said clause has been *perverted* by some, and used in such a manner as to produce the impression that the Methodist Episcopal Church believed *slavery* to be a *moral evil*:

"Therefore, *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Georgia annual conference that slavery, as it exists in the United States, is *not a moral evil*:

"*Resolved*, That we view *slavery* as a civil and domestic institution, and one with which, as ministers of Christ, we have nothing to do, further than to ameliorate the condition of the *slave* by endeavoring to impart to him and his master the benign influence of the religion of Christ, and aiding both on their way to heaven.

"On motion, it was *Resolved, unanimously*, That the Georgia annual conference regard, with feelings of profound respect and approbation, the dignified course pursued by our several superintendents, or bishops, in suppressing the attempts that have been made by various individuals to get up and protract an excitement in the Churches and country on the subject of *abolitionism*.

"*Resolved, further*, That they shall have our cordial and zealous support in sustaining them in the ground they have taken."

Never was a more absurd sentiment uttered than to declare that slavery, as it exists in the United States, is no moral evil. For what is slavery as established by law, supported by judicial decisions, and practiced under the authority of these laws, and protected by these decisions? Slavery deprives a man of his natural rights, or infringes on them. Slavery, as it exists in the United States, makes men the property of others. It chains, drives, works, whips, and even feeds them like beasts. It deprives men of education and mental improvement; it compels them to break the Sabbath, violate the laws of chastity; it separates husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters. This is slavery only in part. The entire picture of its moral character is too dark for any moral painting. It is sinful, or morally wrong, necessarily and unchangeably. The mild and Christian treatment of some masters is not derived from slavery, but exists in spite of it, and in complete antagonism to it. And, indeed, no Methodists, as far as we know, ever denied slavery to be a great moral evil, till the Georgia conference intro-

\* Z., Vol. IX, pp. 51, 126, 131, 134.

† Id., p. 77.

‡ Id., p. 69.

¶ Id., p. 111.

duced this new moral heresy into the Church; and, indeed, all Methodist writers, up to this date, declare slavery to be a great moral evil. Dr. Clarke declared, "In heathen countries slavery was in some sort excusable: but among Christians it is an enormity and a crime, for which perdition has scarcely an adequate state of punishment."

The British conference declared, "The conference fully concur in those strong moral views of the evil of slavery, which are taken by their fellow-Christians of other denominations."

In 1780 the Methodist conference in America declared, that "slavery is contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, and hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion."

These resolutions of the Georgia conference gave rise to considerable comment at the time of their passage.

Mr. William C. Brown, editor of *Zion's Herald*, remarks, very justly, indeed, "If the Georgia conference has a right to pass resolutions declaring slavery to be *not* an evil, in direct opposition to the Discipline, has not the New England conference a right to pass resolutions declaring slavery to be a *great evil*, in accordance with Discipline?"\* Again: "If slavery is not a *moral evil*, why did not the Georgia conference, which seems to be very much enlightened on this subject, enlighten the Methodist Episcopal Church, which for many years has defined slavery to be a *great moral evil*? We feel some curiosity to know what *kind of an evil* the Georgia conference considers slavery to be."<sup>†</sup>

The *Christian Guardian*, the organ of the Canada conference, speaks thus: "Sainted spirit of the venerable Wesley! could shame and anger disturb thy deep and holy tranquillity, this would call them into existence! If for aught thou couldst wish to revisit this world of grief and sin, it would surely be to erase from the records of Methodism so foul a blot upon the character of the system which claims thee as its founder; or to inscribe beneath it, in emblazoned capitals, thy firm protest. Gladly wouldst thou, with heavenly permission, have recorded, in a handwriting upon the wall of that conference-room, thy unchanged belief of the true character of American slavery, the vilest that ever saw the sun. But if they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

The editor of the *Pittsburg Conference Journal*, Rev. William Hunter, after quoting the resolutions, adds: "What a pity it is that the Methodist Episcopal Church did not long ago make the grand discovery now made by the Georgia brethren! It is certainly mortifying to think that the Church has been for so many years solemnly inquiring what shall be done for the extirpation of a mere civil and domestic institution that has no moral evil in it. But is it not somewhat strange that the Georgia conference, having nothing to do with this domestic institution but to ameliorate the condition of the slave, by endeavoring to impart to him and his master the benign influences of the religion of Christ, should, nevertheless, so gravely legislate upon it? and that, so cordially approving the course of the bishops in suppressing attempts to get up and protract an excitement in the Church and country on the subject of abolitionism, they should, at the same time,

make an attempt which must add fuel to the fire, and disturb more than ever the harmony of the conferences? O, when will men cease to run into one extreme in order to avoid another? The men who, in conference assembled, in Georgia, could pass such resolutions, are the very men who, if the bounds of their habitation had been fixed in some parts of New England, would have been the most ultra abolitionists. And they are but condemning in others what they exemplify in themselves. They, indeed, should talk of overheated zeal, fanaticism, recklessness of consequences, and disturbing the peace of the Church."<sup>\*</sup>

8. The South Carolina conference, which was held in Columbia, South Carolina, January 10, 1838, had the following proceedings on the subject of slavery, as we find it in the *Southern Christian Advocate*:

"On the last day of the session, January 18th, Rev. W. Martin introduced resolutions in favor of slavery similar to those passed by the Georgia conference.

"Brother Dannelly approved of the resolutions, but remarked on the inconsistency of any action of conference on a subject which was avowed to be foreign from its province. He also brought to view the mischievous use which might be made of it in some parts of the country, where some sought to take up the time, and pervert the business of conference with debates of abolition.

"Brother W. Capers expressed a conviction that the sentiment of the resolution was universally held, not only by the *ministers of this conference, but of the whole south*. Still he acknowledged the force of the remark made by brother Dannelly, and would willingly do nothing which might ever be perverted into a pretext for the mischievous discussions which were going on in another quarter. The doctrine, and the only true doctrine, was, 'It belongs to Cæsar, and not to the Church.' But the subject, right or wrong, had got into the Church. He would suggest to the mover of these resolutions, whether it might not be better, all things considered, to adopt the following substitute:

"Whereas, we hold that the subject of slavery in these United States is not one proper for the action of the Church, but is exclusively appropriate to the civil authorities; therefore,

"Resolved, That this conference will not intermeddle with it, farther than to express our regret that it has ever been introduced, in any form, into any one of the judicatures of the Church."

"Brother Martin accepted the substitute.

"Brother Betts asked whether the substitute was intended as implying that slavery, as it exists among us, was not a moral evil? He understood it as equivalent to such a declaration.

"Brother Capers explained, that his intention was to convey that sentiment fully and unequivocally, and that he had chosen the form of the substitute for the purpose not only of reproving some wrong doings at the north, but with reference also to the General conference. If slavery were a moral evil—that is, sinful—the Church would be bound to take cognizance of it; but our affirmation is, that it is not a matter for her jurisdiction, but is exclusively appropriate to the civil government, and of course not sinful.

"This substitute was unanimously adopted with this explanation."

\* Z., Vol. IX, p. 15, col. 1.

† *Id.*, p. 19, col. 1.

\* Z., Vol. IX, p. 35, col. 2.

Comment is unnecessary. All that was said on the action of the Georgia conference will apply to that of South Carolina. This is given as a part of the history of the times on the subject of slavery.

9. The New York conference, which sat May 16th, passed the following resolutions:\*

"Resolved, That in the judgment of this conference it is incompatible with the duty which its members owe to the Church, as its ministers, for them to be engaged in attending anti-slavery conventions, delivering abolition lectures, or forming antislavery societies, either in or out of the Church, or in any way agitating the subject so as to disturb the peace and harmony of the Church, and that they be, and are hereby, affectionately advised and admonished to refrain from all these things.

"Resolved, As the sense of this conference, that any of its members, or probationers, who may patronize Zion's Watchman, by writing in commendation of its character, by recommending it to our people, by obtaining subscribers, and by collecting or remitting money for it, shall be considered guilty of indiscretion, and be censured by the conference."

What could be more sober than to advise and admonish all to refrain from such movements as employed Messrs. Scott, Storrs, Sunderland, and which all wise men must see would soon ripen the schism already begun? And what could be more mild than to censure the preacher who lent his influence to a publication which assailed the Church in the most virulent manner?

10. The New England conference held its session in Boston, June 6, 1838. At this conference "the pacification plan" was introduced by Rev. Gershom A. Cox, of the Maine conference. Much alienation of feeling had risen up among the preachers in the New England conference, in consequence of the controversy of the times. Mr. Cox first presented this plan to Fisk, Scott, and others, who received the proposition kindly, canvassed it thoroughly, and thought the measure might do good by being a basis of union. It was brought before the conference, who appointed a committee of twelve, six on each side, who were to choose another, who should be chairman, to consider and report. The committee could not fully agree. The proposition was then made to the conference, when fifty-eight signed the plan, and twenty against it. It was understood that there were eighteen who did not answer to their names. Subsequently the names of six six or eight were added. We find sixty-four names attached to it, in a communication in the Maine Wesleyan Journal, and copied into the Christian Advocate, of New York, of July 20th.†

The following is the document referred to:

"**ΚΟΜΜΟΝ ΓΕΩΡΓΙΟΝ.**—Whereas, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the north has been, and still is, greatly excited on the subject of American slavery, and the means which should be used for its removal from the Church; and,

"Whereas, we deem it of vital importance that the peace of the Church should be secured in order to her prosperity; and,

"Whereas, it is recognized as a cardinal virtue in religion, by our blessed Lord, that his followers should be 'peacemakers,' and love one another, and which are even given as a test of discipleship:

"Therefore, the undersigned, ministers of said Church, after mutual consultation, have agreed to adopt the following principles and measures for the purposes above named:

"**Principles.**—We believe that the system of American slavery is a great moral evil, and that the relations springing from this, which bind an innocent race to perpetual bondage to others against their wish, are sinful, although we concede that the master who sustains this relation is not, in every case, necessarily guilty.

"**Measures.**—We agree that, in any action we may be disposed to take on this or any other subject, we will,

"(1.) Never attack an officer, clergyman, or private member of the Church, in a public journal or lecture, or publicly arraign the official acts of any Church officer; but all such difficulties shall be adjusted according to the Discipline of our Church. Provided, however, that this shall not prevent the courteous investigation of principles and opinions.

"(2.) We agree that we will not countenance any brother in leaving his proper work to lecture upon this or any other subject, without the sanction of the proper authorities of the Church.

"(3.) No paper shall be established ostensibly for the purpose above stated, by our aid or sanction, or shall be countenanced by us, which claims to be controlled by any Wesleyan or Methodist societies, or having appellations attached to them peculiar to our Church.

"(4.) We agree that no societies or conventions claiming the character specified in section 3d, shall receive our approbation or aid. Our conviction is, that, in the present state of affairs, the peace of the Church claims at our hands that organizations of this character should not exist.

"(5.) We hold that our ministers and private members are at liberty—nor shall it be regarded as an offense for them thus to do—to connect themselves as they may choose with any anti-slavery society independent of the Church; provided, however, that our action in such cases shall not contravene the principles of this agreement.

"(6.) It shall not be regarded as an offense by us, but considered just, that prayer be offered in public for the master and his slave, or for the abolishment of the system. But we recommend that the apostolic language be used, as far as may be, in such devotions.

"(7.) Our preachers have liberty not only to read our rules once a quarter to the societies, and once a year to the whole congregation, but to explain at these seasons any part of our Discipline.

"(8.) We hold that our people have the right of petitioning the General conference, through the yearly conference, or otherwise, upon this or any subject with which *they have to do*.

"(9.) Nevertheless, in all circumstances relating to the above, we recommend to our preachers and people to exercise 'the wisdom of the serpent and the harmlessness of the dove.'"

The "plan of pacification," or "common ground," as it was called, was disapproved of by the ultra class of abolitionists, such as Scott and Storrs. It was approved by Bishops Hedding and Soule, Dr. Bangs and Dr. Fisk. Through the influence of the ultra-abolition-

\*C., Vol. XII, p. 166.

†Id., p. 189, col. 1.

\*Matlack, pp. 182-184. C., Vol. XII, p. 180.

ists, a number who signed it withdrew their names. Several articles appeared in the *Herald*,\* discussing the merits of the plan. Messrs. Merrit, Porter, and P. Crandall were the principal writers, to whose articles the citations in the margin refer. Many of the abolitionists never withdrew their names, though they thought, for the most part, that the plan was not exactly what it ought to be. Many of the members of the Maine and New Hampshire conferences signed it, or approved of its leading features; and, although no great number approved of every part of the common ground platform, the effect of it was salutary. The antislavery men were pleased with it; the ultra-abolitionists rejected much of it; while moderate abolitionists were, on the whole, satisfied with it, and observed its requirements. We find after this time less asperity on both sides, except among the ultra-ists, who persisted in their former course, and never ceased, till they ended in that actual schism, the principles and previous steps of which they had already adopted and pursued.

11. The Maine conference held its session June 27th. Rev. I. H. Husted, under date of July 5th, writes thus, in *Zion's Herald* of July 11th,† to its editor: "The pacification bill, introduced into your conference by brother Cox, was introduced at an early hour into ours. It took well with us, and will be subscribed to by a large majority. *Ninety one* have given in their names in its favor, and only *five or six* against it. A few still stand on neutral ground. I can but think the Lord has heard, and is answering, the many prayers of his people in relation to the subject which has so greatly agitated the Church for many months past.

12. The New Hampshire conference sat July 4th, at Danville, Vermont. The following resolution was presented to the conference for adoption:‡

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this conference that an attendance, on the part of any of its members, on abolition conventions, delivering abolition lectures, or circulating abolition periodicals, does not involve immorality, or militate against his ministerial character."

The president decided that the resolution was not in order; but if an appeal was made from his decision to the conference, he would put to vote the motion to appeal, on condition that his decision, together with the bill of exceptions, if he chose to present them, be recorded on the conference journals. An appeal was made and sustained, and the motion to adopt the resolution was eighty-one yeas and only one nay. The bishop then entered the following exception:

"Whereas, I decided that the foregoing resolution was out of order, on the ground that it approved what the General conference condemned; and, whereas, an appeal was taken from that decision; and, whereas, the appeal was sustained, my decision overruled, and the resolution carried:

"Therefore, I except to the said resolution in part. I allow that 'attendance on abolition conventions, delivering abolition lectures, or circulating abolition periodicals, does not in-

volve immorality;' but I except to the expression that these things do not 'militate against the ministerial character' of any member of this conference; and I except for the reason that the last General conference exhorted the members and friends of our Church 'to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications,' and also expressed 'the solemn conviction that the only safe, Scriptural, and prudent way for us, both as ministers and people, to take, is wholly to refrain from this agitating subject, [of abolitionism,] which is now convulsing the country, and consequently the Church, from end to end, by calling forth inflammatory speeches, papers, and pamphlets.\*

"THOMAS A. MORRIS."

The course of Bishop Morris gave great satisfaction to the conference. Of this a correspondent of *Zion's Herald* makes mention,† in very handsome terms, and closes the eulogy in these words: "If, in the order of Providence, it should ever be the lot of Bishop Morris to visit again the New Hampshire conference, he will, to his brethren in these northern regions, be welcome—more than welcome." Perhaps, had a similar course been pursued in the New England conference, it had been better, much better. But it is difficult to say what course would satisfy those who become very zealously engaged in carrying out their own peculiar views in times of excitement.

But the pacification plan seems to have found little favor in the New Hampshire conference. We account for it thus to some extent: Scott, Storrs, and others, attended the conference, and, of course, they must do their appropriate work; namely, to produce or continue agitation and excitement. And, indeed, the great objection to the plan was, that it was in opposition to agitation, and would confine the approvers of it to a course of sober discussion and careful examination; but agitation was the very life-blood of the leading abolition movements of the times. On the 9th of July the "Preachers' Wesleyan Antislavery Society" of the conference, held a meeting in Danville, and passed five resolutions, condemning the pacification plan. The reasons they assigned were, that it would be productive of contention rather than peace; that the signers of it had sacrificed their principles and measures; that it was defective in principle; and that all Methodist abolitionists should endeavor to live in peace with all opponents, as far as possible, but to have nothing to do with this compromise.‡

13. We are now come to the period of conventions. The antislavery associations seem to have been too narrow to embrace the full range of discussions which many, in their zeal, thought proper to pursue. The convention was now added; or rather the former having greatly spent their force, or becoming somewhat stale, and wanting in novelty, the zealous Methodist abolitionists had recourse to the convention. The first we read of was held in Cazenovia, New York, August 3, 1837.¶ Three principal ones were held in 1838.

At the Cazenovia convention the following resolution, introduced by Storrs, was discussed and advocated, though finally laid on the table:

"That we will not receive into our circuit

\* *Z.*, Vol. IX, pp. 102, 117, 118, 122, 130, 134, 137, 141, 149, 173, 177; also *Matlack*, pp. 182-184.

† *C.*, Vol. XII, p. 189, and *Z.*, Vol. IX, p. 110.

‡ *Z.*, Vol. IX, p. 115, col. 1.

\* Pastoral Address.

† *Z.*, Vol. IX, p. 118.

‡ *Z.*, Vol. IX, p. 122, col. 4.

¶ *Matlack*, p. 195.



and stations any preacher, by the appointment of a bishop, who will not receive petitions and memorials, and suffer them to be acted upon."

At a lay convention, held August 16th, the sequel of the Cazenovia convention, a preamble and resolution were adopted, which taught, "1. That the measures resorted to by the bishops and General conference are unconstitutional and subversive of order. 2. That these measures have effected a direct annihilation of the covenant rights of the Church. And, 3. That the obligations of the membership to the ministry are, by the practical operations of these measures, most emphatically destroyed.\*"

It should be remarked here, that Messrs. Scott, Sunderland, and Storrs were the great promoters of conventions. They took incipient measures to call them, attended and acted at them, and urged those principles and measures which shortly severed themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and prepared the way for others to follow their example.

On August 2d and 3d a Methodist antislavery convention was held at Utica, New York. It was called February 8th, by a committee for the New England, New Hampshire, and Maine conferences. The committee was composed of O. Scott, G. Storrs, J. Perkins, L. Sunderland, and D. B. Randall.† The reasons for the call of the convention, spread over a column of the Herald, were, in brief, the following: There are many slaveholders in the Church who enslave their brethren and sisters in Christ. There are about seventy thousand slaves in the Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church is one; therefore, slavery in it concerns every part of it. We have no right as conferences to express our sentiments against slavery; hence the necessity of conventions. But "southern conferences may take any ground they please in favor of slavery; they may prostrate Discipline as the Baltimore and Georgia conferences have done, and require of candidates for orders unauthorized pledges, as the New York conference has done, and bishops are ready to put such business to vote. If nothing is done before the next General conference by us, nothing will be done by that body; that the object is not to oppose any of the constituted authorities of the Church, but slavery, together with the pro-slavery and anti-abolition measures as they exist in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mr. Scott was appointed a delegate by the convention to attend the British conference, and Mr. Lee to attend the Canada conference; but neither would be received in this capacity by either of those two bodies.‡

The convention held at Lowell, Massachusetts, November 21st and 22d, was first called by Rev. James Porter, October 19, 1838, with reasons for its call similar to those of the Utica convention. The call contained this sentence: "Certain annual conferences have labored to put down abolition societies, conventions, and efforts, and thereby, at least, indirectly endeavored the extermination of those righteous principles on which they are based."§ Mr. Porter's call was responded to by the signature of nearly fifteen hundred names, comprising preachers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.¶ The convention published a long address to Methodist abolitionists, extending

through three successive numbers of Zion's Herald on account of its great length.\* The convention also published a long list of resolutions.† Both the address and the resolutions were no other, elementarily, than the call sets forth, and the matter published a thousand and one times in the Herald, and Watchman, and other abolition papers. In the address and resolutions the elements are so diluted with other material as to present the idea of chaos and confusion, such as would puzzle ordinary critics to separate and place in intelligible form. Still some things are unmistakable. The General conference, the bishops, and, indeed, Church authorities in general, are so fully anathematized that their doom was sealed. Scott, Storrs, Horton, and Sunderland, now on the eve of secession, obtained great vantage-ground over their present associates, who continued in the Church; and it was a herculean work for Messrs. Horton, Crandall, and others, to maintain the existence of the Methodist Episcopal Church in New England after the foundation had been so much undermined by the Lowell convention. Still these brethren did a noble work at a future day, notwithstanding the severe loss they sustained in being partners in the conventional proceedings of the times.

As to the real character of the conventions, they were no other than schismatical. They were irresponsible to any Church authority. They formed a government within a government. The topics discussed show opposition to the institutions and constituted authorities of the Church, and the result fully shows that this is a correct view of their proper character.‡ But insubordination became the order of the day, and we need not be surprised at its results.

14. The General Rule on slavery became this year the subject of conference action. The New England conference passed a resolution, to be sent around to all the conferences, calling for a change in the General Rule on slavery. Their action was as follows:§

"Resolved, That the New England annual conference recommends to the General conference next to be held in the city of Baltimore, in May, 1840, to alter our General Rule on slavery so that it may read as follows:

"The buying, or selling, or holding men, women, or children as slaves, or giving them away, except on purpose to free them."¶

This was passed at the conclusion of the conference, when many of the members had left.‡ On the change, Dr. Capers, then editor of the Southern Advocate, remarks: "It was published in Zion's Herald as long ago as June 27th, that the Committee of the New England conference on the Discipline had recommended, and the conference had adopted, with but one dissenting vote, the resolution recommending to the General conference the offensive alteration of our General Rule. It is very doubtful to our minds, though we would not interfere with our General Rules, whether it is not absolutely necessary to the southern portion of the Church to expunge every word of Section X, Part 2."¶

15. The plea of free discussion becomes sometimes very equivocal in its meaning. Zion's Herald opened its columns to the free discussion

\* C., Vol. XII, p. 141, col. 1. † Z., Vol. IX, p. 26.

‡ C., Vol. XII, p. 187. Matlack, p. 179.

§ Z., Vol. IX, p. 170, col. 2. ¶ Id., p. 181.

\* Z., Vol. IX, pp. 193, 197, 201.

† Z., Vol. XII, pp. 93, 110, 141.

‡ Z., Vol. IX, p. 178.

† Id., p. 198.

‡ Z., Vol. IX, p. 102.

¶ Id., p. 171, col. 2.

of slavery, in January, 1835. This not answering, Zion's Watchman was established a year after, as the Herald did not answer the purpose. The abolitionists continued to occupy nearly all the Herald, and had the Watchman entirely to themselves as a one-sided paper, yet professing to give both sides. In 1838 the editor of the Maine Wesleyan Journal speaks thus of the Watchman: "Few papers in the land, we think, wince more at an opposing article, or give it to their readers, if they give it at all, with less fairness. It is a mere organ of one side of the question. It will not do to plead that other papers are not free, as an excuse not to publish an article, as the Watchman professes *that* to be the reason for establishing itself."\* This is a correct view of the Watchman. Thus the abolitionists had the Herald at this time without let or hindrance, except an occasional correction of Mr. Scott; while the Watchman was their humble servant in every thing, but to which their opponents had no access.

16. The operations of the antislavery societies this year were extensive and effective, and we think they were much more wise and less extravagant than the movements of abolitionists in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The American Antislavery Society held its anniversary in New York, May 8th. The annual report informs us that three hundred and forty auxiliary societies were organized during the year, making the whole number one thousand three hundred and forty-six. Twelve of these were state societies. The receipts for the year were forty-four thousand dollars, being six thousand dollars over the previous year. The issues of the press were in pamphlets, six hundred and thirty-three thousand six hundred and thirty-eight, and in bound volumes, twelve thousand nine hundred and fifty-four. The traveling agents were thirty-eight, making twenty-seven years' service. The number of petitioners to the senate on slavery was four hundred and fourteen thousand five hundred and seventy-one.

Among the issues of the press, some from the Society's press, and some not, we find the following: Third Report of the Ohio Antislavery Society; Reply to Reese by Jay; Address to Ladies of Ohio; Memorial of Abolitionists to Ohio Legislature; Correspondence of Elmore and Birney; Power of Congress in District of Columbia; Address to the Churches; Nourse on Colonization; Address of Antislavery Women to Members of Congress; Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery, republished. These were some of the issues of the current year, to say nothing of the long list of other publications which had been in process of publication for years.

17. Amidst all the uproar and discussions on slavery and abolition, the faithful missionaries among the slaves pursued their work without serious hindrance from any source. We give an abridged statement of July 7, 1838,† from the missionaries Leadbetter and Kirtland, on the Beaufort mission, South Carolina conference:

"We visit twenty-five plantations, generally, in the week, in order to attend to the instruction of the children and visit the sick. From the fact that many of the larger children, from nearly every place, have been transferred to the field, we would not be able to report the same number

as formerly, were it not that we have added three plantations to our number, and could add three times three were we sufficient for the task. This department of our work is one of uncommon interest, especially to the children, as is evinced by their joy at the sight of the missionary, their readiness to wait upon him, in opening gates, etc., and their warm, earnest invitations to come back soon. It is affecting to see a class of children, washed and dressed in their best, in a semicircle around the missionary, with their hands clasped, as if at prayer, while they answer the questions in the catechism, repeat the Lord's prayer, ten commandments, apostles' creed, and sing together with the spirit, if not the understanding, the high praises of God. We have eleven appointments, which are on islands. Our congregations are tolerably large, generally from twenty to eighty children, seated near the preacher, and from twenty to two hundred adults. Beside the members of our own Church, and those of no Church, we serve very many who belong to another Church. Many of these are pious, as their lives testify. They are much edified by our ministry, the only constant one they have. The people drink down the word without caviling. We wish to elevate the standard of piety, as well as character, among this long-neglected people, and thus promote their happiness in time and eternity; and rather than their blood should be on the Church any longer, we are willing, through grace, to meet the privations and hardships attending a missionary life, and, if worthy, would glory in the title of apostles to the negroes."

Rev. Messrs. Dodfrey and Davis, missionaries on Savannah Back River mission, Georgia conference, write thus:\*

"The children, whom we catechise once in two weeks, on five plantations where we preach, continue to learn fast. We returned yesterday from catechising a school of fifty children, from the age of three to twelve, and are happy to state that they did not miss one question in Dr. Capers's Catechism for Colored Children, rehearsed the Lord's prayer, ten commandments, and sung nearly all the hymns contained in it. The owners are still zealous, and continue to bear testimony to the good effected among the slaves. One of them said to us, some time since, that, previous to the establishment of the mission, his barn was frequently broken open, and his property stolen; but now such a thing was never heard of. 'What is the reason?' said he. 'They have got religion, and are, therefore, worth double to me now to what they were before the missionaries came.' This is good testimony. Several of the planters have solicited us to preach to their people."

Respecting Ogechee mission, Georgia conference, Rev. A. Gordon writes:‡

"We have two hundred and eight children that are regularly taught Dr. Capers's Catechism. They can recite the greater part of the questions with much ease, and appear to understand them. On two of the estates we use the Scriptural cards, and the children are taught some of our hymns. Since my last ten have joined the society, and there appears to be a very great change in their morals, while the congregations improve."

\*Z., Vol. IX, p. 199, col. 1.

†C., Vol. XII, p. 182, col. 5 and 6.

\*C., Vol. XII, p. 126, col. 5, of March 30, 1838.

‡C., Vol. XIII, p. 22, col. 5, of September 28, 1838.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## EVENTS OF 1839.

1. THE events of this year, in reference to slavery and abolition, are not numerous, nor eventful. Yet there are some things connected with our subject which we may notice in passing.

The subject of conference rights was discussed by Rev. T. Spicer and Rev. James Porter. Mr. Spicer wrote an article explanatory of the several powers of the conferences, annual, quarterly, and General, as well as the powers of the presiding officers of these bodies. He maintained the usual practice of the Church, as well as the analogical cases growing out of them.\* Mr. Porter replies in several long communications,† calling in question several of the positions of Mr. Spicer. He seems disposed, agreeably to the usage of the times, to place his opponent on the defense of slavery. Indeed, this was now the leading method—to place every one on the list of pro-slavery men who called in question the principles or measures of abolitionists, in whole or in part. But as this topic has been sufficiently considered, and the Church has settled down on her old platform of principles and practice, no good end could be answered by detailing the newspaper controversy that took place on the subject during this year.

2. The collision between the presidents of annual conferences and the conferences naturally passed over also to the quarterly meeting conferences and the presiding elders. As there was no general element of disturbance on this point, and the administration has kept its ground, on the whole the topic has no special practical use. In several quarterly conferences, collisions took place between them and the presiding elders, but they have all passed away without leaving any visible effect behind them.‡

3. In the course of 1839 considerable dissension arose in the antislavery ranks. Messrs. Garrison, Phillips, and others endeavored to introduce the subject of woman's rights, non-resistance, and kindred topics, into the discussions of the antislavery meetings. It was first broached in the quarterly meeting of the Massachusetts Antislavery Society, with Messrs. Birney, Tappan, and Phelps on one side, and Messrs. Garrison, Phillips, and others on the other.¶ The New England Wesleyan Antislavery Society, on June 21st, passed resolutions condemning Mr. Garrison and his associates; and Mr. Scott comes out, under the head, "*the secret out*," against the rupture, and trusts no Methodist will "sustain that rotten-hearted, no-human government, women's rights institution, called the *Massachusetts Antislavery Society*."§

4. The "American Wesleyan Observer" was projected this year, and on the 7th of November a prospectus was issued by the editors, Messrs. Horton and Scott.¶ It was to be published only for six months, commencing Jan. 1,

1840. Its design was to report the proceedings of General conference, as well as to prepare the way for a favorable abolition action. Rev. J. D. Bridge, under date of December 26, 1839, pleads for it with such reasons as these: that the Watchman had only a limited circulation, and would not answer the purpose; the Herald could not admit the various topics necessary to be discussed, such as rights of the laity, rights of the preachers, episcopal prerogatives, etc.; that the General conference was drawing near, and "abolitionism and abolitionists had nothing to hope from that body."\* Thus it will be seen that the transition, from assailing the Church in reference to slavery, was a natural step in preparing the way for attacking her in other respects. The Observer was nothing else than a new edition of the Philadelphia Wesleyan Repository, the Mutual Rights, and the like; and indeed the Observer was succeeded by the True Wesleyan, and other prints, which did their utmost to overturn the Methodist Episcopal Church.†

5. The American Antislavery Society carried on its operations with great energy this year. They published a report of 115 pages octavo, and much of it in small print. It embraced a variety of topics, and much of it very important matter. It goes in for political action against slavery, but in accordance with law and constitution. The entire number of copies of books and papers for the year was 724,862. The receipts, rejecting fractions, were \$47,111, being \$3,017 over last year.

There are several things, however, in this report, of a very exceptionable character. It speaks of the "fierce fanaticism of John C. Calhoun, and the hypocrisy of Henry Clay." It says, "The leading men of the Methodist Episcopal Church have shown a similar disregard of moral obligation, in maintaining what they choose also to call the peace of the Church." The report then proceeds, in the usual abolition mode, to give detached instances from the former Disciplines, and by a strange oversight of the present testimony of the Church, concludes that she is very corrupt indeed. Nevertheless, the report is a valuable paper, and well worth perusal by the Christian and citizen.

To the large stock of antislavery productions already before the public, several have been added this year to the number. We mention an able pamphlet on the subject, by Rev. J. L. Wilson, D. D. The trial of Lewis Tappan possesses interest and value. Rev. B. Green wrote a pamphlet of moderate character.

In the periodical publications in Zion's Herald and Zion's Watchman, matter that had been published in almost all forms, was remodelled for the thousandth time, and the Methodist public mind surfeited with stale repetitions which had nothing new or additional, except some modifications of the former large supply of reproachful language.

\* Z., Vol. X, pp. 61, 65, 105.

† Id., pp. 69, 70, 73, 77, 81, 145.

‡ Id., pp. 54, 110. § Id., p. 153.

¶ Id., pp. 93, 177.

‡ Id., p. 182.

\* Z., Vol. XI, p. 2, col. 4. † W., Vol. VI, p. 123, col. 2.

## CHAPTER XIV.

## EVENTS OF 1840.

1. THE editor of Zion's Herald quotes the following sentence from the editorial of the Southern Christian Advocate, of which Dr. Capers was then the editor:\*

"But does Zion's Herald ask us what slavery tends to; meaning an insinuation against us at the south? *We will tell him what.* IT TENDS TO THE SALVATION OF THE NEGROES! And still we rejoin, *Depend upon it, your abolitionism tends to infidelity.*"

The Herald shows very conclusively that as slavery tends to, and actually does produce, injustice, cruelty, licentiousness, and other gross sins, it has, therefore, no tendency to promote the salvation of the slaves; and though the grace of God does save them, they are not indebted to the slave system for this.

The Rev. Charles Adams, taking up the query, *Does slavery tend to the salvation of slaves?* addresses five long letters to Dr. Capers in the columns of the Herald,† on the general subject of slavery. The letters do not contain much directly on the point on hand, though they abound in such matter as had been published many times in the Herald. Dr. Capers made no reply, as far as we recollect, and there the matter ended. It is right to notice, however, that it is reasonable to suppose that Dr. Capers meant that the enslavement of the negroes in America became the *occasion* of their conversion, and that through the converted negroes of this country Africa would finally be saved.

2. The elements of secession, as we have seen, had been previously sown in the abolition periodicals; namely, Zion's Herald and the Watchman; and the indications of this were manifest from the papers themselves, and the acts of some abolition societies, quarterly conferences, and individuals. Let us notice these indications of schism, as manifested by the periodicals.

Mr. Scott, in the Observer, said, "We ought, perhaps, to say that, in our opinion, the New England and New Hampshire conferences would be better pleased were the Herald more decidedly antislavery in its character, though they have never wished it so fully given to that subject as the Watchman." The Herald of March 25th,‡ after quoting this sentence, asserts that the Herald had always published, on slavery, every thing of importance. The truth is, the Observer and Watchman had greatly supplanted the Herald, so that in April, 1840, the subscription was three hundred less than the last of the previous December.§ Mr. True therefore argues, in an article referred to in the margin, that the Herald should be supported. The Herald, in an article defining its position,¶ refers to the rumors abroad about secession, and excuses the paper for not noticing them, on the ground that the paper and its publishers were true to the Church, and that there was no serious ground for apprehending danger. Mr. Porter, under date of May 6th,¶ declares there were no indications of secession. If the Church is corrupt, he argues, let

us reform it, and concludes thus: "If secession has come to be our best alternative, who will ever dare to speak of slavery in the Church again? Our abolition will have been as injurious to the slave as our opponents say it is now. We should never be able to make amends to him for the injury, though we might live a century." Such were the signs of the period previous to the General conference.

After General conference, the indications of secession became more clear. Mr. Porter, in two articles of August 15th and 22d,\* takes up the subject. He thinks that hatred to abolition has something to do with forming the idea of secession and of spreading the alarm. He thinks it probable, however, that some abolitionists are now radicals. He concedes the news is not flying reports, but abolitionists themselves have declared it. But in order to prevent the evil, he thinks all good Methodist abolitionists should rally at the convention on October 6th, at New York, and harmonize there their views.

Rev. D. S. King comes forward,† and declares that the Herald had always published sound abolition matter, and rejected nothing except what was acrimonious, unnecessary, or irrelevant, and catechises Mr. Scott for publishing Storrs's renunciation in the Observer, and thinks the indications are those of a meditated secession. Mr. Scott‡ replies to Mr. King with spirit, and contends that important abolition matter was excluded from the Herald, and instances the call for the conventions, and others.

Rev. Horace Moulton§ declares that the recent movements of Mr. Scott show that he designs to proscribe and supplant the Herald; that, as he has labored for six months, without success, to make a better paper than the Herald, he should cease his opposition to it. He then gave several instances in which Mr. Scott endeavored to supersede the Herald. Mr. Crandall¶ pleads also for the Herald, and thinks nothing is to be expected now from the New England Christian Advocate, or the Observer, as Mr. Scott, in his specimen number, has dealt largely in vituperation. The Herald itself¶ makes its plea for its own life with great firmness, and states that the paper has some enemies who will injure it all they can. After all, few, if any, papers have passed through such an amount of controversy with less harm, or in a more consistent manner, than Zion's Herald, though many of its correspondents taught elementary secession, which in time produced the fruit.

The Wesleyan Antislavery Society in the New Hampshire conference, aware of the sentiments and movements of some abolitionists, declare, among other things: "We believe that to assail, unnecessarily, the institutions and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which we think has been done in some instances, will, if persisted in, greatly retard, if not totally defeat the antislavery cause among our people."\*\* They

\* Z., Vol. XI, p. 26, col. 5. † Id., pp. 65, 69, 73, 77, 81.  
‡ Id., p. 50. § Id., p. 67. ¶ Id., p. 71, col. 1. ¶ Id., p. 74.

\* Z., Vol. XI, pp. 149, 153. † Id., p. 151, col. 1.  
‡ Id., p. 154, col. 2. § Id., p. 154, col. 3.  
¶ Id., p. 185. ¶ Id., p. 182. \*\* Id., p. 121, col. 4.

also think that the discussion of Church matters in antislavery meetings is wrong and injurious. The quarterly meeting conference at St. Paul's, Lowell, on September 5th, denounces the General conference and the New England conference, Rev. C. K. True and Zion's Herald, in unmeasured terms. The presiding elder, Rev. P. Crandall, entered his protest, on the ground that a quarterly meeting had no right to denounce the General conference or an annual conference.\*

3. Indeed the spirit of discord, growing naturally from the censorious spirit and unreasonable tenets of many abolitionists, entered into the very heart of the abolition societies and divided them; so that in May, 1840, a new society was formed, called the "American and Foreign Antislavery Society." Garrison and others endeavored to introduce into, or connect with their Society, women's rights, non-resistance, the Church as apostate, the ministry, the Sabbath. The new Society thus accounts for the division or formation of the original Society:

"The majority retired from the general meeting on account of the successful efforts that had been made by some prominent eastern members of the Society to outvote those who, coming from different parts of the country, usually composed the annual meeting, by inducing large numbers of persons from a few localities to attend it; in consequence of the disposition shown to introduce objects not contemplated by the founders of the Society; and because the spirit that was perseveringly manifested by several prominent members of the Society was detrimental to the cause. A surreptitious course was pursued to obtain the control of the affairs of the Society."†

In the history of the division in the antislavery societies by the Massachusetts Abolition Society, p. 33, the old Society is censured for adopting a preamble and resolution affirming that "the American Church has given its undisguised sanction and support to the system of American slavery," and therefore "ought not to be regarded and treated as the Church of Christ, but as the foe of freedom, humanity, and pure religion, so long as it occupies its present position."

The true state of the question is this: The first abolitionists endeavored to get the Church judicatories and pastors to follow in their wake. Failing in this, they commenced a crusade against the Churches. Mr. Garrison was among the leaders in this. Mr. Birney was almost his equal, for he published, in 1840, his famous pamphlet entitled, "The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery," in which the Churches are misrepresented.

Then Mr. Foster's pamphlet was issued, which charged the Churches with all the sins of slavery; and indeed the annual reports of the new society condemn the Churches, if not so coarsely, yet as unjustly as Foster and Garrison did. We hope to see, however, that this partial improvement will progress till it will be complete.

4. The New Hampshire conference held its session at Chelsea, Vermont, July 1st. The conference, by the report of a committee, resolved to memorialize next General conference in reference to the Comfort case, requesting them to *reconsider or rescind* the offensive reso-

lution on colored testimony. The reasons they allege against this action of the conference are, 1. The first action in the case was right. 2. The passage of the resolution was unnecessary. 3. The majority of the General conference, after maturing the subject, were against it. 4. It looks like accommodating the action of ecclesiastical bodies to those of the state. 5. It introduces an odious test. 6. It is a concession to slavery. 7. In many cases it makes the commission of crimes easy, and their detection impossible. 8. The Church can not defend herself from assaults on this account. Together with these reasons, a resolution was passed to petition the next General conference on the subject.

On November 10th several preachers signed a declaration disavowing any radical sentiment, feeling, or action, and this was said to represent the views of the great body of the New Hampshire conference.\*

5. A convention of Methodist abolitionists, to meet in New York, October 6th, was called on the 15th of July, at the instance of the Utica convention of 1838.† This measure was strongly recommended by Rev. J. Porter in September, in order to harmonize the many conflicting views of abolitionists, and especially in order to prevent secession from the Church.‡ He repeats his warning in a second letter,§ by observing that as some, especially the Christian Advocate, predicts that there will be attempts made to divide the Church, every true abolitionist should be on the ground to prevent that evil.

As to the true character of this convention, Rev. Horace Moulton, September 17th, writes as follows:

"I was asked by brother Scott, at the close of the conference in Lowell, to sign a call for another Methodist antislavery convention. I did so, thinking at the same time it would promote the antislavery enterprise; but having since read his last Observer, which contained many objectionable things to my mind, also his circular relative to the anticipated convention, one important part of which is the formation of a Methodist antislavery missionary society, which is contrary to the expressed will of the conference to which he belongs; and especially his unheard-of course, in trying to overthrow the Herald; I have now come to the conclusion that the convention will have other objects beside the promotion of the abolition of slavery: therefore I can not give the little influence I have in favor of that convention, because I think that the forming of a Methodist missionary society at present, the course brother Sunderland is pursuing with the New England conference, and brother Scott's course with the Herald, are daily weakening the confidence of abolitionists in each other, and will, if persisted in, soon shatter us in a thousand splinters. I had as lief Mr. Garrison would lug into the abolition cause the woman question and non-resistance, as to have brother Scott lug in Church reform into the same cause."¶

The convention met October 6th, composed of about two hundred delegates, in the Baptist church, in M'Dougal-street, New York. Mr. Scott was chosen president. A committee of five was appointed to ask the editors of the

\* Z., Vol. XI, p. 151, col. 2.

† Amer. and Foreign Antislavery Almanac for 1849, p. 3.

\* Z., Vol. XI, p. 203.

† Id., p. 151, col. 3, *infra*.

‡ Id., p. 153.

§ Id., p. 158.

¶ Id., p. 157, col. 4, *supra*.

Christian Advocate "if the subject of slavery and its abolition may be discussed in that paper." The editors, Bond and Coles, replied that, as ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, communications from them would receive the same attention as those from any other brethren. The editors then proceed to state that "Methodist antislavery conventions," or "Methodist antislavery societies" are not recognized in the Discipline, or in the proceedings of the General conference, as any part of our economy; and further, that no portion of the Church members can properly appropriate the common distinguishing denomination of "Methodist" to any unauthorized association within our pale, as this would be wholly surreptitious. Beside, apart from all this, our people generally believe that such societies are really got up with the design of overawing the Church authorities, if not the civil government.\*

The convention organized an "American Wesleyan Antislavery Society," the second article of whose Constitution reads thus:

"The objects of this Society are the entire extinction of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church in America, and thereby to aid in that great national enterprise, now in successful progress—its entire extinction in the United States."

No missionary society was formed, but the convention recommended those who had scruples to contributing to our missionary society, to appropriate their funds to such foreign or domestic missions as they may agree to support; and those brethren who were not able to support a missionary in their own conference should cooperate with brethren in other conferences, for that purpose. But the convention did not omit to declare that money obtained by slaveholding, and contributed by those who uphold and defend the system of slavery, is an insult to humanity, and a deep disgrace to the cause of God.† Indeed, some members of the convention did their best to interfere with our missionary operations. But others deprecated such a course, and it was owing to these that the ultra measures did not fully obtain. That an independent missionary society was intended, there is no doubt. Mr. Scott and others avowed it. The Christian Advocate warned the public of the intention, and this was, no doubt, a principal cause of preventing this new element of discord and division.‡

6. In regard to Methodist antislavery societies, they may here receive some consideration in passing. If the object of them be to inculcate sound principles on slavery, then this object could be attained as well in uniting with any other antislavery societies, and, therefore, they are unnecessary. But if the object be to exclude all slaveholders from the Church unless they manumit their slaves, then the thing would be unjust to the masters, and injurious to the slaves, in many cases. Many masters became slaveholders, not by their own acts, but by law. They can not manumit, and the slaves, very often, will not consent to go to a free state; or, if the slave be abandoned by the master, then he is sold by the state to the highest bidder, and his case becomes generally worse than before. Dr. Bond gives a case of a

preacher, who wanted the annual conference to receive his slaves; but they declined, as they could not remedy the matter.\*

The following we quote from the Maine Wesleyan Journal, and was copied in Zion's Herald of December 30th,† at the request of an abolitionist, who affirms that such were then the opinions of many abolitionists. It is from the pen of Dr. Tefft, who, at the time, resided in New England:

"In regard to abolition associations and organizations, I believe they are all now in the wrong. Time was when they were a source of good; but the scale is turned. There are now four parties of professed abolitionists: 1. The Garrisonian party, which has incorporated every conceivable project with the holy scheme of negro emancipation. 2. The Tappan and Birney party, which has lent its influence, more or less, to political ambition. 3. The regular political party, with Birney at their head, who are resolved, it seems, to make a political matter of the whole question. And, 4. Those who are yet true to the noble sentiments of humanity, and to the real interests of the slave. Three-fourths of our former strength have scattered their influence to the winds; one-fourth is yet immovably fixed for the only sufferer in our country, the slave."

7. The publications in Zion's Watchman, in July, August, and September, of 1840, indicated that, with some at least, there was more intended than mere abolition. The great body, however, of Methodist abolitionists were always well affected to the government and Discipline of the Church. But the time had now come when every abolitionist must decide for himself whether he will be a partner in dividing the Methodist Episcopal Church. Those principally in the defection were Messrs. Scott, Sunderland, Storrs, etc. Dr. Bond calls them radico-abolitionists, and this was perhaps the most appropriate name they could receive. In an able article, on the 23d of September, he warns the other abolitionists to beware of Scott, Sunderland & Co., and heads his article "Radico-abolitionism." He tells them a snare is laid for them; if they go but a single step with the radico-abolitionists they will find it difficult to retreat. Artifice and influence will be employed to insnare them, and unless they are on their guard they may be taken in the trap before they are aware. Dr. Bond then proceeds to detail the particulars which prove the radical character of Scott, Sunderland, and their allies, and mentions the following:

The proposed formation of a Methodist Antislavery Society at the convention would be a preparatory step. Warm addresses on the "horrid," "blood-stained," "murderous" Episcopal connection would induce secession, and thus form a new Church, ready-made to their hand, and the auxiliary societies would aid greatly in furthering the object. And then the contemplated "separate and independent missionary society" would do its part, as the true Methodist abolitionists could mingle their contributions with the "price of blood." This would be a society opposed to the society of the Church; for, as they could not unite in contributing, they could not unite in efforts. They must, of course, have their own missionaries, their own fields of labor, and thus come in opposition to the Church, and be independent of her.

\* Z., Vol. XI, p. 177. C., Vol. XV, p. 25.

† Z., Vol. XI, p. 181.

‡ C., Vol. XV, p. 54, col. 5.

\* C., Vol. XV, p. 54, col. 4.

† Z., Vol. XI, p. 210.

The Wesleyan Observer and Watchman, though subscribed for at first as merely abolition papers, have become the vehicles of radicalism. They will gradually distill the poison of disaffection. After suffering the penalty of transgressors they will then be martyrs, and cry persecution, and thus form their party.

The two new societies will be prepared to collect money for the support of the party paper, its editors and agents. It will then be as easy to form a new Church out of the new missionary society as to form a "Methodist Protestant Church" out of a "Union Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

Mr. Scott at this time became familiar with the writings of the Methodist reformers of other days, and was pleased with their views. Beside, Mr. Storrs had already defined his position in a pamphlet, and withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, as others were likely soon to do.\*

The voice of warning given by Dr. Bond proved a timely note of danger. The true sons of the Church took the proper steps to prevent the formation of a missionary society, so that the principal plans of Scott and Sunderland were defeated.† Mr. Lee attempted to reply to Dr. Bond in Zion's Herald;‡ but with little effect or relevancy. Dr. Bond responded with great point and just severity, utterly demolishing the "logical Lee," and, withal, attacking him for his authorship against the Methodist Episcopal Church on ordination, in an Episcopal paper, in anonymous publications.¶

If the scheme of the leaders of the convention had been carried out, it would have been a direct renunciation of the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, accompanied with an insult to the feelings and judgment of her members and ministers. The warning of Dr. Bond did much to open the eyes of many abolitionists on the subject. Hence, when at the convention, they resisted, and, indeed, effectually counteracted the plans of Scott, Sunderland, and those of the same views.§

Mr. Porter took great umbrage at the pointed remarks of Dr. Bond on radico-abolitionism, and maintained that he misrepresented them altogether, and to this end wrote two articles in Zion's Herald,¶ in December. Mr. Porter had been forward in calling the convention, and urged a general attendance. Being well affected to the Church himself, he could not think, it seems, that others might be, or were, of a different mind. But the event showed that Dr. Bond took the right view of this subject, as he did on all subjects of Church polity; and the Methodist Episcopal Church owes a debt of gratitude to him for his able and successful services as editor from 1840 to 1848, to say nothing of his services from 1824 to that time.

8. Zion's Herald changed editors in December, Mr. Brown furnishing his valedictory on December 2d, and Rev. Abel Stevens giving his salutatory on December 9th. Mr. Brown was an able and faithful editor. He loved the Church, its doctrines, economy, its members, and all that concerned its welfare.\*\*

Rev. Abel Stevens was a true son of the Church. He was no radical. He declares the

Herald can not be the vehicle of radical sentiments. Its character as an organ of Methodism, of Episcopal Methodism, must be inviolable.\* After entering on his work, in introducing an article from members of the New Hampshire conference, he says: "Methodism as it is, we trust, is as firm in New Hampshire as her granite hills. May it continue so till the heavens burn down! The *sine qua non*, by which alone abolitionism can ever do any good in the Methodist Church, is that utter absence and abhorrence of radicalism—radicalism direct, or radicalism indirect. The day in which we must admit a radical sentiment into these columns, let it come from where or whom it may, that day we go out of our office."†

It was a matter of considerable importance to the Church, and especially to New England Methodism, that Mr. Stevens was so firm a supporter of the Church and her institutions. Doubtless, through his endeavors, the radical spirit and movements in the New England states, through the medium of abolition, were greatly checked, and became comparatively harmless, compared to what they would be had they obtained aid or comfort from the editor of Zion's Herald, which was always a spirited and ably-conducted paper.

9. In regard to the American Wesleyan Observer, Rev. P. Crandall, in Zion's Herald of November 18th;‡ complains of the radical character of the paper. He said he recommended and subscribed for it, but was woefully disappointed in his expectations. The Observer was the very opposite of what it should have been in defending the Methodist Episcopal economy. Here is a true and faithful witness declaring the schismatic character of this radico-abolition paper.

10. The New England Christian Advocate, edited by Rev. Luther Lee, is thus characterized by Mr. Crandall, in the same article in which he so justly excepts to the Observer. He thinks that the new Advocate, judging from the specimen number, will be of the same type with the Observer. Neither the prospectus nor the editorial give any pledge that it will be an advocate for any one single peculiarity of Methodism; and though the lay association, who publish the paper, were true Methodists then, their 8th article of association prevents them from doing what they would wish. The article stated, that "no restraint shall ever be imposed upon the editor by the association." That personalities will form a part of the paper was plain enough, because Mr. Scott, in several articles, attacks individuals. Thus the manifest indications of schism, through the claim of free discussion, were too plain to be denied; and if denied, they were proved by competent witnesses.

It is something amusing to notice the attempts made in promoting ultraism and secession, under the covert of free discussion. Mr. Luther Lee pleads for his paper in this wise: The Christian Advocate and Journal is objected to because it does not circulate much in New England, and is also unsound in regard to abolition and slavery. The Watchman and Observer, by Messrs. Scott and Sunderland, does not circulate to any great extent, and it is of too general a character. Mr. Sunderland, however, contested this last point as not sustained.

\* C., Vol. XV, p. 22, col. 4.

† Z., Vol. XI, p. 173, col. 1.

‡ C., Vol. XV, p. 86, col. 4.

\*\* Z., Vol. XI, pp. 194, 196.

† Id., p. 34.

‡ C., Vol. XV, p. 60.

¶ Z., Vol. XI, pp. 208, 210.

\* Z., Vol. XI, p. 198.

† Id., p. 208.

‡ Id., p. 185, col. 6.

The Maine Wesleyan Journal was thought to be nothing better than the New York Advocate; and Zion's Herald is not the right paper because it rejects articles written by Mr. Scott, L. Lee, and others, and it is too much like the atrocious sheet of Mulberry-street. Thus Mr. Lee calls for the patronage of all who love the slave, as if no other paper was fit to be sustained but the one which he edits.\*

11. The movements of the Antislavery Society, notwithstanding the division in their ranks, were vigorous and unremitting. The press continued its former course, with its issues of books, pamphlets, and periodicals, all on a stinted hand.

The Executive Committee of the American Antislavery Society, on February 13, 1840, issued an address to the friends of constitutional liberty, on the violation by the United States house of representatives of the right of petition." The occasion of the address was the passage of Mr. Johnson's gag law, on January 28th, by which it was made a standing rule of the house, that "no petition, memorial, resolution, or other paper, praying the abolition of slavery in the District of Columbia, or any state or territory of the United States, in which it now exists, shall be received by the house, or entertained in any way whatever." In 1836 a similar resolution was passed, and several since that time, the success of which, in accomplishing the object, has been any thing but favorable.

Pinckney's gag was passed May, 1836, by a majority of fifty-one; Haines's, January, 1837, by a majority of fifty-eight; Patton's, December, 1837, by a majority of forty-eight; Ather-ton's, December, 1838, by a majority of forty-eight; and Johnson's, January, 1840, by a majority of six.

Thus the majority was reduced from fifty-eight to six, furnishing an incentive to perseverance. Beside, in 1836, the petitioners were only thirty-seven thousand. After Mr. Haines's resolution the petitioners were three hundred thousand. When Mr. Patton's passed the northern legislatures took up the subject; and Massachusetts, in May, 1838, declared that this was a "usurpation of power, a violation of the Constitution, subversive of the fundamental principles of the Government, and at war with the prerogatives of the people." This was echoed by the other free states. The effect of such measures on the members of Churches was not small, in stirring them up to resistance to the slave power, whether in Church or in state.

Other rumor-makers were calculated to excite the public mind, or keep up the ferment. Among these we may mention the Amistad case; Van Buren eulogized by the Legislature of Alabama for his pro-slavery courtesies; the Address of the Congregational Union of England to the Congregationalists of this country; the Letters of Bishop England to Mr. Forsyth; Birney's American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery; Proceedings of the General Antislavery Convention in London, held June 12th. Add to these the proceedings of the ecclesiastical bodies, and we will find ample material of disturbance, both among Church members and citizens.

12. The attacks on the American Churches by abolitionists have been frequent, severe,

and, in many cases, unjustifiable. At first the abolitionists endeavored to enlist the Churches in their cause, for the most part as mere auxiliaries, then as subservients, with little regard to their constitutional organizations, or the fields which the Churches occupied. When the Churches refused to become thus subservient, they were attacked unsparingly by the abolitionists, and by none more violently than by the members of the respective Churches themselves. The attacks of Garrison, and those of his school, would avail little, and would not be worthy of much notice.

But the onset came from the other leaders of the party, and even from the antislavery associations, as well as the press. The principal among these was Mr. Birney, who, though a New School Presbyterian himself, charged the Churches of America with being the principal supporters of slavery. He did this, too, formally and violently in 1840, in England, while there at the great abolition convention. He misrepresented the American Churches to the British public. Had he met the Churches at home to their face, the excuse for his course would be plausible; but he attacked them at a distance, where they were not present to meet him. His work is entitled, "The American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery. By an American. In forty-eight pages, duodecimo." It was published in London first, and at least three editions of it were published in America, in 1847, enlarged by a supplement by another hand. He commences by saying:

"The extent to which most of the Churches in America are involved in the guilt of supporting the slave system is known but to few in this country, [England.] So far from being ever suspected by the great mass of the religious community here, it would not be believed but on the most indisputable evidence. Evidence of this character it is proposed now to present, applying to the Methodist Episcopal, the Baptist, the Presbyterian, and the Protestant Episcopal Churches. It is done with a single view to make the British Christian public acquainted with the real state of the case, in order that it may, in the most intelligent and most effective manner, exert the influence it possesses with the American Churches, to persuade them to purify themselves from a sin that has greatly debased them, and that threatens, in the end, wholly to destroy them."

From the charge of "supporting the slave system," one would suppose that the Churches had made ecclesiastical laws to maintain slavery. It is very true that the American Churches might do much more than they have done to do away slavery. Let them bear their sins. But to give them none or little credit for what they have done, to charge them with acts they never did, and to exaggerate their sins, is of itself a sin that would well compare with the worst forms of slaveholding for magnitude and aggravation. Our limits will not allow us to speak of other Churches than our own, except in passing. Mr. Birney states as follows on page six:

"There is no systematic instruction of the slave-members of Churches, either orally or in any other way.

"Uniting with a Church makes no change in the condition of slaves at home. They are thrown back, just as before, among their old associates, and subjected to their corrupting influences.



"But little pains are taken to secure their attendance at public worship on Sunday.

"It is only one here and there who seems to have any intelligent views of the nature of Christianity, or a future life."

While Mr. Birney quotes the old Disciplines on slavery, he seems to have overlooked the present Discipline altogether. He adduces the acts of the Georgia and South Carolina conferences, and the speeches and opinions of some Methodist preachers, and thus gives us these anti-Methodistic statements as standard, when he ought to go to our General Rules, our Discipline, and Wesley for our views on slavery.

We are here compelled to state positively, that Mr. Birney misrepresents the Methodist Episcopal Church in all those respects men-

tioned above. We have shown that the contrary to his statements is true. And his allegations, at that time, against the Methodist Episcopal Church are in themselves slanderous, though we are slow to ascribe to him a wrong intention; yet a man who writes on the subject as he did ought to be informed. And just recently Mrs. Stowe follows suit with Mr. Birney, and quotes his misstatements of facts as history in her *Key to her Cabin*.

It is palpably false that there was no systematic instruction of slaves; that there was no change in their condition at home; that little pains were taken to secure their attendance at Church; that very few of them had any intelligent views of religion.

## CHAPTER XV.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1840.

1. PRIOR to the General conference of 1840, the New England annual conferences chose abolitionists to represent them. Two or three other conferences did the same. Memorials to the General conference from two annual conferences, hundreds of ministers, and thousands of members, were also prepared and forwarded. As we have seen, a new antislavery paper was issued, at Lowell, Massachusetts, called the *American Wesleyan Observer*, edited by Jotham Horton and Orange Scott. The special design was to furnish New England Methodists with a channel of "free discussion on slavery," as the *Herald* and *Watchman* did not answer the purpose. It proposed to continue for six months, so as to include the proceedings of General conference. A series of articles from Dr. Bangs on the subject of "Union" appeared in the *Advocate* and *Journal*, which showed that the General conference could cut off an annual conference. Some of the abolitionists supposed there was a design to cut off the abolition conferences, although no such design was entertained. Petitions were poured on the General conference on slavery. A committee, on the motion of Mr. Early, of one from each conference was appointed to consider the petitions, of which Dr. Bangs was chairman. The petitions, as presented, were handed over to the committee. There were several other cases which also brought the subject of slavery before the conference, as the petition from Westmoreland circuit, the appeal of Silas Comfort, the appeal of Mr. Dorchester, as well as the general discussions on slavery that had roused the public mind, and directed it to this most exciting subject.

2. The Address of the British conference, dated Liverpool, August 16, 1839, to the General conference, contained two paragraphs on the subject of slavery. In this they refer to their addresses of 1835 and 1836, and reaffirm their former sentiments. They consider slavery as possessing moral evil. They urge the conference to maintain the *principle* of opposition to slavery, not to omit or qualify our noble testimony, but continue to insert it in the Dis-

cipline in its primitive and unimpaired integrity.\*

Such sentiments, as to matter and manner, as are contained in the addresses of the British conference, are well calculated to convince and instruct; but they have no tendency to provoke or lead to agitation or strife, much less to misrule or insubordination.

3. The bishops, in their quadrennial Address, bring up before the General conference the subject of slavery, and other topics connected with the controversy on it, such as the powers of the bishops, of presiding elders, and of annual and quarterly conferences. We present the following points on slavery from the Address of the bishops:

That the advice of the Pastoral Letter of 1836 had been salutary and generally well received, with the exception of some of the northern and eastern conferences. They then affirm these four propositions, namely:

"(1.) Our General Rule on slavery, which forms a part of the constitution of our Church, has stood from the beginning as testamentary of our sentiments on the principle of slavery and the slave-trade; and in this we differ in no respect from the sentiments of our venerable founder, or from those of the wisest and most distinguished statesmen and civilians of our own and other enlightened and Christian countries.

"(2.) In all the enactments of the Church relating to slavery, a due and respectful regard has been had to the laws of the states, never requiring emancipation in contravention of the civil authority, or where the laws of the states would not allow the liberated slave to enjoy freedom.

"(3.) The simply holding or owning slaves, without regard to circumstances, has, at no period of the existence of our Church, subjected the master to excommunication.

"(4.) Rules have been made, from time to time, regulating the sale, and purchase, and holding of slaves, with reference to the differ-

ent laws of the states where slavery is tolerated; which, upon the experience of the great difficulties of administering them, and the unhappy consequences both to masters and servants, have been as often changed or repealed."

The bishops also state that, in their judgment, no new legislation on slavery is called for; but the most important work of the Church was to endeavor to bring both master and slave to the enjoyment and practice of religion.

They think the General conference should define the General Rule on slavery, so that it might be a uniform guide in the administration of Discipline.

On the powers of bishops in annual conferences, and the rights of annual and quarterly conferences, after stating that differences of opinion and of action did exist between the bishops and some conferences, the bishops propose the following questions:

Does the power to decide a question of law in an annual conference belong constitutionally to the president or the conference?

Have the annual conferences a constitutional right to do any other business than what is specifically prescribed by the Discipline?

Has the president of an annual conference the right to decline putting a motion on business other than that provided for in the Discipline?

These questions are proposed on the ground of constitutional right, and not on the principles of courtesy or expediency.

The bishops conclude that, should the views of those obtain who would give the decision of these questions in favor of placing the power in the annual conferences, the uniform and efficient government of the Church would be rendered impracticable.\*

4. At the session of the New England conference in 1838, Messrs. Scott and Sunderland were charged, tried, and acquitted. Bishop Hedding saw cause to complain of this to the General conference, on the 9th of May, in a communication dated May 6, 1840.† He said that, in his judgment, they were acquitted contrary to law and evidence. He informed the conference at the time that he believed they erred in judgment, but not intentionally; yet the error has done much injury, and, in his opinion, will do much more, unless it be corrected. In acquitting them the conference censured him, and encouraged them and others to inflict greater injuries on him. He thought he had no appeal; but he invited the General conference to examine the acts of the annual conference in the matter. He would mention, then, no name, but would give all information on the subject.‡

A committee was appointed, consisting of Dr. Baugs, Wm. H. Raper, George Peck, J. Dempster, and J. Early. When the parties met, such explanations, and perhaps concessions, took place, on the part of the delegates of the New England conference, as led to an amicable adjustment of the whole matter between the Bishop and them. A verbal report of the adjustment was made by the committee on May 18th; but as no such reports were received, a written one was required. Accordingly, on May 25th, a report was presented

and adopted, which is as follows: "That they had a meeting to consider the subject referred to them, the Bishop and the delegates from the conference alluded to being present; that propositions were made in the presence of your committee by the parties, which were accepted, and the difficulties amicably settled. The charges were then withdrawn, and the committee, having nothing more to do in the premises, ask to be discharged."\*

The truth is, the two brethren richly deserved correction, suspension, or even expulsion for their unchristian conduct toward Bishop Hedding; but, owing to his placable character, he frankly forgave all the injury. Yet the conference was fully recompensed for their acting contrary to law and evidence. These two men became thorns in the sides of the conference, and continued their evil course till they seceded. But great zeal in the cause of abolitionism, at that time, secured great favor in the minds of the majority in this conference.

5. The case of the Rev. Daniel Dorchester, presiding elder in the New England conference, occupied the attention of the General conference. He had been charged with maladministration for refusing to allow the Westfield quarterly conference to pass resolutions against slavery. From this decision he appealed to the General conference. The record of the New England conference on his case was,

"Charge. For exceeding the powers of his office.

"Specification. In peremptorily arresting the quarterly meeting conference, on the evening of the 13th day of August last, [1838,] in the midst of business which he had allowed them to commence, and for suddenly and unprecedently adjourning the conference, contrary to the express wish of a great majority of the conference, thereby abridging them in the exercise of their privileges of an associate body."†

Mr. Dorchester, in his defense, maintained that the difficulty arose from an attempt to make the quarterly meeting conference a mere abolition organization, and that on the avowment he was abused by the abolition press, and his supplies withheld by the abolitionists of his district. Messrs. Scott, Crandall, and J. A. Merrill defended the New England conference. Mr. Scott wished it to be considered as a question of *rights*—simple *rights*—and earnestly deprecated any other view. Mr. Holdich, who pleaded the cause of Mr. Dorchester, maintained,

(1.) The quarterly conference had no *right* to demand that this business should be done, because the business excluded by Mr. Dorchester was not embraced among the questions to be submitted according to our Discipline, and no member has a right to introduce other matter. The business prescribed by the Discipline is, 1. Hearing complaints; 2. Receiving and trying appeals. 3. Licensing preachers. 4. Recommending preachers. 5. Examination of character. 6. Sunday school Reports. 7. Renewal of license, etc. These only are matters of *right* in quarterly conference business. If other business be introduced it is through courtesy.

(2.) The presiding elder had, therefore, the right to reject the subject attempted to be forced

\* Document, No. 32. Journals of 1840, p. 133.

† General conference Journal, p. 38, and W., Vol. VII, p. 25, col. 2.

‡ Document, No. 33. W., Vol. VII, p. 25, col. 2.

\* Journal, p. 76. W., Vol. VII, p. 38, col. 1.

† Journal, p. 46. W., Vol. VII, p. 26, col. 3.

on the quarterly meeting conference. He had also the decisions of the General conference of 1836, and the bill of pacification to support his decision.

(3.) The manner in which Mr. Dorchester performed his duty was Christian and Methodistic.

The following resolution, offered by Mr. Few, was adopted by a vote of 120 yeas to 17 nays, namely:

"Resolved, That the decision of the New England conference of 1839, censuring Rev. D. Dorchester, and requiring him to pursue a different course in future, be, and the same is hereby reversed."\*

By this decision, the right of a quarterly conference to demand was denied; the right of the presiding officer to refuse was insisted on. It is said many voted, without intending to settle the question of episcopal prerogative generally; but in reference to the special advice of the General conference on the subject of abolition excitement.† But the question was afterward settled by adopting the report of the Committee on Revision, declaring it the duty of bishops and presiding elders "to decide all questions of law;" that the "president of an annual conference, or quarterly meeting conference, has the right to decline putting any question to vote, when, in his judgment, it does not relate to the proper business of a conference," and to adjourn the conference when the proper business is done. But the conference may "record their dissent on the journals."

6. On the presentation of a petition by Mr. Scott, from persons residing in New York, on the subject of slavery, Mr. Early moved the appointment of a committee on slavery, to which all papers on slavery should be referred. The committee was appointed, consisting of one from each conference, selected by their respective delegation. Dr. Bangs was the chairman.‡ To this committee the petitions were referred, from time to time, after being presented to conference.

On the 14th of May the chairman reported, "that the committee at present can not act on any of the subjects referred to them in the Bishops' Address, touching the acts of annual conferences, on the subject of slavery and abolitionism, and asking to be discharged from the further consideration of all such matters as properly come before the Committee on Itinerancy."§ The report, after some debate, was recommended.

On the 21st of May Dr. Bangs presented a report, as follows:

"The Committee on Slavery, to whom were referred various petitions and memorials, praying the General conference to reaffirm the language of the Church, as expressed in the Minutes of 1780 and 1785, on the subject of slavery, as it exists in the United States, and also acts of several annual conferences, together with that portion of the Bishops' Address relating to this subject, have had the same under consideration; and, as the result of their deliberations, beg leave to recommend the adoption of the following resolutions, as their report in part:

"Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences, in General conference assembled,

"(1.) That it is inexpedient to express any opinion, or to adopt any measures to control or modify slavery as it exists in the United States,

other than those now recognized in our book of Discipline.

"(2.) That the General conference, in its legislative capacity, has no authority to expound the General Rules of the Discipline.

"(3.) That it is to be regretted that annual conferences have, in some instances, expressed conflicting opinions on the item on slavery, in the General Rules, and on the subject generally; and, considering the great delicacy of the subject, as well as the necessity of union among ourselves, it is the will of the General conference that the annual conferences, in their action on this subject in future, should closely adhere to the language of the Discipline, as it now stands.

"Respectfully submitted.

"N. BANGS, Chairman.

"Baltimore, May 19, 1840."\*

Mr. Scott stated that the minority had prepared a report, which they desired to present. The report had not been read in the committee. The report of the minority, by a vote of 59 to 52, was laid on the table.

On May 22d the subject of the report was debated with good feeling on both sides.†

Mr. Scott made a strong and temperate speech, which took a wide range, comprising important matter, with little or nothing to complain of, so as to elicit from the reporter the eulogium "that his manner throughout was dispassionate and conciliatory, and his whole address free from offensive or inflammatory epithets."

Dr. Bangs asserted that the language of the Discipline was plain and explicit, and had always been, against slavery; and that the language of Mr. Wesley, Watson, and others, properly understood, did not support the views of Mr. Scott.

Mr. Ryerson "believed that the most suitable and efficient mode of banishing slavery, was to promote and advance the Christianization of the slave."

Dr. Capers made an eloquent and touching address, in which he said: "Viewing the awful and ruinous consequences that must eventuate, should the Church now interfere with their laws and their relations in closing their mouths as ministers, sealing up their commissions, or invading their consciences, he entreated, rather than this should ensue, that they, not the blacks, might be colonized. Make us not slaves; if you do, you make us rebels; and the very love which we profess to Christ, shall dissolve the Church."

Mr. Crowder considered slavery in its civil, ecclesiastical, and religious aspects.

In its civil aspect, as citizens, we had nothing to do with it. As neither the General Government nor any state had power to interfere with slavery in any one state, so no citizen had any right to interfere.

He said that as we have, in one of our Articles, subscribed to the support of civil government, we had no right as Methodists to interfere with slavery.

In its moral character, he maintains that slavery is not in principle, and under all circumstances, clearly forbidden in the word of God. He then attempted to show that the Bible sanctions slavery.

We will barely remark, that the texts quoted by Mr. Crowder do not prove his doctrine. The Jewish law did not either sanction or countenance slavery; but, on the other hand, condemned it as *malum in se—evil in itself*. Joseph was a

\* Journal, p. 47. W., Vol. VII, p. 26, col. 6, *infra*.

† W., Vol. VII, p. 23, col. 2.

‡ Journal, p. 14. W., Vol. VII, p. 24, col. 1.

§ Journal, p. 48. W., Vol. VII, p. 23, col. 2, *supra*.

\* W., Vol. VII, p. 34, col. 3.

† Document, No. 34.

slave; the Israelites were slaves in Egypt. Servitude was regulated by the Jewish code, so that it should not run into or countenance slavery. Hence, the usual time of service was not over six years, or, at farthest, to the year of jubilee, which gave liberty to all the inhabitants of the land. And the strangers who were bought from themselves, or even from third persons, were to serve only to the year of jubilee, or as long as the ear-bored Hebrew servant, as the meaning of the word *forever*, in Lev. xxv, 44, 45, 46, is confined to the period ending with life, or the jubilee. This is proved historically, because no class of helots existed among the Jews. But did God regulate slavery? Did he give rules how to steal, sell, buy, and use men as slaves? or did he enact that men are born slaves? Did he ordain that the 100,000 children annually enslaved by laws in the slave states, are made slaves according to the laws of God? It must also be shown that the law of God annuls marriage, justifies cruelty, and approves of oppression, in order to show that the principles of slavery, or the system of slavery, is right in the sight of God. Mr. Crowder did not approach the merits of the question of slavery. He kept aloof from this. He is a good man, and could not do it, deceived and thoroughly bewildered as he is. Did he tell us in his speech in 1840, as he did in 1836, that his two female slaves were better clothed than the wives of northern preachers, we would have confidence in his statements. In this way he may plead. After all, he did not touch the subject on which he made his speech.

On May 23d a protest from a number of ministers and members from New York, to General conference, against the memorial on slavery, was presented by Mr. Scott, on the 2d day of May.\* The protest stated that the petition was got up fraudulently, as some petitioners signed twice, some were convicts, some were colored persons or children, many were women, and some names were forged. In a state of considerable fermentation, the paper was referred to the Committee on Slavery.

Four days after, or May 27th, the Committee reported.† The report accounts for the 1,154 signers of the petition as follows, namely: 45 were not members, 15 were probationers, 78 names were recorded twice, 1 thrice, 58 had no residences, 23 can not be found, 60 declare they were deceived; making, in all, 369 to be deducted from the entire number. Of the whole number, 813 were females. The report presented strong resolutions against abolitionists, for the adoption of conference, which were permitted to lie on the table without being taken up again.

Mr. Scott challenged an investigation of the affair, with great coolness, and charged that the protest was gotten up for effect. The abolitionists of New York canvassed the matter after the General conference adjourned, and stated that the alleged forgeries were admitted to be genuine by the signers. Those reported to have been imposed upon, were interrogated, Did you sign the petition for amalgamation?—for the division of the Church?—for a new Discipline? The whole was published in Zion's Watchman for June 27, 1840, and in the Observer for July 9th.

In this whole affair, the case seems to be this: The petitions were got up pretty much like such petitions elsewhere. There seemed to be more abolitionists in New York city than their oppo-

nents supposed, wished, or knew of. The conference were pushed into a temporary excitement by the warmth and haste of the New York brethren, cherished by a pretty warm flame from the south. But, on calm reflection, the whole temporary commotion subsided into an indifferent neglect of the entire business.\*

† The appeal of Rev. Silas Comfort from the decision of the Missouri conference became the subject of much discussion at this conference. The appeal was presented May 7th, by Bishop Waugh, and laid, for the present, on the table.‡ On Friday, May 15th, Rev. G. Peck moved to call up the appeal, and the conference made it the order of the day for Saturday.‡ Accordingly, the appeal was taken up on the 16th.¶ A letter from the appellant was read, and the journals of the Missouri conference. Bishop Roberts, in the chair, decided that the appeal could not be entertained; but his decision was overruled by the conference. The following is the statement of the case from the appellant and his counselor, Rev. G. Peck.

The state of the case was this. A lady had received certain insulting communications, by the hands of a negro of about 16 or 17 years of age, who refused to tell the author's name. The lady promised him five dollars, if he would point him out. This he did, by showing him, on the street, to a little girl of about 10 or 11 years of age, who had been sent with him for the purpose. The individual, after a while, passed the door of the store in which the lady was. She charged him with the authorship, which he acknowledged; but afterward, on his trial, denied it. Such is the case, as we gather from the state ments concerning it.§

The charge was for maladministration.

\* *Specification.* Admitting negro testimony on the trial of a white man."

On which, the conference decided as follows: "Resolved, That the errors in brother Comfort's administration be considered, in the estimation of this conference, errors of judgment, and that his character now pass without any censure."

The plea of Mr. Comfort, in his written appeal to the conference, was, that he decided officially that colored testimony was admissible, because, 1. The Discipline contains no special rule on the case. 2. If colored testimony in all cases be excluded, then the testimony of more than 88,000 communicants can not be received by the judicatories of the Church. 3. Colored testimony was not the only testimony in the case.

The principal plea of the delegates of the Missouri conference was, that colored testimony was received in no court in Missouri against white persons; that the Church could no more control this, than they could control the current of the Mississippi. They also pleaded, that the colored boy was, on account of his moral character, an incompetent witness.

The following resolution on the case was then presented to the conference, after several amendments:

"Resolved, That the decision of the Missouri conference, in the case of S. Comfort, finding him guilty of maladministration, be, and hereby is affirmed."

The resolution was rejected. So the confer-

\* Matlack, pp. 209-211. † Journal, p. 28.

‡ Journal, p. 55. W., Vol. VII, p. 30, col. 3.

§ Journal, p. 57. W., Vol. VII, p. 30, col. 4.

¶ W., Vol. VII, p. 30, col. 4, 6.

\* W., Vol. VII, p. 37, col. 3 and 4. Journal, p. 71.

† Journal, p. 82. W., Vol. VII, p. 41, col. 1 and 2.

ence refused to affirm the decision of the Missouri conference in the case of Silas Comfort.\*

On Monday, May 18th, Dr. Tomlinson moved a reconsideration of the vote on the appeal of Silas Comfort, taken on Saturday last, reversing the decision of the Missouri conference, with the design of offering the following resolution:

"Resolved, That, in view of the laws of Missouri, and the usage of the Church in states similarly situated, the decision of the Missouri conference, disapproving of the administration of brother Silas Comfort, from which he appealed, be affirmed."

After some little discussion, on matters of order, Rev. S. G. Roszell offered, as a substitute:

"Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences, in General conference assembled, That our presiding elders, elders, deacons, and preachers, having charge of districts, stations, or circuits, in slaveholding states or territories, be, and hereby are directed, not to admit any person of color to give testimony against a white person, it being a violation of the laws of slaveholding states and territories so to do."†

Mr. Roszell's motion was pronounced to be out of order till the motion for reconsideration should be decided. After some debate Dr. Tomlinson withdrew his motion to reconsider, and Dr. Few instantaneously submitted the following:

"Resolved, That it is inexpedient and unjustifiable for any preacher among us to permit colored persons to give testimony against white persons in any state where they are denied that privilege in trials at law."

Mr. Porter moved to strike out *unjustifiable*, and Mr. G. Peck moved to insert *unadvisable* in its place. Both these amendments were rejected. Mr. Roszell then proposed his substitute again, which, after some debate, was laid on the table; so that Dr. Few's resolution was then before the conference. After some debate it was adopted—74 in the affirmative, and 46 in the negative.

While the reconsideration, the substitute, and Dr. Few's resolution were before conference, the subject of colored testimony was debated by Messrs. Smith, Bangs, Slicer, Few, and Sandford. On the one side it was contended that the laws of the states should govern in ecclesiastical cases; and, on the other, it was argued that state laws should not govern in Church matters. We refer our readers to the debates in our collection of documents.‡

On Tuesday, May 26th, Mr. Ostrander brought in a motion to reconsider the case of Silas Comfort. This was debated during the afternoon. The object in view was to erase the whole from the journals of conference. Bishop Soule was in favor of the motion to erase. Dr. Few was violently opposed to rescind his resolution. Mr. Winans said, that to admit colored testimony would be the destruction of the south.

On May 28th N. Wilson moved to suspend the rules to take up the consideration of Dr. Few's resolution relative to colored testimony. Mr. Smith presented a resolution to amend Mr. Few's resolution, by a clause allowing annual conferences the power to decide how colored testimony should be received. The vote on

this stood 69 to 69. Bishop Hedding decided that, in his judgment, a bishop presiding in the General conference has not the prerogative, in case of a tie on a question, to decide it by giving the casting vote, and, of course, the motion was lost.

On Tuesday, June 2d, the day before the conference adjourned, Bishop Soule presented the following resolutions, which, on the motion of Mr. Winans, were adopted by 97 yeas to 27 nays:

"Resolved, That in the decision of this conference in the case of the appeal of the Rev. Silas Comfort, it is not intended to express or imply that the testimony of colored persons against white persons, in Church trials, is either expedient or justifiable in any of the slaveholding states or territories where the civil laws prohibit such testimony in trials of law.

"Resolved, That it is not the intention of this conference, in the adoption of the resolution of the Rev. Ignatius A. Few, of Georgia, in regard to the admission of the testimony of colored persons, to prohibit such testimony in Church trials in any of the states or territories where it is the established usage of the Church to admit, and where, in the judgment of the constitutional judicatories of the Church, such testimony may be admitted with safety to the peace of society, and the best interests of all concerned.

"Resolved, That it is not the intention of this conference, in either of the above cases, or in any action had by this body, to express or imply any distrust or want of confidence in the Christian piety or integrity of the numerous body of colored members under our pastoral care, to whom we are bound by the bonds of the Gospel of Christ, and for whose spiritual and eternal interests, together with all our fellow-men, of every color, and in every relation and condition in life, we will never cease to labor."\*

A motion to reconsider Mr. Few's resolution was laid on the table by a vote of 76 to 52.

As all will perceive, there was much confusion of ideas as to the exact wording of resolutions to meet the case. Dr. Bond, toward the close of the conference, interested himself much, and prepared two resolutions on the subject, which met with the views of nearly all north and south. A leading member from the south was to have offered them; but, owing to the great amount of business, at the close of conference there was no opportunity of presenting them. The resolution of Dr. Few was to be reconsidered and laid on the table, and the following presented, namely:

"(1.) Resolved, That this conference, in their action in the case of Silas Comfort, did not decide, and did not intend to decide, any thing concerning the admission of the testimony of colored persons in Church trials.

"(2.) Resolved, That in all cases of trial before the judicatories of our Church, the admissibility of testimony must be decided by the judicatory before which the case is to be tried, subject, however, to the ultimate decision of the superior judicatory, having appellate jurisdiction in the premises."†

These resolutions were in conformity with the theory and practice of our Church government from the beginning. The testimony

\* Journal, p. 57. W., Vol. VII, p. 30, col. 4-6.

† Journal, p. 60. W., Vol. VII, p. 33, col. 1.

‡ Document, No. 35. W., Vol. VII, p. 33, col. 1-4.

\* Journal of 1840, p. 109. † C., Vol. XV, p. 26, col. 5.

offered, whether of white or colored persons, may be such as no good men would admit. And even in slave states, where prejudices are the most inveterate, the testimony of colored persons might be so corroborated by circumstances that even public opinion would demand its reception in a Church trial. It would be ruinous any where to keep a man in the Church when his brethren and the community believed him to be guilty. In this way the Methodist Episcopal Church has always practiced and will practice. The case of Mr. Comfort had no proper legal right to be introduced into conference. It was a vexatious case from the beginning; occupied the time of conference unnecessarily; was an excellent text for ultra-abolitionists. It was of no theoretical or practical use, and in 1844 it had properly neither opposers nor approvers; and all, both north and south, agreed to dispose of it summarily as a thing of no account whatever. "How great a matter a little fire kindleth!"

There was one thing, however, in connection with this matter, that had like to have done great mischief. After the passage of Mr. Few's resolution, the colored members of the Church in Baltimore were greatly afflicted. They prepared an address to the conference, making complaints in their case. Through the kind offices of Dr. Bond, and other influential brethren of Baltimore, their minds were pacified. On this account their paper was never presented to the conference. The abolition press, however, made much ado about it. A copy of it was afterward published in Zion's Watchman, with a letter from a "colored Baltimorean," dated June 20, 1840. The address was signed by about forty persons. We place it among our documents.\* The resolutions of Bishop Soule had also a good effect in satisfying the colored members of Baltimore.

8. Several petitions were presented to General conference on lay delegation, a moderate Episcopacy, and the election of presiding elders. A committee of five, of which Mr. Winans was chairman, was appointed, to whom the petitions on these three topics were referred.†

On May 25th the committee reported that the petitioners made no complaint of individual grievances, but of general interests; that the operation of the present system was eminently useful; and that two principal points, on lay delegation and the election of presiding elders, had been fully canvassed, in 1828, and decided, and that no change in the government was needed.‡

The committee made no report on a "moderate Episcopacy," as this was embraced by the Committee on the Episcopacy. But an interesting conversation with Dr. Newton brought out this topic very satisfactorily before the conference. Rev. J. Horton asked Mr. Newton whether there was any authority among the British Wesleys equal in extent of power to our superintendency.

Rev. Mr. Newton.—"We have the thing without the name. The president of our conference exercises more authority than your venerable bishops. He can, at any time, arrest debate by his decision; and, although Mr. Wesley did not assume the title, he claimed and exercised

the prerogatives of a Christian bishop. Our chairmen of the districts are, in their sphere, also representatives of the president."

Rev. Mr. Horton asked whether the presidents were not elected annually.

Rev. Mr. Newton.—"Unquestionably they are, but the president never dies."

"Is not the chairman of the district also elected annually?" asked Rev. Mr. Horton.

"Unquestionably he is, but he never dies," replied the Rev. Mr. Newton.

The chair also inquired of Rev. Mr. Newton whether the president of the British conference did not decide many questions which we decide by the vote of the conference, to which he received an affirmative response.

Rev. J. Horton also asked how long the chairman of the district might retain his office, to which he received the reply that that depended on circumstances. He always deferred to seniority in case of the presence of a more aged minister. This was generally, if not invariably and universally, done.

Rev. P. Crandall was in favor of the adoption of the report, and he entreated that the topics which called it forth might be considered kith or kindred with abolitionism. Many of those who held antislavery sentiments were decidedly hostile to the sentiments of Methodists.\*

9. The report on the itinerancy presented several points connected intimately with the general thread of our history; namely, on conference rights, the power of presidents of annual and quarterly conferences, etc. We will notice such parts of this report as concerns the subject on hand.

Mr. Winans, chairman of this committee, reported June 2d. As the resolutions of the Georgia conference, in regard to slavery, received no notice from the committee, Mr. Dodge offered an amendment to the preamble condemnatory of the Georgia resolutions on slavery. He thought that as the action of several conferences had received animadversion, impartiality required uniformity of treatment. He moved, therefore, to amend the report by adding:‡

"The action of the Georgia conference, in declaring that slavery, as it exists in these United States, is not a moral evil, contradicts the sense of the General Rule and the 10th section of the Discipline on that subject, and is, therefore, irregular."

On a motion to lay the amendment on the table, but before it was acted on, Rev. S. K. Hodges, from the Georgia conference, begged leave to explain. He read the preamble and resolutions of the Georgia conference. He said the meaning of the resolutions was plainly and intelligibly that slavery, as it exists among us, is not a *damning sin*. To confess ourselves in the constant practice and sanction of a moral evil, would be, to acknowledge ourselves guilty of transgression against the law of God. We did not contradict the sentiments of the Discipline; but have simply declared that we do not believe ourselves sinners because of the existence of slavery among us. A crusade has been commenced against us. We have acted only on the defensive, with honesty of heart and firm attachment to Methodism. A different course on our part would have led to our exclusion from our colored missions. For twenty years

\* Document, No. 36. † Journal, p. 35.

‡ For the report, see Journal, p. 74. W., Vol. VII, p. 37, col. 6.

\* W., Vol. VII, p. 37, col. 6, *infra*.  
† Journal, p. 106. W., Vol. VII, p. 46, col. 4-6.

we have maintained the institutions of the Church, and submitted to offensive legislation without complaint. Such is the exposition of Mr. Hodges on this subject. The amendment of Mr. Dodge was laid on the table, and therefore not carried, as it was not afterward called up.

The Committee on Itinerancy had the following in their report:

"The New England conference, as has appeared to the Committee, have been, during the last four years, disorganizing in their proceedings; indeed, to have pursued a course destructive to the peace, harmony, and unity of the Church, in that,

"(1.) They have gone beyond the proper jurisdiction of an annual conference; and, in doing so, have pronounced upon the characters of those brethren who were not at all responsible to them. In that,

"(2.) The journals of that conference exhibit no grounds on which they acquitted Orange Scott, who, by direct implication, had been found guilty, by a large majority of the General conference, of publishing statements concerning members of that body, which were gross misrepresentations, or flagrant and scandalous falsehoods. In that,

"(3.) The same absence exists of all showing of reasons for acquitting Orange Scott and Leroy Sunderland, on sundry charges of evil doing, growing out of abolition movements in which they were engaged. In that,

"(4.) The said conference, disregarding the established usages of Methodism, permitted the members of their body to be present during the examination of their own characters. In that,

"(5.) The conference did, by an official act, advise or request that Leroy Sunderland should be left without an appointment. In that,

"(6.) The conference did sustain Orange Scott in neglecting his appropriate work as a Methodist preacher, while he was prosecuting an agency unknown to, and not recognized by, the Discipline."

This part of the report, after considerable discussion, in which Bishop Hedding and Mr. Smith were the principal speakers, was laid on the table, and remained there.

Bishop Hedding barely made a few observations, in which he urged that this part of the report had best be dropped. He thought the New England conference had erred in some of their acts; still, as a body, they were good men and fast friends of the Church. He advised to strike out of the report the part that related to the New England conference. The brethren had been, in that part, under excitement. The act of the Georgia conference operated to increase and prolong it. The comments of the Georgia brethren did not accompany their resolutions. The resolutions affirm that slavery is not a moral evil as it exists in the United States. Taking the resolutions in the literal, plain meaning, they go to say that slavery confers on the master unlimited power to dispose of the slave; to separate man and wife; it inflicts great injury on its subjects, especially in the hands of drunkards, infidels, and other immoral persons; that the resolutions go to say, according to the import of the terms, that the exercise of all the powers allowed to the master, and all the practices incident to the state of slavery, are not moral evils. He thought that the brethren of the north and the south did not understand each other. When they

recede from extremes they will meet and live together in harmony and love.

Mr. Smith made a vigorous speech, in which he declared that the course of the New England conference had been disorganizing; that the Georgia conference, in declaring that "slavery was not a moral evil," asserted the truth. Expediency demanded the decision of the Georgia conference, and their opinion was also correct in itself. He allowed that, did the north and south understand each other, they would agree. They did not differ on the abstract subject of slavery. There were two abstract senses. The one was the popular sense, referring to the original act of kidnapping from the coast of Africa. All north and south held this to be wrong. The second sense in the abstract was *its technical and proper sense*; that is, *the simple overt act of slavery*. In this sense slavery had no moral character. You must give it a concrete act before it is either right or wrong. As an abstraction it has no moral character. It is like the overt act of giving money. Thus, to give it to relieve distress is right, but to give money to hire an assassin is wrong. "So of slavery: the abstract, or mere overt act, is neither right nor wrong; it has no moral character; while, as a concrete act, its motives and objects determine its moral character; and by these principles we are willing that southern slavery should stand or fall, both now and hereafter."

Mr. Smith perfectly confuses the subject. Slavery does the same thing, by the laws of the slave states, that the African trade formerly did in this country, and now does in other countries; that is, it *deprives human beings of their liberty*, and then inflicts on them the *wrongs of slavery*. As none are born slaves, the one hundred thousand of freeborn colored children annually enslaved by slave laws, are deprived of their liberty, and suffer all the wrongs of slavery: call these, if you must speak nonsense, concrete or abstract—terms, in this application, that either mean nothing, or serve as an ill-concealed sophism to hide or pervert the truth. Slavery, in spite of all that good men can do, blots out marriage from its code, and, of course, introduces licentiousness. The father, under the legal workings of slavery, sells his own children. Slavery makes brothers the property of brothers, and sisters the property of sisters; parts parents and children; compels disobedience to parents; compels licentiousness on the part of the wife, the daughter, the mother, or sister. But it were useless to enlarge. Mr. Smith's sophistry will deceive no man, north or south, but a sinful slaveholder or his apologist. For the benefit of all concerned, we will furnish the debates on the report of the Committee on the Itinerancy, occasioned by the consideration of the course of the New England and Georgia conferences.\*

On the 2d of June the report on the itinerancy, on conference rights, or the powers of annual and quarterly conferences, and of their presidents, was presented, and the following resolutions, or propositions, were passed. That one numbered 2, was laid on the table, or, in other words, rejected:

"(1.) That the bishop in an annual conference, and the presiding elder in a quarterly meeting conference, shall decide all questions of law, and the conference shall decide the

application of law; and from such decision of the president there shall be no appeal, except it be taken from the president of a quarterly meeting conference to the president of an annual conference, and from the president of an annual conference to the General conference.

"(2.) [Laid on the table or lost.]

"(3.) The president of an annual or a quarterly meeting conference has the right to decline putting the question on a motion, resolution, or report, when, in his judgment, such motion, resolution, or report, does not relate to the proper business of a conference; provided, that in all such cases the president, on being required by the conference to do so, shall have inserted in the journals of the conference his refusal to put the question on such motion, resolution, or report, with his reason for so refusing; and provided, that when an annual conference shall differ from the president on a question of law, they shall have a right to record their dissent on the journals, provided there shall be no discussion on the subject.

"(4.) That the president of an annual or a quarterly meeting conference has the right to adjourn the conference over which he presides, when, in his judgment, all the business prescribed by the Discipline to such conference shall have been transacted; provided, that if an exception be taken by the conference to his so adjourning it, the exception shall be entered upon the journals of such conference.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"W. WINANS, *Chairman.*

"*Baltimore, May 28, 1840.\**"

The passage of the report, as a matter of course, required that the Discipline should be amended so as to place among the duties of a bishop the power "to decide all questions of law in an annual conference, subject to an appeal to the General conference; but in all cases the application of law shall be with the conference."

A similar clause was called for in reference to the duties or powers of a presiding elder, namely: "To decide all questions of law in a quarterly meeting conference, subject to an appeal to the president of the next annual conference; but in all cases the application of law shall be with the conference."

Thus the question of conference rights was decided in a satisfactory manner. Indeed, Bishop Morris had given the clew to the whole matter in his wise decision at the New Hampshire conference in 1838.

On the 1st of June the report on the Episcopacy was adopted, which declares that the administration of the bishops, in the several annual conferences, for the last four years, was correct, and entitled to the approbation and support of the conference.†

10. On the 8th of May a petition was presented by E. Dorsey, from the stewards, and others, of Westmoreland circuit, Baltimore conference, complaining of the action of the Baltimore annual conference, in refusing to elect to ordination local preachers on the single ground of their being slaveholders.‡ This was referred to a committee of which Dr. Bascom was chairman.

On the 3d of June, at a night session, and toward midnight, the report on the Westmoreland case came before conference, and was

adopted with very little examination as to its contents. The report is ably written, though verbose, abounding in repetitions, and rather illogically connected. Still the doctrines are correct, Methodistically, but unguarded, so as to give great advantage to a pro-slavery interpretation. The report states that local preachers of Virginia, in the Baltimore conference, in considerable numbers, and for several years, have been denied orders solely because they were slaveholders, or owners of slaves. Still the laws of Virginia forbid emancipation, except under restrictions amounting to a prohibition. The Discipline comprises two distinct classes of legislative provision in relation to slavery, the one applying to owners of slaves where emancipation is practicable, the other where it is impracticable. The Church has never insisted on emancipation where emancipation is impracticable, and no ecclesiastical disabilities are intended in this case. The General Rule requiring emancipation where the laws allow should be carried into effect, but does not apply to the memorialists, and should not affect their rights. Yet an annual conference possesses the right of free choice in elections, and can not be controlled. The principles and causes giving birth to moral and political institutions, may be essentially evil, without moral obliquity in those involuntarily connected with these institutions. There is not any necessary connection between the moral character of the individual and that of the system. The following is the resolution passed:

"Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences in General conference assembled, That, under the provisional exception of the General Rule of the Church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in states or territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and can not be considered as operating any forfeiture of rights in view of such election and ordination."\*

The resolution was passed without reference to any but traveling and local preachers, or members, having no reference, as it has no pertinency, to the Episcopacy. At a future day this became the stronghold in favor of a slaveholding Episcopacy.

11. The Address of the General conference to the British conference avows that no new principle or rule of Discipline respecting slavery, since the days of Asbury, had been introduced, nor is any intended; and the noble testimony is still the same as it was. They state that some states have already become free. There are others in which it is allowed, but the tendency is to freedom. In other states slavery exists by law, and it is treasonable to set forth any thing, by word or deed, tending to emancipation. And while the Church has encouraged emancipation where the laws allow it, she has refrained from meddling with it where the laws make it criminal. The Church in America has done nothing different from their Wesleyan brethren in their instructions to their missionaries laboring among the slaves.†

12. The General conference, as was meet, em-

\* Journal, pp. 111, 112, 121. W., Vol. VII, pp. 42, 49.

† Journal, p. 99.

‡ Journal, p. 34. W., Vol. VII, p. 50.

\* Document, No. 38.

† Document, No. 39.



ployed part of its Pastoral Address to the people on the subject of slavery. They state that some petitions, principally from the northern and eastern states, asked for action on slavery, and others asked for radical changes in the economy of the Church. The conference kindly state that no good reason appeared to them to make changes in reference either to slavery or to our general economy as a Church.\*

13. Indeed, the principles and general economy of Methodism have been so well tried, and so long practiced, and found to be of such general, and even particular utility, that there is little or no room or reason for changing either. There is room and reason for development, extension, and application of the rudimental elements; but the elements themselves can not be changed, added to, or diminished, without vitiating the entire system.

The General conference is an assembly of Christian pastors, not of legislators; not authorized to make laws, but to make "such rules and regulations" as the state of the Church and the world may require, as necessary to carry into effect the laws already given by the only Lawgiver. This well-marked and obvious distinction was always acted on by the Church, and at length formally recognized by the General conference of 1828, in the adoption of the report from the Committee on the Itinerancy. Though

the terms *legislature*, *legislative*, etc., have been sometimes used in a restricted sense, strictly speaking no Church can assume the power of making laws. No Church can make laws for the moral government of her members without renouncing her allegiance to the only Lord and Lawgiver; and, surely, the Church can not interfere with the political relations of her members. All laws, pious or moral, are found in the Bible; and all the General conference can do, as the supreme judicatory of the Church, is to devise the best means of executing these laws. Hence the terms of communion must be Scriptural, but the manner of enforcing these terms must be left with the pastors of the Church. For example, it is a law of God that a dishonest person or drunkard shall not be a subject of the kingdom of God—shall not be a member of the Church. No authority can repeal or modify this law. But the Scripture does not show precisely how the crime is to be proved. The General conference has decided that it shall be by a committee of brethren. The *law* can not be altered; but the *rule* may be changed for any other which reason and experience may select. So the great outlines are contained in Scripture; and while these are preserved inviolate, rules and regulations to execute these laws may vary as matters of discipline.\*

## CHAPTER XVI.

### EVENTS OF 1841.

1. As might be expected, ultra-abolitionism in the Methodist Episcopal Church now began to develop itself by secession. The abolitionists, heretofore, to some extent, seemed to think the whole Gospel included in the doctrines and measures of antislavery societies. The Church, bishops and preachers especially, were put down as pro-slavery. Hence, slavery was talked, and preached, and prayed about, and little else; making the watchwords of the party the theme of the class meeting, the love-feast, and the prayer meeting, as well as the rostrum and the periodicals. We will give some specimens of the style used on these occasions from the pens of those who employed them, or whose sentiments they report.

The following sentiments appeared in the Watchman of March, 1840, dated Duxbury, February, 1840, over the initials J. D. B., a well-known and talented preacher of the New England conference:

"That paper [the Christian Advocate and Journal] is cruelly and wickedly dumb in relation to the cause of humanity. The editors will not bark on the subject. Anon, however, they pounce on the friends of bleeding humanity. O Methodism! how hast thou corrupted thyself in an unholy alliance with the American Moloch—the *sum of all villainies!* The mother of abominations has found a refuge within our pale. We have reclined on the adulterous lap of a heartless Delilah, till, like Sampson, we are shorn of our

strength. Ichabod! Ichabod! flames forth on the walls of our edifice, in characters of unearthly fire!"†

Another preacher, under the initials of J. S., writing to Mr. Scott, says:

"The New England abolitionists—many of them, at least—are led away, as the sons of Israel were by the daughters of Balak, to commit whoredom with the Moloch of slavery."‡

Rev. J. S. Barris, under date of Monroe, O., July 25, 1840, writes thus:

"I have for a long time believed that abolitionists would do more honor to the cause of God, if they should break off from their present ecclesiastical connection, and meet in convention by delegates from the ministry and laity, and organize a Church free from the sin of oppression; embracing, in their religious creed, nothing but the essential doctrines of the Gospel, and leaving out every thing that does not involve the grand scheme of Gospel truth. On such a basis every intelligent Christian could unite."§

These are mere specimens of the sentiments and feelings among some abolitionists, giving plain indications that the secession was now fixed in principle and determination, and the execution, of course, must soon follow.

Accordingly, in Cleveland, in the fall of 1839, I think, a secession took place, because the quarterly meeting conference and the annual conference did not virtually become abolition societies.¶

\* Document, No. 40.

† C., Vol. XIV, p. 182, col. 2.

‡ Id., p. 234.

§ Id., p. 235.

¶ Matlack, pp. 233, 234.

‡ Id., p. 301.

In Monroe, Ohio, in the summer of 1839, under the Rev. Ensign B. Hill, a secession took place of about thirty persons, on account of the administration in the Church, and "were formed into a large congregational Church." Thus a "large Church" was formed out of "about thirty persons;" and this is a fair specimen of the large Churches of Scottites which were formed in Ohio at this time and afterward. So a congregational Church was formed in Williamsfield, Ohio, in 1840. "They anticipated a secession of the main body of the abolitionists; and whenever that event should take place, it was their intention to become united therewith."\*

And in Utica, New York, there was a considerable secession in the fall of 1840. The reasons assigned by the seceders were: The efforts of the authorities to suppress the discussion of slavery in the Church; its pro-slavery character; the action of the Oneida conference, in restoring an expelled member; and the government of the Church.†

In 1839 secessions commenced in Michigan, but this was confined to individuals, some of whom joined other Churches, and others stood alone. The first organized secession took place in February, 1841, consisting of five classes in Wayne county. These formed a convention May 13, 1841, and called themselves "Wesleyan Methodists." Several other secessions took place in other parts of Michigan, as Wheatland, Adams, etc. In 1843 they all amounted to 1,116.‡

These secessions, generally, made no noise beyond their narrow circle, and the columns of their paper. The secession in Utica did attract some attention, and called out remarks from Zion's Herald and the Christian Advocate. Dr. Bond, in two articles,|| shows off the Utica case in its proper colors. After the secession, those that remained in the Church, though the weaker and poorer part, being aided by brethren at a distance, paid off a church debt that had been an incumbrance for years. They were relieved from their former constant din of abolitionism that assailed them from the pulpit, in the prayer meeting, the class-room, and official meetings. The Lord revived his work among them, and the waste places were soon repaired.

Rev. Abel Stevens, then editor of Zion's Herald, wrote an article of great weight and point, on the *appointing power* of our bishops, and other matters,§ which gave a manifest check to the spirit of disaffection. The Methodist Episcopal Church, indeed, is greatly indebted to Dr. Bond and brother Stevens for their able and timely articles in defense of the Church, at this time and afterward.

A convention was called to meet at Utica, to organize all Methodist seceders together into one body. But the materials were too discordant for this purpose, and the convention did nothing to accomplish the object of their meeting.¶

2. The developments of radicalism or revolution in the Church, in connection with abolitionism, were now fully manifest to all. The Lowell Christian Advocate was commenced January 7, 1841, edited by Luther Lee, and continued only fifteen months, or till March 31, 1842. It died for want of support, and left its publishers involved in debt to a considerable amount.\*\* The Methodist abolition press stopped at very little to accomplish its object. Who does not remember

the shameless effort to bring the pious and amiable Bishop Hedding into contempt, by offering him and his wife for sale at public auction—giving a ludicrous description of their personal qualifications for service, their age, teeth, size, etc.? The abolitionists carried their strife into our classes, Sunday schools, and missionary societies, and even into our love-feasts. Everywhere they taught the Methodist Episcopal Church was pro-slavery in her councils and administration, especially the Episcopacy. They spared none who were not of their party; and to be one of their party, it was necessary to agree with them in measures as well as in the principles they avowed. The result of the whole was, that they succeeded in alienating many from their attachment to the Church and her wholesome discipline, upon which alone depended their connection; and this ligament once sundered, they were ready for secession and open hostility. The fruits of this may be seen at Utica, Patterson, and the places we have mentioned above.

Mr. Scott, in 1841, had temporarily retired to his farm in Newberry, Vermont. For a year or two he was much displeased at the Methodist abolitionists of New England. They all got astray. He denounces them as "spaniel-like," "crawling," and "licking the dust," because they would not allow him to denounce the Herald through its own columns.\* The Lowell Advocate, too, denounced the Herald, under the care of Mr. Stevens, because the paper did not assail the Church with more zeal than it did slavery.†

Radical principles were now broached by Mr. Scott and those that seceded, as well as those that were ready for secession, through their alienation from the Church. Radical measures are those which strike at the fundamental principles of our economy, at the Episcopacy, at the itinerancy, etc. Mr. Scott, referring to the course of the bishops in 1820, declares that then did "oppression and tyranny triumph," and that now "tyranny has triumphed, and oppression struck deep its roots in the Church." The Lowell Observer also develops the matter. One writer declared, "Let those who can put confidence in the statement of the bishops," etc. Mr. Stevens thought, under date of September 1st, that the antislavery movement in our Church was fast merging into a movement of mere ecclesiastical revolution. Mr. Bridge, about the same time, declared, "Once we had one class of abolitionists, firm and united; now we have many, divided and broken into fragments. To this deplorable list may be added the new party of Church revolutionists."‡

3. The affairs of Lowell will furnish a specimen of what was in process at the time. Both of the stations in this city rejected the preachers sent them, and chose others. St. Paul's entered into a negotiation with the Rev. Mr. Hoes, of the Oneida conference, who was a violent ultra-abolitionist. They afterward chose Mr. Scott, who immediately commenced to serve them. Wesley Chapel chose Mr. Brewster. Bishop Hedding and the presiding elder, Mr. Crandall, did their utmost to adjust matters. But the wound was too deep to be healed; though skinned over, it festered, and ultimately became worse.¶

4. The claim of *free discussion* was pressed so

\* Mr. D. Pechin, in the True Wesleyan, April 25, 1846.

† Matlack, pp. 302, 303.

‡ Id., pp. 303-306.

§ C. Vol. XV, pp. 114, 126.

¶ Z. Vol. XII, p. 18, col. 4.

|| Id., p. 103, col. 1.

\*\* Matlack, p. 229.

\* Z., Vol. XII, p. 27.

† Id., p. 82, col. 6.

‡ Id., p. 138.

¶ Id., pp. 133, 150, 158.

far by some at this time as to demand the right of saying any thing they pleased. As an example, a writer in the Lowell Advocate complains that the Herald would not allow him to recommend the Advocate in the columns of the Herald, though the Advocate dealt weekly in abusive terms of the Herald. According to this claim, we must allow a Deist, Unitarian, or Universalist, into our pulpit, to defend their own views, and thereby, at least tacitly, attack those of our own Church. Our papers were set for the defense of the Church, but not for their overthrow. Such a plea for free discussion is Jacobinical, and nothing else.

The editors of the Christian Advocate did not consider themselves either bound or at liberty to introduce into its columns both sides of this question, nor even to discuss it properly at all. Such a course was deemed unnecessary.\* The editor of the Western Advocate also declined the discussion of this subject, because, as a moral question, it was already decided in the General Rule, and because, in the present disturbed state of the public mind, no good could arise from its discussion.†

Indeed, Zion's Herald, which had opened its columns to the discussion of slavery from 1835 to 1841, because it would not now allow the ultra-abolitionists to maintain their views, and assail the Church with rancor, was placed on the same list with the New York and Cincinnati Advocates. Or, rather, the case is this: Messrs. Scott, Horton, Storrs, Sunderland, and others, had been assailing the Church, in their articles in the Herald, for the five preceding years, and condemning the Church for being pro-slavery, and condemning nearly all slaveholders as sinners. At this time the matter becomes fully developed. The Episcopacy and itinerancy are now assailed, in addition to the former topics, now become threadbare. The Herald, now, and most of the New England preachers, see whither matters tend, and commence to retrace their steps in the best way they can.‡

5. Nevertheless, the Methodist antislavery societies were not given up, though they had a sickly existence. The brethren in New England got fairly committed, and could not, with any face, give up the form, although the thing itself was languishing.

The American Wesleyan Antislavery Society held its first and its last anniversary at Albany, New York, October 6, 1841. The energy of Methodist abolitionists was not now combined. Various influences conspired to scatter their power.¶ Still they held their anniversary, without doing much any way, though they resolved, "We shall never relinquish the right to assemble in this capacity, as long as we have slavery in the Church of which we are members."§ The Providence conference formed an antislavery society, met, and passed resolutions, and finished their business without a shred of radicalism.¶ The New England conference passed a report on slavery. The antislavery society of the conference also passed resolutions, and had a meeting, with but little done any way, except to keep up appearances.\*\* The New Hampshire conference and its society went through the rounds with all patience

and earnestness, and all passed off very pleasantly.\*

Our Methodist Protestant brethren have had their trouble on the subject of slavery, as well as ourselves. The readers of the Mutual Rights and the Wesleyan Repository know that the General Rule on slavery, at the organization of the Methodist Protestant Church, was rejected, for the double purpose of conciliating slaveholders, and of exposing the errors of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This pro-slavery courtesy bore its legitimate fruit, as we learn from the following, taken from the Christian World, edited by Mr. Stockton, of Philadelphia:† "We learn from the Augusta (Georgia) Sentinel, that the South Carolina conference is zealously devoted to southern interests. At its recent session, a committee presented a report, which was adopted, complaining of the inexcusable and offensive conduct of the northern Methodist Protestant ministers, who, from the pulpit and the press, and even in their annual and General conferences, have denounced slavery, and threaten to withdraw all fellowship from slaveholders. They also think it necessary to get up a southern periodical, because the Methodist Protestant can not publish any communication in defense of the institution of slavery. The conference does not consider slavery, as it exists in the United States, a moral evil, nor does it debar the slaveholder from the enjoyment of the favor of God, nor exclude him from glory hereafter. The agent of the conference is directed to visit or write to the other conferences in the south, asking their cooperation."

7. The antislavery movements of the current year will call for a brief survey. Among the most remarkable occurrences, we may place a letter from the antislavery committee of London to the President of the United States, signed by Thomas Clarkson, on the subject of slavery, and dated London, March 5, 1841. The letter was carried to the United States by Joseph Sturge, an influential Quaker. Mr. Sturge informed the President, Mr. Tyler, of the letter and its purport, desiring an opportunity to present it. The President paid no attention whatever, in any way, to the matter, so that Mr. Sturge could not deliver the letter in person, as he was instructed. Of this Mr. Sturge complains, and addresses the abolitionists in the United States on the subject. The letter to the President is a graphic survey of slavery in its moral character, well written, presenting such a view of slavery as shows forth its moral obliquity in a very convincing light.‡ We will, in order to preserve it, remand the paper to our collection of documents.¶

Mr. Gurney's letters to Mr. Clay on the success of West India emancipation may be noticed. He attempts to show, 1. That emancipated negroes worked well on the estates of their own masters. 2. Yet the increased amount of labor cheapened it. 3. These he endeavors to show from facts. 4. Their personal comforts were increased. 5. Their moral and religious improvement were promoted. Whether these points were fully made out, we say not; yet the excellent spirit in which the book was written presented something to slave-

\* C., Vol. XV, p. 110. † W., Vol. VIII, p. 3, col. 1.

‡ Z., Vol. XII, pp. 55, 74, 82, 90. § Muddack, p. 230.

¶ Zion's Watchman in Z., Vol. XII, p. 172.

‡ Z., Vol. XII, pp. 94, 100. \*\* Id., pp. 112, 123.

\* Z., Vol. XII, pp. 112, 140. † Id., p. 62, col. 3.

‡ Id., p. 108, col. 1-3.

¶ Document, No. 41. Z., Vol. XII, p. 108.

holders which they were willing to read and consider; and an excellent example of *manner* was presented for the imitation of a large class of abolitionists, from which we trust they derived profit.\*

The American and Foreign Antislavery Society held its first anniversary. Not being prepared fully to ostracize all the clergy, abolish the Sabbath, and denounce all government, they came out from among the leaders of the parent society. Their report did not contain many statistics. They were compelled to dispense with the services of Messrs. Birney and Stanton, for want of funds for their support. The past year was one of comparative inaction. An antislavery convention was held next morning by the members of the Society, for the purpose of nominating candidates for President and Vice-President of the United States, to be supported by abolitionists in 1844.†

The People's Advocate complained much of the decline of abolition papers, and says, "We do not know of one which sustains itself, and most of them are a heavy bill of cost to the proprietors." Some have supposed that the decline of the papers was a proof of the decline of abolitionism, while others thought that abolitionism continued to progress. We do not indorse either of these opinions. The extravagances of abolition had spent themselves in disgusting many, and curing many. A more sober course was found to be absolutely necessary, in order to give a hearing to the cause. This produced a temporary pause. But the public mind in the north settled down into a more calm state, rejecting much of what was said and done by the abolitionists, and equally rejecting the fanaticism of pro-slavery men, either in the north or south.‡ The true antislavery principles, however, were strengthened, extended, and greatly separated from the evil and indiscreet principles with which they had been previously mixed.

Among the most thinking men of the south, it was generally believed that the strong antislavery sentiments in the north were much in the advance, and had greatly affected the south itself, and reached even its *conscience*, so as to promote even some panic. We have before us forty-five quotations from the published declarations of southern men,§ slaveholders, who declare or lament that the consciences of southern men are reached, and the *sin* of slavery is becoming known, and is felt by many slaveholders.

8. A survey of the missionary and religious movements of the Church, in regard to the slaves, deserves a prominent notice. We have before us the report of the Missionary Society of South Carolina conference, which gives the most cheering intelligence of the success of the Gospel among the slaves. Some eighteen or twenty missionaries were employed among the blacks exclusively; there were between five and seven thousand Church members, and more than half that number of the children were receiving catechetical instruction. The report states that the vocation of the South Carolina conference, by way of eminence, is the religious improvement of the colored population of the low country of the Carolinas. Here they exist

in scores and hundreds, in circumstances forbidding necessarily the opportunities of Christian instruction in the ordinary modes of clerical operation. The most of these are, in point of fact, as remote from religious influences as though they were in the deserts and jungles of Africa itself. We must quote here largely, *verbatim et literatim*, from the report; for it would be an unpardonable omission to withhold the following extract from the report:

"And here," say the conference in their report, "we declare it publicly and solemnly, in the face of the highly-respectable planters of this community, and before the whole country, that this Missionary Society has no ulterior designs beyond our plain and positive and present duties. We are working to no secular ends. We have nothing to do with the rights and duties of Cæsar. We bow to the authority of the laws; and by the express precepts of the Christianity which we preach, we are under obligation to obey these laws. Our vocation looks to a different end. It contemplates spiritual relations—eternal destinies. It sees beneath the humble condition of the plantation negro, the gleaming lights of *soul*—the upward burnings of *immortality*. It calculates the elements of his spiritual destiny from the moral and religious capabilities of his nature. It finds him ignorant of God; and its solemn office is to instruct this ignorance. He is fettered by a thousand superstitions; these it seeks to dispel by the simple teachings of religious truth. He is responsible to God for his conduct here, and the doom of eternal happiness or woe awaits him hereafter! To awaken in his mind the same, and to fix upon his heart the feeling of *responsibility* both to God and his master, is our aim.

"In hoping to accomplish this great end, our confidence rests upon the efficiency of the Gospel. The commission we have received of the Lord Christ is to 'preach the Gospel to every creature,' and if to any by emphasis and partiality, to the *poor*. It operates without detriment or bar from the outward circumstances of life, be they splendid or mean. It reaches from the shining pinnacles of society to its Helot class. So to preach the Gospel that it may be believed, and, being believed, may prove the power of God unto salvation, is the great object, and, we repeat it, the *sole* object of our ministrations among the blacks. This object attained, we find the terminus of our anxieties and toils, of our preaching and prayers."\*

We can not here withhold the testimony of an abolitionist—Rev. S. W. Coggeshall, in his correspondence in Zion's Herald:

"In the South Carolina conference, several of the preachers are exclusively devoted to the work of preaching to the slaves; and so exceedingly dangerous to health and life are the stations of these devoted brethren, in the low lands of that state, some having already fallen martyrs to their work, that the bishops will not always take the responsibility of appointing men to fill them, but call for volunteers for this truly-missionary work, when sufficient are always found to boldly step forward, not only to supply the places or those who have fallen, but also continually to enlarge the borders of the work. The result of all this superior zeal and sacrifice, as might be

\* W., Vol. VII, p. 146, col. 4. † Z., Vol. XII, p. 78.  
‡ Id., p. 198. § Antislavery Almanac for 1841, pp. 28-34.

\* W., March 19, 1841, Vol. VII, p. 190, col. 6.

expected, is, that in this conference the blacks number more than the whites; the former numbering 27,630, and the latter 27,209. The ratio of increase is still greater, being, whites, 2,223, blacks, 2,808. Why the South Carolina conference is so far in advance of all the other conferences in this good work, I do not know, unless it is on account of the superior and commanding influence of her distinguished son, the Rev. Dr. Capers, a man who, though he is not every thing upon the slave question that the friends of hu-

manity could wish, yet, during a long, active, and laborious life, has most commendably exerted himself for the spiritual benefit of these poor outcasts of human nature.\*

The devotion of Methodist ministers to the slaves obtained for them the title, by way of derision, of "the negro preachers." They may now wear it with honest pride as a badge of honor, and of more real worth than the title of Cæsar.

## CHAPTER XVII.

### EVENTS OF 1842.

1. A PRO-SLAVERY movement, in the winter of 1841 and 1842, was the occasion of manifesting the antislavery spirit of the Methodists of Maryland, whether slaveholders or others. The circumstances are the following: A small fraction of the slaveholding interest, assuming, without any legitimate warrant, to act for the whole, held a convention, and, by a series of resolutions, recommended to the Legislature a course of action, which was intended not to bear on slavery, either speculatively or practically, but on the free people of color. The effect would be to drive from the state, or reduce to bondage, those who, by the laws of the state, were free. A great many of those to be expelled, or reduced to bondage again, were Methodists, and claimed the sympathy of Methodists, and, if practicable, their protection, too. Our preachers would be, by the proposed law, made liable to severe pains and penalties, which might be incurred in the discharge of their duties as ministers, without themselves violating the law, or being in any way accessory thereto.\*

At a time when the antislavery societies were formed in the north and east, Maryland was steadily advancing toward a gradual emancipation of her slaves. The tragedy of Southampton, Virginia, awakened general alarm. But the abolition movements of the north seemed to cause a halt to the advancement of emancipation. Of this pause the pro-slavery men of Maryland took advantage. They succeeded to have laws passed that made the friends of humanity blush. The great majority of the people, though opposed to slavery and these laws, were compelled, for the sake of peace, to maintain no strong opposition. Emboldened by the impunity with which they had been permitted to trample on the feelings of their fellow-citizens, these *ultra* slaveholders proceeded in their measures; held a convention; succeeded to have an obnoxious law pass the house. The convention was warned of the danger of their course. The people thought their madness would be rebuked by the Legislature; but, to the astonishment of most, a bill was passed the house in conformity with the resolutions of the convention. The Methodists, acting as a society in Baltimore, memorialized the Legislature.†

On the 28th of February, 1842, at a meeting of the male members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of twenty-one years of age and upward,

a memorial to the senate was adopted, signed by Thomas E. Bond, sen., G. C. M. Roberts, and Robert Emory, remonstrating against the bill that had passed the house of delegates. The memorial is a noble specimen of the principles of true Christians and of loyal citizens. For the sake of preserving it, we assign it a place among our valuable documents.†

In reference to this matter, Dr. Bond makes the following remarks:‡

"This mad movement of the slaveholders' convention is the more surprising, because they must have known the difficulty with which the opposite fanaticism of the antislavery societies was suppressed in the free states. To cast this firebrand into the yet smoldering materials is beyond the ordinary folly and wickedness of men. To our brethren we say, and to *all* who fear God we say, you are released; the slaveholders' convention have taken off your straight-jackets. With an eye single to the glory of God, do your duty. If we have at any time compromised too much, we did it under a conviction of duty. We do not repent that we have let our moderation be known to all men. The questions which we were told it was dangerous to discuss, are now forced upon us by those who conjured us to be silent, for the sake of mercy and humanity, and, with the blessing of God, we will discuss them to the hearts' content of the slaveholders' convention."

The notices of this subject in the Christian Advocate and Journal created considerable alarm in the south, as was manifest from a correspondent from Georgia, of March 22d, under the signature of "An Itinerant," and from an editorial notice of it in the Southern Advocate of April 1, 1842. The "Itinerant" complained that the controversy was brought into the columns of the New York Advocate, and affirmed that "such a discussion in *that paper* must close all access to the colored people of the south, and send home our missionaries, or compel the southern Church, *from a love of souls*, to a separation." The editor, Mr. Wightman, emphatically participated in the regrets of his Georgia correspondent. He says, if the discussion proceeds, the New York paper will not circulate in the south. "We know too well the temper of Virginia, the Carolinas, Georgia, and Alabama, to suppose that they will read and pay for a paper which

\* C., April 13, 1842. † C., March 9, 1842.

\* Z., Vol. XII, p. 130, col. 5. † Document, No. 42.  
‡ C., Vol. XVI, p. 119, col. 5, of March 9, 1842.

agitates questions so justly considered *dangerous*.\*

Dr. Bond† responded. He said the paper belonged to the *whole* Church, and, as such, he considered himself prohibited from the discussion of slavery. He neither discussed slavery nor abolition, but *radico-abolition*. As to the Maryland affair, he did not propose to discuss it in the paper. The discussion would be conducted by a pamphlet or other means, in Maryland, if necessary; but the Advocate would not be the proper vehicle for that purpose. He had been making arrangements for the publication of a pamphlet in Maryland, when the rejection of the offensive bill, in the senate, rendered it unnecessary to publish.

2. The Watchman, by its opposition, not to slavery, but to the Church, became obnoxious to many, so that its circulation was greatly diminished. As a remedy to this, its size was greatly reduced. The New England Christian Advocate, the rival of the Watchman, criticising on the braggardism of the Watchman, says, with great truth, that "in one number of the Watchman there were twenty distinct articles, in every one of which he refers, in some way, to the merits of his paper, and in most of them directly."‡

Mr. Sunderland, editor of the Watchman, became, at this time, enamored of Mesmerism, and employed much space in favor of this topic in his paper. The paper, too, reflected on the character and motives of our ministers. It assailed the institutions of the Church. It opposed not the *sins* in the Church, but the Church itself. It abounded in dark insinuations, as well as direct assertions. On this account, there were some who gave credence to its statements who were prepared to abandon the Church. Messrs B. M'Lauth and J. Marcy, on July 20th, complained of this course. But the editor refused to publish the communication. It appeared afterward in the Herald of August 10, 1842. Thus the much vaunted free discussion was at an end in the Watchman.

3. Mr. Scott during the winter of 1841-42 was in retirement. He makes his appearance in the Herald of June 15th, in a communication dated May 28th. He there states, "Men of an ardent temperament, like myself, are exceedingly liable to *overact*, and not always to exercise sufficient caution and prudence in the *manner* of debate. This, I believe, has been my fault to some extent. I think I might have managed my part of the controversy more judiciously and profitably. I now regret that the debate on both sides assumed, at so early a period, so hostile a character, and that I contributed my full quota to such a result."

He further remarks, that he thought antislavery societies and conventions in the Church were now of no use; that there was not now life enough among Methodist abolitionists to keep Church antislavery societies alive; that it was better to confine ourselves to official action on slavery, in the annual and quarterly conferences. In regard to Church government, he wanted *improvement* rather than revolution; that he had no hope that any improvement would take place, and there is no alternative but to submit to things pretty much as they are, or secede. "I have never yet felt pre-

pared for the *latter*; how I may feel hereafter I can not tell; but my opinion is, that those who can not *conscientiously* submit to Methodist economy and usages, had better peaceably leave." He concludes by saying, "Having, in what I have said on slavery and Church polity, frequently been severe and personal, I have, within a few months, made public and private apologies, and explanations to individuals."\*

The editor of the Herald, in a preface to Mr. Scott's piece, feared or thought that the article would be viewed as a plea for radicalism; but he inserted it through courtesy, though he would not be disposed to repeat the courtesy. Mr. Scott, on June 20th,† explained that he did not intend to inculcate radicalism. H. B. Husted congratulated brother Scott; on his abandoning antislavery societies in the Church, and the prospect of peace and unity. He then went on to state, that the strife at the north was, to a great extent, a strife of words, and that much harm was done by the abolition controversy in the north.

4. In the fall of this year there were manifest indications of secession. The Reformed Methodist paper, in October, announces that a new radical movement was being secretly projected in New England. Mr. Stevens thinks this can not be so, writing under date of October 26th.‡ Mr. Bridge, on November 2d, disclaimed any knowledge of radical movements. § Mr. Stevens, under the same date, affirms, that there was now no doubt of the matter. He had received positive assurances from brethren who had been invited by letters, asking cooperation in the new measure. The Methodist Reformer, at this time, writes as follows: "We have the pleasure of announcing to our readers, that '*radico-abolition*' is *not dead* in New England. The requiem which Dr. Bond & Co. have been singing over it was premature, and got up to the tune that they love to sing so well. Their *wish* was the father of that thought. Mark what we say: there will be agitation in that quarter ere long."¶ The Watchman sounded a similar note of warning.¶

5. The time at length arrived when Messrs. Scott, Sunderland, and others, must sever themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church. All the previous steps for secession had been taken. Now the final one must follow. Accordingly, on the 8th of November, 1842, Rev. Jotham Horton, Orange Scott, and Leroy Sunderland withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church. In November the first number of the True Wesleyan was issued, edited by Messrs. Horton and Scott. On the first page was contained their "Withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church." It is a document which apex the Declaration of Independence, as well as Mr. Bascom's famous "Declaration of rights." The reasons for withdrawing are: "1. The Methodist Episcopal Church is not only a slaveholding, but a slavery-defending Church. 2. The government of the Methodist Episcopal Church contains principles not laid down in the Scriptures, nor recognized in the usages of the primitive Church—principles which are subversive of the rights, both of ministers and laymen." The document

\* S., of April 1, 1842.

† C., April 13, 1842.

‡ Z., Vol. XIV, p. 6, col. 6.

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 96, col. 1.

† Id., p. 102.

‡ Id., p. 104, col. 2.

§ Id., p. 170.

¶ C., Vol. XVII, p. 50. Z., Vol. XIV, p. 174.

¶ Id., p. 174.

is poorly composed as to its style and logic, while it contains a bundle of heterogeneous materials, partly made up of unfounded accusations against the Methodist Episcopal Church, partly of bold and untried principles of Church government, assumed with some strong marks that would nearly come up to infallibility; and all along mingled with a sufficiency of self-complacency, if not pride. We will place this curious paper in our list of documents, to be preserved, whether for its wisdom, importance, or folly. This is one of those foolish papers that posterity may learn a lesson from, on the principle of avoiding what is unsound, or unwise, or injurious.\*

The editor of Zion's Herald made only slight allusion to the secession, and considered it of no great importance as far as the interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church were concerned.† Dr. Bond noticed the event too as a passing bubble that would soon explode and disappear.‡ The mistaken men suffered great loss, but the Church, as a body, remained uninjured.

6. The sentiments on slavery in the south seem to become more and more lax every succeeding year. The proofs of this will be seen from the erroneous opinions we have had occasion already to quote and refer to. We will now add from a correspondent of the Southern Advocate, calling himself Justice, who in two numbers discusses the subject. In his first number he lays down the position that slavery is not an institution of the Church, but of the state, and the Church has no right to interfere with it. In his second number he endeavors to show, that all the Church has done respecting slavery has done harm, except to devise and use plans and means to instruct and benefit religiously the slaves. He then considers the history of this matter down to the time he writes. He next affirms that "the everlasting agitation and the increasing excitement on this very subject, by ecclesiastical bodies at a distance, calls for a protest on our part. As ministers of Jesus Christ our business is with men's souls. For their civil condition we are not responsible; let the statesman and politician look to this." He then concludes, "May I not ask every Methodist who loves our Lord Jesus Christ, and the souls he has bought with his blood, to aid in having this whole class of difficulties removed, by expunging from the Discipline the obnoxious articles on this subject, except that article in the General Rules which concerns only the slave-trade, about which all are agreed?"¶ The foregoing is a mere specimen of the sentiment now becoming current in the far south at this time. It will be seen that it is at direct variance, and even opposition to the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery; and it is the opposite extreme of the ultra-abolition doctrine of some parts of the north.

7. The Methodists from their early origin paid especial attention to the religious culture of the colored population. But it was not till 1828 that missions solely to the slaves were established. This was done first at the suggestion and invitation of Mr. Pinckney, of South

Carolina, an Episcopalian. Bishop Soule, in an address to the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, dated January 24, 1842,\* pleads for the slave and colored men thus: "They are our kindred—children of the same common father—creatures of the same Creator—fellow-heirs of immortality—bought with the same price. To them, equally with ourselves, is the Gospel the power of God to salvation. And these are literally poor. And we be to the Churches of these United States, if the African population, especially such as are in a state of slavery, have not the Gospel preached to them! And we be to the masters who deprive their servants of this bread and water of life!" He then states that many of them have been savingly converted to God; and although the Church can not remove their civil disabilities, she can be the instrument of their salvation.

Bishop Andrew, under date of December, 1842, writes thus concerning the south-west: "There is another very favorable sign in Louisiana. Many of the planters are turning their attention to the religious instruction of the slaves. This is particularly the case in the neighborhood of Alexandria on Red river. It is believed that an effectual door is opened in that country, and we have accepted the invitation tendered to us, and sent the Rev. Wm. F. Brown to labor among them. Nor is this spirit of awakened attention to the spiritual condition of the slaves confined to any one portion of the country. It is becoming common in every portion of the south-west; insomuch that we have more calls for missionaries to the plantations than we can supply."†

The missions to the colored people are located within the bounds of the Tennessee, Memphis, Mississippi, Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, South Carolina, and Virginia conferences; but the most of them are in the Georgia and South Carolina conferences. The following statistics are as complete as we have means of ascertaining:‡

Tennessee conference.....	651
Memphis ".....	798
Mississippi ".....	937
Arkansas ".....	
Alabama ".....	154
Georgia ".....	2,493
South Carolina ".....	6,110
Virginia ".....	

Up to this date, notwithstanding the constant outcry made in the south, that the abolitionists would break up all the missions among slaves, there was no obstacle of any amount thrown in the way of the missionaries. The reason was, no missionary of the Methodist Episcopal Church ever interfered with the civil relations of the slaves. Their work was to instruct them in the principles and practice of religion; and content with this, they left the rest to the providence of God.

8. The doings of the conferences will now require some notice, as these express pretty clearly the general sentiments of the preachers, and to some extent those of the members also. Little was done or said, however, this year on slavery, except in the New England conferences; and, indeed, the abolition agitation was, all along up to this date, principally confined to New England.

The Providence conference, which sat at

\* Document, No. 43. Matlack, pp. 308-317.

† Z., Vol. XIII, pp. 190, 200.

‡ C., Vol. XVII, pp. 62, 66, 70, 73. Scraphs, Vol. VIII, pp. 250, 251, 255, 256.

§ S., Nov. 25, 1842. Scraphs, Vol. I, pp. 58-60.

\* W., Vol. VIII, p. 166.

† W., Vol. IX, p. 169.

‡ Id., p. 39, col. 2. See Minutes.

Warren, Rhode Island, in June, adopted the report of a committee June 13th. The following points were presented to the conference by petition from abolitionists, asking the conference to instruct their delegates to endeavor to have the General conference to act on them:

"(1.) To oppose the election of any slaveholder to the office of bishop.

"(2.) That the rule of Discipline on colored testimony be rescinded.

"(3.) To alter the Discipline so that no person can hold, buy, or sell a slave and remain in the Church.

"(4.) To purify the Church from the pollutions of slavery."

The committee agree to the first.

To the second they say that there is no rule in the Discipline on colored testimony. There was a *resolution* passed by the General conference of 1840, expressing an *opinion*, but never put in the Discipline; it has not the form of law, and is not, therefore, binding upon any; and it may, therefore, be followed or rejected as the administrators of Discipline may see fit.

They concurred in rescuing the Church from the "pollutions of slavery."

But to alter the Discipline was thought to be impracticable, though the theory was correct.

Accordingly, the conference passed four resolutions, declaring that they were for the destruction of slavery, were against the resolution on colored testimony, were against the election of a slaveholding bishop, and they "most earnestly long for the approach of the time when the Church shall come up from the pollutions of slavery."

That the "Church was polluted with slavery," was an admitted point on all hands.\*

We have, in connection with the New England conference, four documents; namely, an account of their Conference Antislavery Society, an Address from it to the Church members in the conference, and two reports of two committees.

At the annual meeting of their Antislavery Society, Dr. Bond was present. The speakers were Messrs. Moulton, Merrill, Tracy, Porter, Stevens, and Dr. Bond. "The speakers generally held that it was wrong and sinful to hold an innocent brother in bondage under any circumstances. Dr. Bond, however, thought differently." The brethren were amazed to find Dr. Bond there, and the reporter strangely thought that his few days' residence in New England's pure abolitionism had nearly converted him to their doctrines.†

A Special Committee, of Messrs. Porter, King, and Sargeant, were appointed to consider and report on the petition of the Newmarket antislavery convention, asking "concurrence and cooperation in the circulation of a memorial to the General conference, praying that body to divide the Church by a line running between the slave and free states." The Committee report that this means of ridding the Church of slavery was inexpedient and impracticable. To divide the Church is one thing; to rid her of slavery is another. The former would neither relieve our responsibility, nor lessen the wrongs of which we complain; yet, however desirable such a division might be in itself, it is impracticable. The General conference are not competent to the task. They have no power vested in them for such purposes. They have authority to build up, but

not to tear down; to unite, but not to divide; to extend and strengthen, but not to dissolve." The conference did not concur at all with the memorialists.\*

The Committee on Slavery, Messrs. Porter, Wise, Shepard, Beebe, and A. D. Merrill, barely report against slavery, against the colored testimony resolution, against the election of slaveholding bishops, and express their strong and undiminished attachment to the doctrines and government of the Methodist Episcopal Church.†

The same Committee, by the authority of conference, prepared an "Address on Slavery to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the bounds of the New England annual conference."

In giving the past history of the antislavery cause, they call slavery the "foul whelp of depravity;" that, for several years previous to 1830, its moral character was little known. In 1830 a voice broke out from Boston. After this Thompson, Phelps, Stanton, Weld, Birney, and others, engaged in the cause. But they omitted to mention the great leader, Garrison, and his second, Mr. Scott. This was unfair. Then annual conferences, quarterly conferences testified against the southern oppressor. Mr. Birney, in 1838,‡ said: "None of the large religious denominations bid fairer soon to be on the side of emancipation than the Methodists." Yet truth compels us to state that our progress was almost wholly retarded, for a time, by the folly of a Garrison, a Johnson, a Quincy, and others. In our Church the question of "conference rights," of "episcopal prerogatives," and the "rights of the laity," were dragged forward, and made the most prominent points. The transition to radicalism was easy under a heated imagination. This led many in our Church to draw back.

In discussing the "development of the radical principle," they say that "SECESSION FROM THE CHURCH WAS NOT AN ANTISLAVERY MEASURE." They then give a labored argument to sustain this position. In answering the objection, "that persons can not remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church without partaking of the sin of slavery, because the Church is a unit," they affirm that the Church is not a unit in such a sense as necessarily involves mutual fellowship on the part of its members. Fellowship signifies that one individual has sufficient evidence in his own mind of another's piety to accord him the claim he makes of being a Christian. Mutual fellowship is mutual confidence in each other's sincerity; it is *personal*, and can only exist, in its strictest sense, between those who know each other; for how can a person fellowship or disfellowship those of whom he has no knowledge? In a wide sense we fellowship the whole Church as a Church of Christ; but we do this on two grounds: *First*. Our actual fellowship is with those we are acquainted with. *Secondly*. We know the whole Church only as it is described in the Discipline. If any members live in the disregard of the rules of the general Church, our obligation to have fellowship with them ceases. This is precisely the view to be taken of Methodist abolitionists and Methodist slaveholders. The latter do not keep the rules. As

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 103. † Id., p. 120, col. 3.

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 120, col. 3. † Id., p. 126, col. 2.  
‡ Correspondence with Ellmore, p. 8.



slaveholders they violate the rule that gives evidence of a desire for salvation: "1. By doing no harm, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is not generally practiced." Every slaveholder *does harm* to the slave in holding him as property, and this evil is most generally practiced. He also disregards the spirit of the General Rule. Every slaveholder violates the spirit of even that deficient rule. He is, therefore, an obvious violator of the bond, and furnishes no real claim to our fellowship. We *protest* against these sins, and labor for their reformation; and, therefore, do not partake in their offenses. The committee then congratulate themselves on the progress of abolition, because the Baltimore conference recently did an act such as they were in the habit of doing ever since it was a conference. They say there is "a decided advance of our cause in the recent prompt action of the Baltimore conference, in requiring the emancipation of certain slaves held by trustees for the use of the wives of some four of the members."\*

The New England conference had awakened great anxiety in the Church. For some years Mr. Scott wielded an unaccountable influence in the body. A majority had been greatly heated on abolition, and some were induced to divide their labors between pastoral duties and abolition lectures. When they proved that slavery was a moral, social, and political evil they were far from proving that all slaveholders were sinners. Slavery may be a great moral evil, and yet a slaveholder may not be a sinner; for his being a slaveholder may not be an act of choice. His slaves may have descended to him by inheritance; and if ever a man be a slaveholder by his own act he may have purchased slaves through motives and principles of humanity, and saved them from afflictions and bereavements which greatly add to the bitterness of slavery. But the hearers of these lectures could not be expected to attend to these distinctions. Slavery was justly enough pronounced to be sinful as to its moral character; and, as there were slaveholders in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Church was represented as tolerating sin. The seceders hoped, therefore, that whole and numerous Churches would withdraw, and a new connection would be formed that would soon absorb the four New England conferences; but the attachment to Methodism was more general and firm than many of them supposed. The Churches of Boston set a noble example of firmness, and the other Churches in New England followed their course.†

In the west abolitionism made very little progress, although the antislavery sentiments and feelings were equally strong to what they were in New England. The Rock River conference adopted a report on the subject in reply to petitions. The report acknowledges the doctrine of the Church as antislavery, and thinks it to be the duty of the south to emancipate as soon as it can be done.‡ The other western conferences were, as they always had been, antislavery; but very few of them would be abolitionists in the modern or recent meaning of the term. We place the report of the Rock River conference among our documents as well worthy of preservation in this history.¶

9. The best pens in New England were now employed to prevent secessions from the Church; and it may be a matter both of curiosity and interest to see how they performed their parts. Rev. Charles Adams wrote an address to abolitionists in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which he maintains that the Discipline is against slavery.\* Mr. Moulton writes a very touching letter against withdrawing from the Church.† Mr. Sargeant wrote on the same topic.‡ Mr. Norris and Mr. Bullard called in question some of Mr. Adams's positions, and canvassed them pretty thoroughly.¶ Mr. Adams explained elaborately and in full.§ Indeed there were so many abstractions and distinctions employed in the discussions of the times that it was difficult to ascertain the proper metes of the controversy, and the constant explanations made the subject still more intricate. But we have already given enough by way of specimen of these attempted distinctions. The best view we can furnish by way of specimen, is to refer to the dialectical doctors of the middle ages, who were continually contending about their own distinctions, while truth was no gainer by their course.

10. The *meaning of the Discipline* was now canvassed; and by the friends of the Church it was maintained to be antislavery. It is true they thought it had its faults; but then, as the seceders now argued that it was a mere proslavery compact, the true-hearted Methodist abolitionists urged its antislavery character with great earnestness.¶

11. The Scottites, as they were called by their opponents, or Wesleyans, as they called themselves, did their utmost to promote their cause. They published in their paper every case of withdrawal or seduction from the Methodist Episcopal Church. One of their favorite headings was, "The Glorious Work of Secession goes on."\*\* In the west the progress of secession was very limited indeed.†† They were called by many *Scottites*, and with great justice, as Mr. Scott was their principal leader.‡‡ The name Wesleyan was deemed very inappropriate indeed, though they assumed it as their distinctive title.¶¶ Their progress, both east and west, was very inconsiderable indeed.§§ On the whole, the scheme was a failure—not splendid, but very indifferent.¶¶

12. A certain class of abolitionists had charged the American Churches with being the principal supporters of slavery. The first leaders could not get the Churches to go with them in their measures. Whether from logic or from feeling, they began to censure the Churches pretty severely. We have seen how unfairly Mr. Birney had misrepresented them in England, in his pamphlet called the *American Churches the Bulwark of Slavery*. This spread the misrepresentation throughout England. At the great antislavery convention, held in London, 1843, the American Churches were assailed afresh. Mr. Arnold Buffum, an ex-Quaker from Indiana, said, "That to destroy the great bulwarks of slavery in

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 133. † Id., p. 140. ‡ Id., p. 143.

¶ Id., pp. 156, 160. § Id., pp. 195, 196.

¶ Id., pp. 101, 120, 142, 154, 188. \*\* Id., p. 72.

†† Id., pp. 122, 124, 130.

‡‡ C., Vol. XVIII, p. 2, col. 3. Z., Vol. XIV, p. 4.

¶¶ W., Vol. X, p. 74. § Z., Vol. XIV, pp. 86, 156.

§§ C., Vol. XVII, p. 166. W., Vol. X, pp. 25, 102. C., Vol. XVIII, pp. 42, 54.

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 132, col. 1.

† C., Vol. XVII, p. 190, col. 3. ‡ C., XVIII, p. 39, col. 2.

¶ Document, No. 44. C., Vol. XVIII, p. 89.

America the Churches must be beaten down." Captain Charles Stewart "admitted that the American Churches were the great bulwarks of slavery; the bulk of the ministers were slaveholders." Rev. John Angel James said, "Hitherto the American Church had been the bulwark of slavery; without its cooperation it could not have existed." Messrs. Fuller, Blanchard, and Leavit did their full share in this matter.\* In the United States the Garrisonians belabored the Churches with right good will, calling them all the ill-names they could devise or catch up from the language of defamation.†

13. The Scottite Discipline, or the avowed principles of the seceders, was reviewed very siftingly soon after its publication. Rev. John Copeland reviewed it in the Northern Advocate, and exposed it with great force;‡ Dr. Bond took up their Discipline and reviewed it in the Christian Advocate and Journal with great ability,|| in three numbers of his paper, referred to in the margin. Much of their Discipline was identical with that of Methodist Protestants; but some parts of it were entirely of a piece with the peculiar, or rather singular and fanciful views of its authors. It is scarcely worth our while, at this time, to occupy our space in any further notice of it in this place.

14. In nothing was the antislavery character of Methodism more marked than in never having elected a slaveholding bishop. There never was any rule made in reference to this subject. Rules were made to meet the cases of lay members, official members, and traveling preachers; but none was ever made in reference to a bishop. This is easily accounted for. The principles and practice of the Church were antislavery; hence, up to 1836, it was a conceded point that the election of a slaveholder would be a nonstrosity in American Methodism.

We heard Rev. Laban Clarke, who was a member of the General conference of 1808, state, that it was noised at its session that a member of the conference was a slaveholder; whereupon an old member arose, and moved that, if this be so, he be expelled from the body. In 1832 a few from the south gave intimation that equal rights would require that a slaveholder be elected bishop; but this obtained no great currency, as no one dreamed that a slaveholder could be elected. In 1836, as we have seen, the southern members were indignant because no slaveholder was elected. They had a meeting in reference to it, and the question of secession, in consequence, was discussed, deprecated by some, advocated by others, resisted by some, but left undetermined, or rather, perhaps, rejected. Mr. Smith, immediately after the close of the conference, issued his famous circular in favor of secession unless slaveholding bishops would be elected.

These ultra views, or at least new views, in connection with rampant abolition in the north, gave rise to petitions and remonstrances in the north against the measure. Indeed, the petitions to the New England conference, and their petitions to General conference, went all against the innovation. This gave occasion to the dis-

cussion of the subject, in the southern papers, in the fall of 1843. It was argued that one of three things must be done by the south: 1. They must either have a slaveholding bishop; 2. Or suffer themselves to be degraded; or, 3. They must withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

As to the first, they concluded that, owing to the number and sentiments of the middle and northern members of General conference, they could not have a slaveholding bishop.

In discussing the next question, they argued that to deny them this right, as they called it, was to degrade them, and that they could never consent to be degraded.

The conclusion to which the correspondents and editors of the south came to was, that they must, therefore, withdraw or secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and organize a new Church in the south, and that this would be their imperious duty.

The editor of the Richmond Advocate, alluding to this subject, and the petitions in the north against the election of a slaveholding bishop, and against the resolution on colored testimony, remarks: "The next General conference will have to settle principles involving the most delicate relations, and the most important consequences. For nearly two years our northern brethren have been preparing measures for the action of the General conference of 1844, fraught with mischief and degradation to the whole southern portion of the Church—measures that, if carried out, will nullify our Church organization, and divest southern Methodism of every right or power guaranteed by our ecclesiastical constitution. If it leaves them a peg whereon to hang their self-respect, it will be found on the outer walls of the building." . . . "That the tact, ingenuity, and perseverance of deep schemy-headed northern men will be all employed to carry these points. The strong antislavery feeling of northern men is the spirit that gave birth to these measures, and will give life and energy to the efforts to procure their adoption. So intense is the feeling upon this subject that it has absorbed all other interests and responsibilities, and every one, and the whole mass, holds himself responsible for only *this one thing*. In the presence of this one thing, Church relations, Christian affections, and spiritual prerogatives are of less weight than the dust of the balance. The Church is to be clean swept of every thing allied to slavery. The golden egg of human freedom must be reached if the life of the Church be sacrificed to obtain it. Consequences are not to be taken into the consideration; they belong to God. Such are the feelings, views of duty, and purposes to be encountered in the social circle, the committee-room, and on the floor of the next General conference. In the presence of such feelings as have originated, and will sustain these opinions, reason will prove uncurrent coin, and argument will be thrown away.\*

Mr. Lee, in the above quotation, attributes to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the north what properly belongs only to ultra-abolitionists, or those of the Garrisonian school. This is unfair. But he furnishes a specimen of these ultra and unmethodistic sentiments, which before this time had few supporters in the south, though their advocates seem to be

\* Proceedings of the antislavery convention and debates, London, 1843; and W., Vol. X, p. 75.

† Z., Vol. XIV, pp. 50, 158, 188.

‡ Z., Vol. XIV, p. 124. C., Vol. XVII, p. 201. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 283.

§ C., Vol. XVIII, pp. 6, 10, 34.

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 176, col. 3; p. 180, col. 4.

increasing ever since Dr. Smith proclaimed for secession, by his famous circular, in July, 1836.

Dr. Capers, under date of September 30, publishes an article in the Southern Advocate of October 13th.\* In referring to the controversy then going on in the Southern Advocate, he thinks that the points on which the greatest interest is felt are, 1. Whether we shall have one or more bishops added to the present number? and, 2. If one or more, shall that one or more be chosen from the southern or south-western conferences? On the first point he thinks that one or two, at most, would be sufficient. On the other point he says: "With respect to the second point, shall we have a bishop or bishops chosen from the southern or south-western conferences? I am fully persuaded that as the Episcopacy is, it is of great importance to have their family residences distant from each other, and one or more, beside Bishop Andrew, in the south and south-west. The object is not to get ready for diocesan episcopacy—which may God avert!—but to equalize among the conferences what chances there are for episcopal service more than presiding in the conferences and stationing the preachers. But I can not see that it is necessary for this that we should elect a bishop with reference to his former residence. On the contrary, it appears to be extremely undesirable, and even inconsistent with duty to Christ—against whom we can pretend to no 'rights' in heaven or earth—for us to govern ourselves in such a matter by such considerations. North or south ought not to be the question, but, Who is the worthiest man? The question of residence ought to follow, and be determined by, the fact of election, and ought not to precede or determine it. If we are to elect a bishop, let it be understood that his family must reside in one of the southern or south-western conferences. I would even say, let it be so ordered by the General conference, and then let us elect, out of the whole Church, the most worthy minister. If he will not remove his family, when it is required of his election, we have mistaken the man, and will elect another. As to any sectional interest to be served by the election, if at the south, I am bold to say there are ministers at the north who would prove a noble acquisition in any office. But I must confess I should doubt the heart of the southern man who would be willing to go to the north in the office of a bishop, he owning slaves."†

Dr. Capers thought that the residence of a bishop might be determined by the General conference; and if the bishop refused to remove his family he is unfit for bishop. He also "doubts the heart of the southern man who would be willing to go to the north in the office of a bishop, he owning slaves." These sentiments were the old original views of Methodist preachers, as well in the south as in the north. Mr. Smith seems to have been either the originator or principal promoter of the recent doctrine that a bishop might, or ought to be, a slaveholder.

The Rev. B. M. Drake, of the Mississippi conference, a man of noble soul and pure mind, in the Nashville Advocate of December

1st, discusses the subject. Referring to the controversy, he considers the two points, the resolution on slavery, and the election of bishops, as the only topics which would produce difficulty at the next General conference. In regard to the first, he thinks there is very little difficulty, as, in truth, there is little difference of opinion on the subject in the Church. The Church got along very well for more than half a century without any rule, leaving it to the sound discretion of the administrator of Discipline to act according to the circumstances of the case. Those who introduced the motion in 1840 seemed to have little intention in producing the results that followed, and most felt the awkwardness of the position of the General conference on the occasion. Had the wise opinion of Bishop Roberts been adhered to all would have been well.

In regard to the election of a slaveholder for bishop, Mr. Drake thinks that, as the General conference has made no distinction by law, none ought to be made by the elective franchise; yet elections must be free. "Dr. Capers's views on this subject, in a late article in the Southern Christian Advocate, are, most certainly, correct. Select the man for his qualifications alone. His residence is a very minor consideration, and may be easily changed, and should be changed if the interest of the work requires it." As to the plan of electing a southern man, unconnected with slavery, Mr. Drake objects to it, and says: "It is a proposition coming from our friends, not the abolitionists, that we should acquiesce in an arrangement which would distinctly recognize a difference between a slaveholder and one who did not hold slaves in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Whatever others may do, God forbid that we should ever consent to put a mark on ourselves! We do not feel that we can act otherwise than we do in the circumstances in which we find ourselves, in the providence of God, and we can not consent that our brethren should disfranchise us when we are not convinced of sin." Mr. Drake concludes his article thus: "As to secession or division, they are words which I have never permitted to come into my vocabulary. I almost feel like I were committing treason to write them here in my study. No calamity could so afflict me as to be separated from the great body of our common Methodism. Life itself is not half so dear as is this union. If our brethren cut us off we must submit to it as the last of evils; but the sin shall be on their heads, not ours."\*

Though the Church acknowledges the innocence of slaveholders, under certain circumstances, it has always been the opinion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of all good men, that the system is evil, morally evil, or that slavery *per se*, is morally evil, and that, therefore, the system should be opposed. Hence the frequent declarations of the Church have discouraged and condemned it; and all our statutes now are *restrictive*, and not sanctioning it. Our Church has always avoided any sanction of slavery, whether direct or indirect. A bishop is not appointed to meet a sectional demand; he is appointed to meet the universal demand. If he can not maintain in his office the union and harmony of the Church, he does not answer for a general superintendent. The office is not for the benefit of individuals or of a section of country, but for the good of

\* Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 408, 409.

† C., October 9, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, 408, 409.

\* Scraps, Vol. I, p. 60.

the whole. And as change of residence may be made, though not without difficulty, this is not too much to be done or borne for the benefit of the Church. Mr. Capers and Mr. Drake allow, nay, contend, that a bishop ought to remove his residence for the sake of the Church; that the General conference may require this from him; and if he refuses, they conclude, and all unprejudiced men conclude, that the General conference have mistaken their man, or that such a one is not fit to be bishop.\*

15. Petitions on slavery occupied the attention of the New England conferences, and an organized plan was adopted to have them circulated among the people, and then presented to General conference. The petitions asked for three principal things; namely, to annul the resolution on colored testimony, not to elect a slaveholding bishop, and to rid the Church of the sin of slaveholding. The Hallowel convention authorized Rev. Mr. Hill to prepare a petition on each of these topics. On separating the Church from the sin of slavery, the petition is "to take such measures as shall effectually separate the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which we are members, from all connection with the sin of slaveholding.†"

A lay Methodist criticises severely the petition in question. He says it is *indefinite*, as it proposes no specific remedy, and yet asks the General conference to carry out this request at all hazards. It is also *ambiguous*. The demand is that the Church shall be effectually separated from the *sin* of slaveholding, not the *relation* of slaveholding *per se*; and thus leaving it after all with the subordinate authorities to determine when and under what circumstances that relation becomes sinful. Yet the intention of the petition does not seem to give room for this construction. For the Hallowel convention, by whose authority the petition was drawn up, declared that the *relation* of slaveholding is, under all circumstances, a heinous sin against God. The request of the petition then was, that the General conference should adopt a rule of discipline and then enforce it, requiring the expulsion of every member who is in the legal relation of slaveholder, whatever the circumstances may be. But the General conference ought not to enact such a law, and they could not enforce it if enacted. Thus, and conclusively argued the lay Methodist.

The truth is, no Church, in a slaveholding state, can rid itself of slaveholding members. If the work were done to-day, by to-morrow's sun some one or more would be slaveholders by the slave laws of inheritance. The thing never was done, and never can be done.‡ The petitions asked an impossibility, and of course the General conference could not undertake to accomplish impossibilities. It is true the Discipline speaks of the *extirpation of slavery*; but it does not say that the Church can, or will, or must extirpate it. It only declares what the Church *can, may, or ought* to do, and prescribes the means to be employed; namely, that the Church is as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; and then prescribes what the Church can do, well knowing that the slave laws can not be annulled by the Church.

16. The division of the Church was certainly desired by some abolitionists of the north, unless all slaveholders could be separated from

it; and as they thought this could not be done, they wished to draw a line dividing the Church, so as to place the free states in one Church, and the slaveholding states in another. We have seen already that the New England conference was petitioned to this effect, but that body rejected at once the proposition and reprobated it sternly.\* Rev. A. Kent opposed the division of the Church, and maintained that the General conference could not do it, without the three-fourth vote of the annual conferences, and that such is the import of the restrictive rule securing an *itinerant general superintendency*.† Yet it should be observed, that there was at this time a very strong purpose, both in the north and south, not just to divide the Church, but unless the peculiar views of each were met the Church would be disrupted. This is sufficiently manifest from the quotations already made, and will be more manifest in the course of this narrative. In short, the alarms uttered by Dr. Fisk, on this subject, were logical conclusions rather than prophetic warnings.

17. At this time there seems to have been in New England no small amount of fanaticism, that may ally this period to the time in which the witches and wizards of Salem were executed. Rev. Abel Stevens, a keen and accurate observer, in his editorial of March 29, 1843, remarks:

"Never was there perhaps, on any equal portion of the globe, more religious distraction and novelties than at present infects New England, and a fearful result is now arresting the attention of observing men; namely, that in this most free, most enlightened, most moral, and—in pecuniary respects—most competent portion of the earth, is found a larger ratio of insanity than is to be found any where else on the globe, and that among the states of New England, Massachusetts, the best off of them all, presents a larger ratio than any of the others. Any species of humbug, whether it relates to science, religion, or business, can command its champions. In such a state of the public mind nothing is secure; no one can predict how far the agitations in our own Church may extend."‡

An abolitionist, in Zion's Herald, of March 22, 1843, describes the misfortunes of abolition, which we abridge. The antislavery cause started with flattering prospects, and advanced rapidly; but its own imprudent friends identified it with foreign and distracting questions, such as woman's rights, anti-clergy, and anti-Sabbath novelties. This gave rise to the separation and new organizations in the general societies. This did not affect seriously Methodist abolitionists. They were, however, disturbed by conference rights, severe personalities, and the new missionary movement. Those who would not submit to the leaders in these movements were denounced. But the climax was not yet attained. Many of the anti-clergy, anti-Sabbath members of the two organizations, congratulated themselves that they had made the discovery, and having taken the name of Comeouters, have united in a solemn pledge, "never again to countenance any man as a Christian minister, or hold connection with any organization as a Christian Church, except such as are practically pledged to labor with them for the immediate and entire extinction

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 170, col. 3.  
† Id., pp. 123, 200.

† Id., p. 64.

\* Z., Vol. XIV, pp. 120, 126.  
† Id., p. 50.

† Id., p. 84, col. 4.

of slavery from our country and the world." Some of them petitioned the Legislature of Massachusetts to do away capital punishment, or to transfer the office of *hangman* from the sheriff to the *clergy*. Such is the picture of things drawn by an abolitionist.\* Indeed, infidelity seems to have been dictating to the good Christians in this matter, and a wonderful degree of docility was manifested by the scholars.†

The abolition friend, before mentioned, mistook the premises. The abolitionists did not start well, as he asserts. Thompson and Garrison were their first leaders, and from these the American abolitionists received their leading characteristics; and they only carried out first principles in the various matters mentioned above. This, I think, we have sufficiently shown in these pages, and we need not therefore enlarge.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

### EVENTS OF 1843.

1. THE year 1843 opened with the renewal of the conventions. One was called for the New England conference, to meet in Boston, January 18th; another for Maine conference, to meet at Hallowell, February 22d; and one for New Hampshire conference, to meet at Claremont, March 28th. Mr. Scott, just before his secession, as we have seen, came to the conclusion that antislavery societies and conventions in the Church are now of no use. But the abolitionists who were not prepared to go the whole length with Mr. Scott, thought that conventions were the very thing by which to prevent secession after Mr. Scott's departure.

Accordingly, Mr. Porter, and twenty-one other preachers, called the Boston convention. In their call,‡ to the preachers and members, they invite those to be members "who believe that all slaveholding is sin," and "who are determined to use every means consistent with our ecclesiastical institutions to remove it from the Church." They state that delay would injure the interests of the slave; their reputation as Methodist abolitionists, and the harmony and prosperity of the Church were periled; that this measure was important to the cause of unadulterated abolitionism. They lament that their operations have been retarded, their ranks broken and deranged, their prospects to some extent darkened; brethren who once stood in the front ranks have retired in despair, and have abandoned the enterprise as impracticable, and have left the Church. Mr. Stevens, editor of the *Herald*, though disapproving of conventions, went in for them for the present, and, editorially,|| exhorts them to come to the convention praying, to exercise brotherly-kindness, avoid violent language, and to beware of making speeches. These advices were very needful indeed, for the consideration of those who conducted the conventions in former times.

The convention, by a committee, published a long address, of eight columns of *Zion's Herald*,§ in three numbers of the paper. The address discussed the nature of slavery; that it was not sustained by Scripture. The address was made up of such matter as had appeared a hundred times in the columns of the *Herald*, with some trivial adjustments to suit the present. The convention passed eighteen resolutions. We refer to our documents those of them which are of

any general use, omitting a few that were merely local.\* After reading the address, the proceedings of the convention, and the call, we were confused in our ideas, not knowing exactly how to reconcile the parts, as composing one complete whole. They constitute a bundle of abstractions, which might be all admitted, without touching the practical question belonging to the subject of slavery, as far as the Methodist Episcopal Church, as such, is concerned. The convention declared that slavery and slaveholding is a sin under all circumstances, though this is expressed confusedly. It would seem that those who called the convention, did it with the design to prevent the mischief which Scott, Sunderland, and others would do, by seducing members from the Methodist Episcopal Church, representing their connection with the Church as sinful, because they were countenancing slavery. It seems, also, to have been designed to show, that none need go over to the Scottites, as they could be very good abolitionists and remain in the Church.†

There is a singular inconsistency in the resolutions. The third resolution affirms the *unity* of Methodism, while the seventh denounces it by saying, that they, though members of the Church, "neither countenance nor fellowship the slaveholder."

Indeed, the principles and measures indorsed by the convention, even in those respects in which they are not palpably contradictory, would lead, if carried out, either to schism or secession. And this was a pretty strong element in the convention. As an example of the sentiment of some, we give an extract from the pen of the Rev. G. May, dated January 27th, commenting on the doings of the convention: "Either the Church will be divided between the north and the south, or redeemed from the reproach of having within her pale ministers and members standing to each other in the relation of master and slave. If we *can not* have the latter, the *sooner* we have the former the better."‡

2. The meeting at Hallowell, Maine, was held agreeably to notice, on the 22d of February. It passed resolutions and sent out an address similar to the Boston meeting. After these doings were published,|| Rev. M. Hill, after praising in restrained general terms the proceedings of the convention, complains that the public who witnessed the doings must conclude, that the acts of

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 48.

† Id., p. 7, col. 2.

‡ Id., pp. 20, 24, 23.

§ Id., pp. 158, 164.

|| Id., p. 6, col. 5.

\* Document, No. 45. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 42; and Z., Vol. XIV, p. 14.

† C., March 15, 1843.

‡ Z., Vol. XIV, p. 22, col. 1.

|| Id., pp. 23, 26, 44.

the convention were in favor of secession, or would have a tendency that way.\* A lay member of the Church, on April 18th, argued that such was the impression made.† He maintained that the lay members of Maine were opposed both to secession and the general character of the conventional doings; and that, as the whole thing was managed, nothing could be better contrived to serve as a trap to entangle the unsuspecting members in the meshes of the secessionists.

For the benefit of the New Hampshire conference, a convention was called to meet at Claremont, March 23d. This seems to have attracted no attention, and was either not held, or had a very thin attendance.‡ A convention was called to meet at New Market, March 8th, whose principal object was to prepare a petition for the General conference.¶

3. When Scott and others seceded from the Church, their leading reason for secession was, that by being members they countenanced, and had fellowship with slavery, and, therefore, participated in its crime and guilt; and they must now leave the Church in order to secure their salvation. Till the secession of Mr. Scott, the Methodist abolitionists in general, in New England, were one with him in all material respects. A marked division was now to take place, at least in the application of the principles. Mr. Scott was for carrying them out. Those who were not radical, and these were the great body of preachers and people in New England, shrunk with horror from the destructive work of dividing the body of Christ.

Mr. Porter became prominent in opposing secession, and under the general heading of Methodist abolitionism, he wrote a number of articles on the sentiment, *It is a sin to remain in the Church*. He argued that it was not, as the argument proves too much; for on the same principle, we must leave the nation to get free from the guilt of slavery. Fellowship with the Church does not imply that we have fellowship with each individual of the million composing the Church. If one sin is a reason why we would withdraw fellowship, so does the existence of any sin. Such a principle reduced to practice would dissolve any Church that ever existed.§ He next maintains that the texts of Scripture quoted for withdrawal, do not prove the point. He then considers several texts: Matthew xviii, 17; 1 Cor. v, 2; 2 Cor. vi, 17; Eph. v, 11; 2 Thess. iii, 6; and thinks them irrelevant to the case in hand, as they refer to the duty of the Church to exercise discipline over Church members. He next argues that the results of secession will be disastrous, and shows this with great clearness; that the Church is not incorrigible; and that her character was such as not to be innocently abandoned.¶

Rev. Mr. Hatch opposed strenuously the views of Mr. Porter, in a series of articles in the Herald.\*\*

The matter seems to stand thus: Mr. Scott fully carried out the current principles advocated by Garrison, Thompson, himself, and the abolitionists in general. Mr. Porter revolts from the result, and attempts to stem the current after he had aided in breaking down the rampart that had restrained it. Mr. Hatch sorely presses him. Still Mr. Porter adheres

to the Church, laboring even under the disadvantages of the common teaching of his former party; for Mr. Porter, all along, argues on the supposition that the Church in the south was deplorably corrupt in principles and practice, and never once, that we have noticed, has allowed or maintained that a man may be a slaveholder and not a sinner. Indeed, the call for the convention, and the convention itself, if not directly, they do indirectly, leave all slaveholders to the uncovenanted mercies of God.

Such questions as the following were now discussed in the Herald: "Is the membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the north responsible for the wickedness of the same Church in the south?"\* Mr. A. D. Sargent takes the negative of this question, and all along goes on the supposition of the abolition scheme, that all the Churches in the south are wicked. Of course his argument, laboring with such an incumbrance as this, is borne down by his admission, that the Church is corrupt.

4. We have, however, cause to rejoice that there were some who took up the question, *Are all slaveholders sinners?* and maintained the negative side of this question. Indeed, we may bid defiance to the world to prove that all slaveholding is sinful under all conceivable circumstances. Several abolitionists took this Scriptural ground, such as Mr. Copeland, Bryan Morse, Sargent, and others.†

We will give some of the cases presented to prove this. If holding slaves simply is sin, Mr. Birney must have been a sinner; for he sustained the legal relation of slaveholder to the slaves inherited from his father, till he emancipated them. The same was the case with those he purchased from the other heirs, till he freed them. Thus he was a *slave-owner*, a *slaveholder*, and even *bought slaves*; but who will say he was a sinner for these acts?

The son of a northern citizen, residing in South Carolina, dies, and his father in Ohio becomes the owner of the slaves. They can not be emancipated in Carolina. The father, after an expensive journey, brings them to Ohio, and there sets them free. He was to all intents and purposes a slave-owner and slaveholder; but will any say he was a sinner while he owned, held, and conveyed these slaves to Ohio?

A slaveholder at the south dies, and leaves his relative in the north ten slaves; the northern man consents to the legal relation long enough to enable him to emancipate those slaves. Is the doctrine true that says it is a crying sin to hold a slave at all under any circumstances? This man becomes a slaveholder in *fact*, in *law*, and in *form*, yet he is not a sinner, so far as this act is concerned.

At this time the Methodist abolitionists of New England were met on their own principles, by the abolition press, and compelled to endure a galling fire, which they were ill able to resist. The Liberty Standard maintained that all who held "a membership relationship with slaveholders," were guilty of a great sin. Every Methodist member and minister in New England stood in this relation to slaveholders; and the more they denounced slaveholding as an enormous sin, the more they condemned themselves, and proclaimed abroad their sin

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 60.

† Id., p. 76.

‡ Id., p. 42.

¶ Id., p. 52.

§ Id., p. 20.

¶ Id., pp. 24, 32, 40, 44, 56.

\*\* Id., pp. 32, 36, 62, 76.

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 60.

† Z., Vol. XI, pp. 32, 42, 52, 56, 64.

and shame in continuing in this relation. The only alternative that the Standard left to Methodist abolitionists, was to obey the summons of the True Wesleyan, sounding throughout the length and breadth of the land: "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partaker with her sins." *Libertas, alias Rev. M. Hill*, in answering the Standard,\* confesses that "slaveholding ought to be a disqualification for religious fellowship;" but rebuts it by saying, that standing in a Church membership relationship to slaveholders does not require that we should fellowship them, because we are doing all we can to get rid of them. At the convention in Maine, they testified against slaveholding, and have acted against it as far as they could; that they would endeavor to bring every slaveholder to repentance or have him excluded from the Church. Mr. Hill quails under the argument of the Standard, after having done his best to meet him. The concession, *every slaveholder is a sinner*, once allowed, unscriptural as it is, gives the whole up to the opponent, who triumphs over his already vanquished concession.

5. In the preceding chapter, for 1842, we noticed the secession of Mr. Scott and others, and the progress they had made to the end of the year. We will now notice their progress and movements for the first half of the current year. A multitude of writers appeared in Zion's Herald, whose object was to oppose secession; and for this purpose, in general, they commenced their articles with the heaviest denunciations against slavery and slaveholders, in the common style of former days, but with greater earnestness. We refer, for specimens, to the places cited in Zion's Herald in the margin.† The editor of Zion's Herald; represents the state of things thus: Some had sent articles to the Herald designed to attack the Church, but they could not be admitted; these were designed for the True Wesleyan, if they could not be published in the Herald. Thus men, ministering at the altars of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and under solemn vows to seek the peace of the Church, were publicly in league with a sheet, whose object was to break down those altars and rend our Churches. Yet the secessions in New England were nothing compared to former occasions. A few Churches, mostly separated from us before this movement began, by a few local preachers, and a few junior members of annual conferences, formed a considerable portion of the trumpeted seceders. The stable members of the Church prayed without ceasing for the peace of Zion. Little importance was given to the matter by editors of the Herald and the New York paper; so that, on the whole, the secessions amounted to much less the first half of this year than was expected by the friends or foes of the Church.

Nevertheless, the correspondents of the Herald, as we noticed above, more than kept up to their former positions in declaring against all slaveholding as sinful; that slavery existed in the Church, and it must soon be separated from it. As a specimen of the most sober abolitionists, stanch friends of the Church, we quote the first resolution of a Theological Association of traveling preachers in Vermont, which reads thus:

"Resolved, That we deplore, with shame and confusion, the existence of the great evil of slavery in our beloved Church, and pledge ourselves to use all means for its speedy and entire overthrow.\*"

The general impression to be made by this, and the numerous declarations of like sort that filled New England, was that the Methodist Episcopal Church was the originator of slavery, and that she now sanctioned, sustained, and adopted it by her laws and her practice. Hence every Methodist slaveholder is a sinner, and of course others will infer, that those in communion, especially Methodist communion, with such flagrant sinners, must be sinners themselves, and nothing else. Our space would not allow us to give even an outline of the communications in the Herald, and to quote from the Wesleyan, though named *True*, would neither instruct nor edify. We will satisfy ourselves by giving as brief an outline as we can, out of the general mass, by abridging two able articles by Dr. Bond, by way of general answer to the unreasonable demands of the seceders, or those who would be disposed to ask for a change of our Discipline on the subject.

6. On the 15th of March† Dr. Bond proposed to discuss the subject of altering the rule; but the general question of slavery, such as whether it be a political, social, or moral evil, would not be admitted. He believed this as firmly as any abolitionist. The controversy was to be published in Zion's Herald and the Advocate. The Herald consented, and both papers published the articles.‡ He proposed to discuss the simple question:

"Ought the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to enact a rule of Discipline, by which all slaveholders, whatever be the peculiar circumstances of the case, shall be expelled from the communion of the Church?"

Or, "If it be admitted that there are circumstances which will justify a Methodist in holding slaves, then whether it be possible to make a rule which, while it will reach all others, shall spare those exempt cases?"

He took the negative of both these questions, and stated, if he was right, it will follow, that whatever a man's opinions on the general subject of slavery may be, he is not justified in withdrawing from the Methodist Episcopal Church. In maintaining these positions he argued as follows:

The policy of the slaveholding states has led to the enactment of laws which, in some of them, totally prohibit emancipated slaves from remaining in the state in which they are set free; and in others embarrassing emancipation and continued residence with conditions which, in most cases, are impracticable, and in others attended with risks to the master which no Church could reasonably require him to incur.

What would be the effect of a rule of Discipline proposed by the ultra-abolitionists, on the Methodists who hold slaves in those states? If they obeyed the rule and executed a deed of manumission, and the slaves remained in the state beyond the time limited by law, the sheriff of the county would seize the emancipated slaves, and sell them at public auction to the highest bidder. And in most cases, the

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 64, col. 4, April 19, 1843.

† Id., pp. 36, 38, 40, 42, 49, 56, 62, 63, 68, 71, 72.

‡ Id., p. 88.

\* Z., Vol. XIV, p. 63.

† C., Vol. XVII, p. 122.

‡ Z., Vol. XIV, pp. 60, 66, 69, 104, 118. C., Vol. XVII, pp. 122, 194, 198, and Vol. XVIII, p. 26.

highest bidder would be the slave-trader, these being always ready to buy for a distant market. Thus the slaves of the Methodist owner would not be made free by the operation of the rule of Discipline, but transferred to other masters, with a great aggravation of the hardships of their condition. The persons who would buy them would be those who neither fear God nor regard man; who are utterly destitute of sympathy for a fellow-creature with a colored skin, brutalized, indurated, heartless, placed beyond the reach of commiseration for their hapless victims by the accursed traffic in which they are engaged.

It is said the Methodist master may send his slaves into a free state, and thus make them free. In some instances this would be attended with more expense than the master could bear. But, waiving this, is the slave to be forced out of the state without consulting his feelings? If not, it will often be found that his own wishes and feelings are averse to the measure. He is as ardently attached to his mate and his young as white men are. But in the slaveholding states the wives and husbands, among the slaves generally, belong to different masters. For the husband or the wife to emigrate implies, therefore, that they may separate themselves forever from those to whom they are united in affection as well as by marriage. The husband must leave his wife, or the wife her husband, and the parents must abandon their children. Many colored people prefer slavery to such bereavements.

The following case occurred at the Baltimore conference, held in Winchester, a few years ago: A local preacher had been recommended by his quarterly conference, in due form, for ordination. It was objected and admitted that he was a slaveholder. His presiding elder urged, however, that the brother had offered all his slaves their freedom, and the means of emigrating to a free state; but the offer had been refused. Some would not leave wives or husbands, others would not leave children or other connections. To discharge them from his service would be to expose them to sale by the sheriff, unless they left the state within twelve months. This he could not do for conscience' sake. The slaves were an incumbrance to him. The labor of those who were able to labor barely produced the necessaries and comforts of life for the family, black and white, including the children and those who were unable to work. He offered them all to the Baltimore conference without stipulation or reserve. This body could not, any more than their owner, either free them without emigration, or compel them to leave the state.

As the above is one of a class of similar cases, will any one say that the General conference ought to enact a rule which would excommunicate from the Church all who are under such circumstances? Such a rule would require the master to harden his heart against the common claims of humanity, in denying to the slave, providentially placed under his care, the protection which he alone can extend. Such a rule would command the commission of the greatest sin under penalty of expulsion from the Church of Christ, the Head and Lawgiver.

All must see the correctness of this, except those who are mystified by the abstraction that, as slavery is a sin, so "slaveholding is, therefore, sin under all circumstances;" and, then, as all sinners are unfit for Church mem-

bers, so all slaveholders should be expelled from the Church. They never stop to inquire whether it is not essential to an *act* of sin that the sinner should exercise volition and choice. A master may be left without any choice in the matter of owning slaves, being placed under circumstances in which he can not avoid it without doing a greater evil, and an evil for which he would be responsible because voluntary. Suppose that slavery and slaveholding be sins, who is the sinner? Certainly neither the master nor the slave, who are the victims of a law they can not control or repeal, but they who have made the law.

Secession from a Church is either a sin or a duty. It is a duty when we are required to believe what we think to be untrue, or to do what we believe to be sin, as a condition of membership; and it is a sin to do so for any lighter reason. The Methodist Episcopal Church has required neither the one nor the other condition in respect to slavery; and as the matter of slavery is the ostensible reason for withdrawing, the excuse fails them.

Such a rule of duty should be clearly enjoined by the word of God to justify the measure; but this has not been shown, because it can not be shown. Slaveholding itself is no where, in terms, forbidden in Scripture, though the practice was general in the time of our Lord and his apostles; yet there is no express prohibition to Christians to hold slaves, though there are express exhortations to slaves to obey their masters, and to make this a matter of conscience. Yet Christianity does not *sanction* slavery, either in principle or practice. Slavery can not be reconciled to the pure spirit and morality of the Gospel, as it existed in the Roman empire, or as it exists in the United States. Slavery was a political institution, and Christianity was not designed to interfere authoritatively with civil government or political relations. It is said *authoritatively*, because in its tendency and influence it was calculated and designed to make important changes in both. Christianity does not sanction war, despotism, or slavery, though they may not be condemned in terms. It is enough for the Christian that they are forbidden by the law of love. Christianity does not sanction evil of any sort. It was designed to remove the evils that afflict humanity; but not to punish the sufferers till the time of their probation shall be accomplished. Christianity provides a scheme of individual deliverance from sin and its consequences. It does not prescribe for aggregate national diseases, but for our individual diseases. Nations and communities are made up of individuals. As are the individual parts, so will be the character of the whole. When Christianity shall have enlightened and sanctified the necessary proportion of the whole nation, political reformation, good laws, and regard to justice and mercy, to individual rights and associated privileges will be the necessary consequence. In this way Christianity has already done its work.

Ought the Churches, whose duty it is to carry the Gospel to all, whether bond or free, to close the door of access by a proclamation of war against the civil authorities of sovereign states, and by an announcement that they intend to propagate doctrines hostile to, and subversive of, the political relations which these states have established? This would be equivalent to a total abandonment of all pur-



poses to carry the Gospel either to the slaves or to the masters. If the Methodist Episcopal Church is bound to cut herself off from the opportunity of preaching the Gospel to the colored people of the south, every other Church is equally bound. Who, then, must preach the Gospel to them?

But the southern people, white and colored, are perfectly safe with the ministry of the men whom the seceders denounced as wicked, because they have the good sense and firmness to resist their proposed innovations upon our economy. The southern ministers are not excelled in piety, zeal, talents, and usefulness. Men of rare talents have spent years among the slaves on the rice plantations, exposed to all the ordinary privations of missionary labor, with the additional danger to health and life of the deadly malaria from the swamps, acted on by the intense heat of a southern sun.

Beside, no other Christian Church, except some of little or no influence, has adopted such a rule of discipline as that contended for. The British Wesleyans had no such rule. They had slaveholders in their societies till the moment of universal emancipation.

The case of Philemon and Onesimus, too, Dr. Bond contended, was at variance with the proposed rule.

Thus, we have given pretty fully the outline of Dr. Bond's argument, which, we are persuaded, fully meets the objection, and shows the wisdom and Scriptural character of the Methodist Discipline, as it now is, on the subject of slavery. The truth is, Dr. Bond studied thoroughly the whole subject. This can not be said of Scott, and the other heads of his party, who set out under the tuition of the living instructions of Thompson and Garrison, and whose principal text-book was Bourne and the Liberator. Those of the abolitionists that now oppose Scott were of the same school with him, in regard to slavery, up to the time of his secession. He carried out their common principles and seceded. They maintained, and maintain up till now, the same principles; but, happily for themselves, they refuse to be governed by them.

7. The proposition of Dr. Bond met with little favor in New England. Mr. Hill, *alias* Libertas, in Zion's Herald,\* objected to the proposition, because he thought it imposes silence on his opponent relative to the moral character of slaveholding, while on this point the question turns: "that every fair case of slaveholding necessarily makes the master such a sinner against God and humanity as that he ought to be excluded from the Church, unless he performs such emancipation work as is meet for repentance." He complains, too, that Dr. Bond would have an undue advantage in having the articles published in his own paper. After some delay, Mr. Hill proposes to meet Dr. Bond, not on the Doctor's plan, but that the entire subject should be discussed in the Herald first, and copied then into the Advocate without note or comment.† While the New England controversialists were thus preparing, and seem to have singled out Mr. Hill as their champion, Mr. Boyd, under date of May 26th, attempted to meet Dr. Bond, and sent two numbers, which were published in the Christian Advocate for June 14th and July 5th.‡

and also in Zion's Herald\* of June 28th and July 26th.

Mr. Boyd was a good man, and a thorough abolitionist, of limited information, and little practice as a writer. He was a man of one idea on this subject, had imbibed all the strictest sentiments of the abolitionists, and, in common, as a Methodist abolitionist, he held all the doctrines of secession; but he was not disposed to carry them out practically in leaving the Church. He was an approved contributor to the Watchman during its entire lifetime.

Mr. Boyd commences by saying that he wanted no change in the government of the Church, except the alteration of the rule on temperance, and the entire extirpation of the great evil of slavery, in a regular constitutional way; that Methodists are not excusable in holding slaves, because they do not use their influence in having the slave laws abrogated; that the Scripture does condemn slavery; that slavery is as much a sin as drunkenness and adultery; that as Church and state are not united in the United States, no denunciation against the moral sinfulness of slavery is any just cause of offense to the civil authority; and that the apostolic example and precept was against slavery, or all slaveholding. Mr. Boyd quotes from Rev. Edward Smith largely, to show that there were no slaves in the countries to whom the apostolic epistles were written, which give instructions to master and servant. He concludes "that no man can become a slaveholder without his consent." The filling up of these outlines was made up of such common threadbare assertions and arguments as abounded in the abolition periodicals of the day.

Dr. Bond reviewed Mr. Boyd's articles in the Advocate of July 19th and 26th, under the title, THE REJOINDER.† Mr. Boyd made him say that "slaveholding was a sin under all circumstances." This he denies, and argues that when he allowed slavery to be a moral evil, he did not admit that slaveholding is a sin under all circumstances. All sin is moral evil, but all moral evil is not necessarily a sin. Sin is a transgression of a known law. A moral evil may be suffered as well as done; and if the slaveholder suffers the moral evil of slavery, and does not willingly participate in bringing about the circumstances which forbid emancipation, he is not a sinner, but a sufferer from circumstances which he could not prevent and can not control. Our people are a minority in every state, and can not be held accountable for the slave laws. Dr. Bond proceeds to show that there were slaveholders in the primitive Church, and quotes largely from commentators and others to prove the point. He then concludes his argument thus:

"To conclude, let no one infer from what we have said that we believe the institution or perpetuation of slavery to be in accordance with the design and spirit of our holy religion. On the contrary, we believe that when Christianity shall have been embraced experimentally by the majority of any people whose suffrages control the legislation of the state, slavery, if it exist, will be gradually ameliorated, and finally abolished. We have only endeavored to show that the Church now, like the Church in the apostolic times, can not lawfully

\*Z., Vol. XIV, p. 84. †Id., p. 104.  
‡C., Vol. XVII, pp. 175, 185.

\*Z., Vol. XIV, pp. 104, 118.  
†C., Vol. XVI, pp. 194, 198.

exclude slaveholders from the Church as for a crime which will exclude a man from the kingdom of grace and glory. This sinfulness of slaveholding depends upon the circumstances of the case, and no General Rule can meet these circumstances. No law can reach hypocrisy; and as men may plead necessity when they are only influenced by cupidity, while others, with the most sincere desire to do right, may really be controlled by necessity, the tares must grow with the wheat till the harvest. Every individual of the human family, of mature age and sound mind, is undergoing a personal probation before God and under his appointments, and God reads the heart. In regard to holding his fellow-men in bondage, if he plead that there is no positive prohibition of this civil relation, we answer neither is there any which forbids the public games which were established by law in parts of the Roman empire; nor of war, even, for conquest or plunder; nor the compelling men to be soldiers, and to obey, as soldiers, the commands of a tyrant and his officers. All these are matters belonging to civil government, with which Christianity did not authoritatively interfere. But it does not follow that Christians are not bound, except constrained by existing circumstances, to abstain from these obvious evils. One thing is certain, as Christians are bound to love all men, and to do them good, and not evil, according to the ability which God has given us, it will follow from this, that to be justified from holding slaves a Christian must be convinced, that to dissolve such relation he should violate the law of love by rendering the condition of the bondman worse, or at least no better, than in the servitude which he now endures. Every one must give an account of himself to God.\*

Mr. Boyd was by no means satisfied with the answer of Dr. Bond. Accordingly, he sent on two additional articles, which the Doctor refused to publish. The reason for not publishing the first article was,† that Mr. Boyd's reply contained "a set defense of secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, which he could not publish consistently with his duty as editor." Of this the editor apprised him by letter. Mr. Boyd urged, in answer, that he could not allow this part to be expunged; consequently, the articles of Mr. Boyd were rejected. It is probable, indeed, to our minds, certain, that Mr. Boyd did not intend to plead directly for secession. But a large amount of the publications of the abolition press, as far as it concerned the Church, was just such matter as would lead to and insure secession. Instance Mr. Birney's pamphlet on "the American Churches the Bulwarks of American Slavery," much of the *Liberator*, the recent resolutions of the Methodist antislavery conventions, many of the articles in *Zion's Herald*, as well as the *Watchman* and *True Wesleyan* almost entire. We could fill many pages from these productions; and if any one wishes to see the gleanings of these in a small compass, he can see it by reading Mr. Matlack's *History of Slavery and Methodism*. This book will show that the *Scottish Church* originated, and was sustained, by just such sentiments as we now refer to, and have given specimens enough in our documents.

8. The articles of Mr. Boyd produced some stir in the south. Dr. Bond admitted that slavery was a "political, social, and moral evil." From this Mr. Boyd inferred that Dr. Bond acknowledged "slaveholding to be a sin, under all circumstances," and upon this assumption made his reply. The brethren of Sparta circuit, Georgia conference, read Mr. Boyd's article, No. 1, and took it for granted that Dr. Bond had admitted what Mr. Boyd had assumed. Accordingly, before reading Dr. Bond's reply, the quarterly conference of Sparta circuit, July 1, 1843, passed resolutions condemning the course of the editor, Dr. Bond, for introducing controversy at all on the subject, especially on the one side. They say there is no middle ground on the subject of slavery. It is either a moral evil or the converse. If it be a moral evil, and contrary to the word of God, under every possible circumstance, none can justify the act. If it be not a moral evil, there is great injustice done to the south. They contend that they are charitable to their northern brethren; but when it comes to the question of giving up the missions to the slaves, or our connection with radical abolitionism, they can have no hesitancy in making the decision.\* The quarterly conference of Russel circuit, Alabama conference, passed similar resolutions July 25th.†

Dr. Bond, August 30th, under the head, "The Senior Editor Vetoed," took up the resolutions of the two conferences, and sifted them thoroughly. He gave a historical survey of his course. He then explains himself further for their satisfaction—that a moral evil is not necessarily a sin; that is, a moral evil which affects injuriously the moral condition of man. Its sinfulness depends on the circumstances of the case. Ignorance of moral or religious truth is a moral evil. Such ignorance is a sin only when it is the result of willful neglect of the means of knowledge; and so with respect to slaveholding. While slavery is a moral evil, inflicting great moral privations, and producing great moral degradation, the holding of persons in this condition may not be sinful; because it may be compelled by circumstances which would render emancipation a still greater evil, both moral and physical. The sinfulness of slaveholding must, therefore, depend upon the circumstances of each individual case. To allege it is never sinful, would be to say that any man, did the law allow it, would be justified to seize his neighbor and make him a slave, if he had or could employ the physical force to do it, or that the African slave-trade is an innocent traffic. If the brethren will say that slavery is not a moral evil, the contradiction of this position would meet them at every turn. The law of the slave states forbids, under severe penalties, the teaching of a large portion of the population to read the word of God. It debars them from testimony in courts. If slavery compels all this, is it not a moral evil of great magnitude? Such laws are justified by the plea of absolute necessity; and that which creates the necessity must be a great moral evil. But it does not prove that those who are subjected to this necessity are sinners, guilty of a willful violation of the law of God.

Dr. Bond proceeds to maintain that ultraism is not confined to the north. The fanatic proceedings of some in the north have driven some in the south to the opposite extreme, and not at all less dangerous to the common welfare than the

\* C., Vol. XVII, pp. 175, 185. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, pp. 272-280.

† C., Vol. XVIII, p. 26, col. 3.

\* C., Vol. XVII, p. 10. † Id.

other. It is to be feared some of the members of our Church in the south have been misled by the one, as others in the north have been misled by the other. Heretofore, we all admitted slavery to be an evil, but an evil for which the Church could neither originate nor apply an adequate remedy, till the Gospel should prepare the slave for a better condition, and dispose the hearts of the owners to confer it. But of late some have contended for immediate and unqualified emancipation, irrespective of the fearful consequences to the slave; and others have come to justify slavery as right *per se*—an institution of God—and therefore no remedy, however remote, is to be sought for; and while the immediatists are wrong, the ultraisms of the south can not be excused or palliated.

He averred that he could not approve of the ultraism of the south, because, 1. It would leave us without hope of a better state of things, for slavery must not only be endured, but purposely propagated. 2. It would take away the very foundation of the Colonization Society. 3. Our Discipline admits that slavery is a great evil, and of course a moral evil, as it would be unbecoming the Church to make so grave a declaration about a physical evil. He concludes by declaring that whenever the Church shall require him to advocate or defend the opinions contained in their resolutions, he will hasten to free himself from the necessity of compliance. And more—should the Church ever cease to testify against slavery as a moral evil, as we have defined that term, we shall seek a more pure communion.\*

The editor of the Southern Advocate, after giving an outline of Dr. Bond's article of August 30th, observes: "Our peculiar organization enables us to send the Gospel to thousands of perishing souls; but from the necessity of the case, solely on the ground that, as a religious body, the public opinion of the country has entire confidence that our intention is purely religious, that we seek no political changes, and meddle not with established social constitutions. At the present time, the conversion and salvation of the negro population is our great work in the south. We have no decision to give upon the question of slavery *per se*. It exists not in the abstract, but is found indissolubly connected with *circumstances*, which moderate abolitionists, such as Dr. Bond, are free to admit do not render it necessary to expel slaveholders from the Church. In view of these circumstances, we think it is *not* a moral evil, in any such sense as involves sin, and consequently is no subject for ecclesiastical action. But if the leading journal of the Church, by the force of circumstances occurring at the north, is compelled to take the ground that the Methodist Episcopal Church is *antislavery*; if the prevailing opinions of the southern portion of the Church are pronounced ultraisms to be condemned; then a very grave issue is brought on. The south must either give up its missionary operations, or protest against ecclesiastical interference on the part of its northern brethren and presses, or else sunder its connection with the north. For the present, the middle path seems incumbered with fewest embarrassments. We object earnestly to the Church being forced into collision with the state."†

Under date of October 3d, J. W. Talley, presiding elder, and E. M. Pendleton wrote a long

article in the Southern Advocate on the Sparta resolutions, maintaining their course, censuring Dr. Bond, and defining their resolutions. The reason of their course, they say, was, that Mr. Boyd, a bitter abolitionist, assailed their institutions; denied their right to Church membership, as slaveholders; that all slaveholders should be expelled, and that, too, on the ground admitted by the senior editor himself; namely, that slavery was a moral evil, or sin against the moral government of God. They then proceed to maintain that slavery has been productive of great moral good in some instances, even to the slaves themselves; that Dr. Bond\* admits virtually that slavery or slaveholding is neither a sin nor moral evil, under certain circumstances, but rather a moral good and Christian duty, as retaining the slave in some cases is an act of mercy, and dismissing him would be an act of cruelty. Poverty produces moral good under some circumstances, and moral evil under others. The editor ought to speak out, and tell the world whether he conceives it to be a sin against the moral government of God for Church members at the south to own slaves.

The presiding elder and secretary of Sparta circuit then define their position thus:

"We have no where denied what our Discipline says in relation to slavery; in fact, we believe as much in attending to its directions as any northern Methodist. We have no where advanced that the thing was right *per se*, an institution of God, and which should be purposely perpetuated. This would be strange ground for a Christian. We advocated, in the resolutions, that slavery was allowable by the word of God. Mind the word *allowable*. And this proposition has no where been denied by Dr. Bond. But for fear of any further difficulties in the matter, we will state these sentiments in a few plain and simple propositions:

"(1.) We do not conceive it to be a moral evil, or sin against the moral government of God, for Christians to own slaves at the south. On the contrary, we believe that much moral good does result from it to the slave in many instances. As such, we can not believe that slavery, under every possible circumstance, is a moral evil; for that can not be a moral evil which results in moral good.

"(2.) While we believe that slavery is allowable by the Scriptures, we do not believe it an institution of God; but that it was at first established in this country by the wickedness and cupidity of northern traders, which God has overruled, by making these very men his sword, to advance his kingdom among the sable sons of Africa, and thousands will have reason, in the day of eternity, for praising God that they were ever enslaved in a Christian country.

"(3.) We do most sincerely believe practical abolitionism, or immediatism, as it has been called, to be productive of far greater moral evil to the slave than slavery itself, because it would, at the present juncture, ruin the temporal and spiritual happiness of hundreds and thousands of our slaves. Being indolent by nature, if thrown upon their own resources for support, they would steal, and rob, and murder, till they would be gibbeted by scores, and their race would melt away, and become extinct throughout the whole country.

"These, then, are our real sentiments upon the subject of American slavery; though, whenever

\* C., Vol. XVIII, p. 10.

† S., Sept. 8, 1843. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 45-48.

\* C., Aug. 30.

the finger of Providence shall indicate a reversion in the order of things, we expect to try and follow the directions of that Providence, though the sky fall.\*

Dr. Bond publishes the article of Messrs. Talley and Pendleton, from the Southern Advocate, and responds to it.† He complains that they took up Mr. Boyd's misrepresentation, in attributing to him the sentiment "that slaveholding was a *sin* under all circumstances," whereas he had taken the opposite ground; as he argued, though slavery was a moral evil, slaveholding was not necessarily a sin. Its sinfulness would depend on the circumstances of the case. As many of our members were slave-owners, under circumstances which did not admit of emancipation, without great injustice, and even cruelty, to those whom they discharged from their service and protection; hence the Church could not justly make a rule to exclude such persons. He then proceeded to examine the positions of the Spartan presiding elder and secretary.

That "slavery has been productive of great moral good in some instances, even to the slaves themselves," is a mistake; because slavery did not produce these effects, but the Gospel. There are thousands in slavery wholly destitute of the blessings which the Gospel offers, and they have never experienced the moral benefits spoken of as the effects of slavery. On the contrary, the system greatly impedes the operation of truth, with all its saving influences. What the Gospel has done for many slaves in the south, it has done in spite of slavery, and not by its aid; and if the general system be so beneficial—productive of moral good—the slave-trade ought to be tolerated and encouraged, as it would abundantly augment the moral benefits.

That "poverty is a moral evil or good, according to circumstances," is unsafe. The prayer of Agur was, "Give me neither poverty nor riches." Poverty is a moral evil, because it prevents many parents from having their children taught to read the Bible; yet they are not to be reckoned sinners because of this evil. The Gospel reaches the poorest; yet the most vicious communities are those who endure the most hopeless poverty and privation. It is not poverty, then, which produces the moral good, but the Gospel, which overrules its natural tendencies. Messrs. Talley and Pendleton's theory would leave no moral evil in the world. Even sin, according to this theory, would not be moral evil, because it has been overruled for good in the providence of God. The cruelty of Joseph's brethren, who sold him to slavery, was made subservient to important providential designs. So was Adam's sin. If, as alleged, moral good flows from slavery under some circumstances, and therefore slavery is not a moral evil, it would follow, that wherever slavery has been overruled for good, the evil ceases to be evil, and becomes good; there is no such thing as moral evil in the world. But slavery is a moral evil, because "it is a system which operates injuriously upon the moral condition of man."

The Southern Advocate's comments on the controversy between Dr. Bond and Messrs. Talley and Pendleton on the one hand, and the ultra-abolitionists on the other, and defines "the precise principles which are to govern the whole body, and harmonize, if possible, the extremes of opinion on the only question which seriously threatens

its connective integrity." He then proceeds to define that the position maintained by the Christian Advocate may be regarded the embodiment of the opinion and feeling of the portion of the Church, which will probably hold the balance of power at the approaching General conference, and will then decide the destiny of the Church for good or evil. The position is that the Church, being the guardian of the morals of her members, has the right to pronounce upon the character of an institution of the state, and to denounce, not only as a civil or political evil, but as a moral evil, that institution. She claims a power of control over the subject; in other words, a right of interference which she is at liberty to use, whenever she judges the circumstances of the case to warrant it. At the same time, it is freely conceded that, though slavery in the abstract is a moral evil, yet slaveholding, in the circumstances under which southern Methodists find themselves, is not, necessarily or actually, a *sin*. There are two things worthy of remark here: *First*. That there is an advance upon what the book of Discipline affirms, and the doctrines heretofore maintained by the journals of the General conference. *Secondly*. There is an implied admission that the antislavery feeling—that, we mean, which denounces slaveholding in existing circumstances as a sin—is gaining ground and winning converts; else why such earnest discussion on the subject?

Mr. Wightman then maintains that the ground of the southern conferences *en masse* is that contained in the resolutions of the South Carolina conference in 1838. It is as follows: "That the subject of slavery in these United States is not one proper for the action of the Church, but is wholly appropriate to the civil and not to ecclesiastical judicatories." "The conference regret that it has ever been introduced, in any form, into any one of the judicatories of the Church." Mr. Wightman then adds, "This resolution maintains the doctrine of the unmix'd spiritual organization of the Church; it affirms the exclusively-spiritual and religious nature of its designs."

Mr. Wightman makes several historical mistakes here, and maintains, also, anti-Methodistic doctrine.

The Church did not pronounce upon or denounce "a civil or political evil." The Church never did this. At Cincinnati, in 1836, the General conference disavowed unanimously the right or intention to interfere with the civil or political relations of slavery. And this has been the language and action of the Methodist Episcopal Church to this day, and previous to that time. Nor does, nor did, the Church ever claim a "power of control or right to interfere" with the political or civil relations of slavery. The claims and the powers of the Church have never gone beyond the *moral* character of slavery; and in *morals* this belongs to the Church, and that, too, by constitutional law, whether state or federal, as fully as political control belongs to Caesar.

The south, taking Mr. Wightman's statement, "that the South Carolina conference of 1838 is the standard," have renounced the Methodist doctrine of having the Church regulate religious and moral subjects, and of having the state to regulate civil affairs, and have transferred the proper Scriptural power of the Church to the state. This is the very thing that is done under the British Government, and the reverse of what his Holiness claims and exercises.

The South Carolina conference, though mildly, denounces the Methodist Episcopal Church for

\* C, Vol. XVII, p. 46, Nov. 1. † *Ibidem*. ‡ *Ibidem*. § S., Nov. 17, 1843. Seraps, Vol. I, p. 57.

having ever done any thing by disciplinary regulations, in regard to the moral character of slavery. To be consistent, they must not interfere with the morals of the slave system. If Methodist masters part husbands and wives, parents and children, whip so as not to injure life or limb, go against all *mental* improvement of slaves, sell their surplus slaves, and become slave-growers, be slave-traders, have no regard to the laws of marriage among slaves—all these, and a thousand more such, must pass for nothing, because the subject belongs wholly to Cæsar, morals and all! We believe their practice is not according to their doctrine, for which “we thank God and take courage.”

After all, the positions of Dr. Bond stood the test of examination. The North Carolina conference, which held its session in November, 1843, passed unanimously the following resolution:

“Resolved, That we, the members of the North Carolina conference, do heartily approve the very prudent, independent, and able manner in which the Rev. Dr. Bond has conducted the Christian Advocate and Journal; and that we regard him as being peculiarly well qualified for the important post which he occupies, as senior editor of that General conference paper.”\*

At this time, the sentiments of South Carolina and Georgia were not the sentiments of the south on slavery. This is plain from the resolution of the North Carolina conference. In the south-west this doctrine had not then obtained; at least we have had no expression that declared it; and it is doubtful that even now—December 19, 1851, the time we write this paragraph—the South Carolina doctrine is fully indorsed by the whole, *en masse*, as is asserted by the Southern Advocate.

## CHAPTER XIX.

### EVENTS OF 1844.

1. THE conventional movements took a fresh start in the winter of 1843-44. Some of the Methodist abolitionists of New England seemed determined to have a pretty general convention some time before the next session of the General conference. Others opposed this measure, in consequence of which Zion's Herald, in January or February, had its columns principally occupied with the debates, and yet the editor was compelled to lay by many of the articles.\* It was the opinion of Dr. Bond that, considering the ill effects of former conventions, this attempt appeared to be so reckless a disregard to the peace and prosperity of the Church, so mad and fanatic a procedure, that he awfully feared a judicial blindness has come upon some of our preachers and people in New England.†

Mr. Wise, in a communication of November 10, 1843,‡ proclaims aloud for a general attendance on a convention. He wants one “which shall leave an impression on our body-eccelesiastic, too deep, too permanent to be erased, but with the overthrow of Methodist slaveholding.” The benefits to be derived from the convention he enumerates as follows; namely, to show that Methodist antislavery had neither died nor emigrated with the seceders; to promote petitions to the General conference; to aid and encourage brethren in the middle conferences, who are disposed to arrest the encroachments of the slave power in the Church; to counteract the effect of a newly-awakened activity at the south; that success will follow the doings of the convention; and that differences of opinion will be harmonized, “so that they may be able to hurl their missiles with renewed force against an old enemy—perhaps to speed the arrow that shall drink up the hell-erected blood of the most reckless, ruthless, murderous Juggernaut which ever exercised authority over the souls and bodies of men—AMERICAN SLAVERY!” Mr. Wise waxes warm, and exclaims, “Come, then, inheritors of the

genuine Wesleyan soul—UP! Up, in the name of enchained Methodists—of crushed Christians! Rally, in the strength of God, and roar forth the thunder of HEAVEN'S antislavery over the heads of oppressors; flash the lightning of Divine rebuke in the face of a guilty Church; whisper the music of hope in the wailing ear of the slave; and show the world, the nation, the Methodist Church, that in a short time Methodism and antislavery shall be terms synonymous in the vocabulary of the people.”

Dr. Bond, in an editorial of December 20, 1843, exposes Mr. Wise's declamation.† By special request of B. Otheman, T. Ely, and E. Mason, this article was republished in Zion's Herald, of January 10, 1844. This publication checked considerably the zeal for the convention. Indeed, it may be said to defeat it, as no general convention for New England was held; but two small, sickly ones were held, one in Worcester, for the New England conference, and another in Vermont, for the Vermont conference. The general convention, however, had friends, though its opponents seem to have had the greater success.

Mr. Wise was somewhat nettled at the opposition, and he wrote a reply, principally declamatory, which contained this misstatement concerning Dr. Bond. He said: “He [Dr. Bond] is the champion of the slave party in the Church; the advocate of the sentiments of the Counter Appeal—of the hateful doctrine of golden rule slavery. The fact that such a man condemns the convention, proves its efficiency.” He adds: “The best interests of the Methodist Church can be promoted more by striving for her purity, than by crying peace, peace, while her bowels are being eaten by the worms of slavery. Let us rush once more to the conflict with *the beast*; the modern dragon who belches lust, murder, and fornication over the nation and the Church.”‡

\* Z., January 10, 1844.

† C., Vol. XVIII, p. 74. Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 1, 287.

‡ Z., Vol. XIV, p. 192.

\* C., Vol. XVII, p. 62, Nov. 29, 1843.

† C., Vol. XVIII, p. 74.

‡ Z., January 10, 1844. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 7.

Mr. Ransom was of the opinion that there was no need for the exciting influence of a popular convention in the Church, in promoting anti-slavery measures.\* Mr. Husted thought it would turn out like the Boston convention, and be injurious to the Church.† Mr. J. G. Smith thought such measures during the last ten years had greatly injured the Church. Men left the places assigned them to lecture on some particular subject—such as abolition or Millerism, and calling and attending conventions, passing inflammatory resolutions, calling for a division of the Church—thus keeping the Church in a continual agitation; and now, while there was a little respite from these foaming, raging waters, a mighty cry is suddenly trumpeted through the land for more conventions, some indiscriminate, and others of the Methodist Episcopal Church.‡ Zion's Herald was crowded to suffocation with articles on the proposed convention; yet the specific design could scarcely be learned with any precise certainty. The writers incessantly declaim against slavery, and still without an adversary. Dr. Bond, while the press teemed with discussions, wrote an editorial on the 17th of January, on the proposed convention, in which he exposes the attempt as fruitless, except to stir up discord;§ nevertheless, though a general convention for New England was not held, there were two small gatherings that were called conventions, each of which may call for some brief notice.

Twenty-nine traveling preachers met at Randolph, Vermont, on the 24th of January, and held a convention professing to represent Vermont conference. Five resolutions were adopted. The first declared, truly enough, "that slavery was inherently so *inhuman, cruel, unjust, and impious*, that no enlightened good man can fail to abhor, detest, and *abominate* its existence." The second expressed the necessity of unceasing efforts for its abolition. The third "deplored the melancholy fact, that any of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the south, or elsewhere, should be involved in this awful sin." The fourth expressed the purpose of contending against slavery in the Church, and that they would not abandon her. The fifth declared that "the section on slavery in the Discipline was subversive of the spirit of the General Rules, unconstitutional, the sole prop of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and therefore ought to be expunged by the next General conference." It was agreed, too, that "the section on slavery *tolerates* its existence under certain circumstances," and complains of this, just as if the Church could legislate authoritatively on slavery, and emancipate every slave in the south. Mr. H. W. Adams made a flaming speech in support of the last resolution, and the convention assured themselves that he fully proved all the parts of it to be true.¶

A convention composed of ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the bounds of the New England conference, was held at Worcester, February 27th. Twelve resolutions were passed, such as have been adopted all along by the abolitionists in America; with the exception that two of them denounced the Comeouters, and insisted that our Churches should be shut against them. Thus, what was accounted intolerable in the Address of Bishops Hedding and Emory, was now thought to be a

prudent, conservative measure. For, as far as condemning the Church was concerned, the abolition lecturers of the former period were no less sparing of the Church than the Comeouters were; nay, more, the convention themselves, in *fact*, condemned the Church about as much as the very Comeouters, whom they condemn, did; for they "enter their solemn protest against the practice of those members of the Methodist Episcopal Church and all others who hold slaves." They consider slavery existing *in the Church* as an *enormous evil*, as if the Church originated and continued it; and in their petition to the General conference, they pray to so change the tenth section, as "to make all slaveholding inconsistent with membership in the Church."<sup>7</sup>

But how could we "excise" slavery from the Church? Shall we expel all who are so unfortunate as to have slaves, unless they set them free; that is, turn them over to the sheriff, and thence to the negro-trader? If the owners obey the Church, and turn their slaves adrift, and they fall into worse hands, and if the slaves charge the Church with an aggravation of their wrongs, how will the Church answer to God, who always hears the cry of the poor? The truth is, the convention demanded what would be unjust and impracticable.

Our abolition preachers constantly represented a portion of their brethren as monsters of iniquity, and the Church as the patron and protector of these monsters. Nay, they went further, and denounced all, even among themselves, as partners in the iniquity who would not enter into their feelings, or adopt their language and measures; and what is still more strange, they thought, that to blacken the character of the Church, and of their brethren, was the right way to prevent secessions. We give an instance of this: Dr. Bond was represented as a principal supporter of slavery, although any unprejudiced person would readily acquit him of this charge. In reference to this same matter, Dr. Bond says:

"We are aware that we have been denounced already as a pro-slavery man. But we deny and despise the unjust and libelous allegation. We hate slavery in all its forms—in all its moods and tempers—and we love to hate it. We have borne testimony both against the system and the practice, from our youth up, and in a slaveholding community. But we have no sympathy with the doctrine, that slaveholding is sin under all circumstances, because we are convinced that the relation of master and slave does exist under circumstances in which it would be a great sin in the master, because it would be an act of cruelty and inhumanity to dissolve it. For this the laws of the state are to blame, over which neither the master nor the Church has any control. The one can not change his peculiar circumstances, and the other dare not compel him to commit sin by an act of Discipline."†

Nevertheless, though many of the Methodist abolitionists went all lengths, as to fundamental principles, with those who were called Comeouters, they were, for the most part, shocked at the consequences. And we believe this will apply to the greater number of those who were at this time so zealous for the convention. Mr. Bridge, no doubt, in giving his own experience, gives the experience of others also. He said he had been intimately connected with the leading seceders. For several years he thought,

\* Z., January 10, 1844. † Id., January 31, 1844. ‡ Id. § C., Vol. XVIII, p. 90. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1045. ¶ Z., February 14th.

\* Z., March 13, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 40. † C., Vol. XVIII, p. 146, col. 5, April 24, 1844.

talked, and acted with them. He wavered, in times of excitement, in reference to the rectitude and economy of the Church. He sincerely lamented it, and thanked God that he escaped the eddying whirl of the secession. He neared the vortex; he paused; he prayed; he reflected; he deliberated, and decided to escape the Comeouter influence. These are his own words, honestly and nobly proclaimed in the columns of *Zion's Herald*.\*

2. At this time there was no small discussion on the General Rules and the section on slavery. We have given already the resolution of the Vermont convention on this subject. In accordance with that resolution, Rev. H. W. Adams maintained:

(1.) That the section on slavery in our Discipline is subversive of the spirit of the General Rules.

(2.) That it is unconstitutional.

(3.) That it is the sole prop of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church;

(4.) And that it ought to be expunged by the next General conference.

In support of the first proposition, it was maintained, *First*. That the General Rules are opposed to slavery, because they enjoin, 1. Doing no harm. 2. *Avoiding evil of every kind*. 3. The special prohibition of "buying and selling men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them." 4. Doing to others as they would us to do to them. 5. Searching the Scriptures, with which slavery is at war. *Secondly*. The section on slavery *tolerates* slavery in the Church. It is attempted to prove this from the restrictions imposed on official members, and on traveling preachers; and thus the section *tolerates* all private members in slaveholding without rebuke.

In sustaining the second proposition, it is argued, that as the section is statutory, and the Rules are constitutional, and as they conflict, the statutory regulations are unconstitutional.

In support of the third proposition, it is insisted, that it is beyond doubt, and, therefore, "this is the section under which southern slaveholding Methodists take unmolested shelter. This section *tolerates* them in the nefarious business of slavery."

The section ought therefore, it is concluded, to be expunged, and all slaveholders expelled, and Mr. H. W. Adams was prepared to do it. He says, and the others in the convention approved his speech: "For one, I am prepared for the consequences. I know not what they would be. We should either lose slavery or the south. If we can not free the Church from slavery without, I am prepared to shake hands with the south. Let them go."†

Mr. A. D. Sargeant maintained that the section and the General Rules do harmonize; because, 1. The tenth section recognizes the General Rules in their bearing on slavery. 2. A sentiment drawn from statute law by implication, that conflicts with the constitution, *must* be of no force. 3. And that *no* Methodist can be a slaveholder from choice consistently with the tenth section; for the section declares slavery to be a great evil, and that it ought to be extirpated. This is equivalent with saying that the person is ready to do all he can to extirpate slavery. This being done, he can not be a slaveholder from choice. The Discipline does not tolerate, allow, or even

suffer slavery, either in the section or General Rules, directly or indirectly, or under any circumstances whatever, in the sense of *approval*; it only suffers members to hold the legal relation when they can not get rid of it, but not even in the sense of *approval*.\* The section was made in reference to official members, all being under the General Rules, whether private members or official members.

3. The seceders from the Methodist Episcopal Church did not appear to be very scrupulous as to the means employed to promote their cause. In the month of January or February, Mr. Scott wrote in the *True Wesleyan* as follows:

"We shall publish next week a letter from an Episcopal Methodist in the state of Ohio, which will make the ears of our Episcopal brethren tingle.

"Brethren of the old Church can write to us in *perfect confidence*, if they wish to do so."

From this it appears there were yet some in the Methodist Episcopal Church who secretly cooperated with seceders in their efforts to destroy that Church. Mr. Scott approves of their course, and will conceal whatever of hypocrisy they may please to practice. This was very much like the treachery of Arnold, on the part of these professed members, yet determined enemies of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And how could Mr. Scott promise to conceal the secret opposition of such, and thus tempt them to betray the cause they profess to support? Mr. Porter met such movements as this in *Zion's Herald*,† in an able article of great point and force. He also prepared a series of tracts or lectures, in which he exposed the injurious proceedings of Comeouters and seceders, so that the mischief of their movements was greatly counteracted.‡

Mr. Scott, too, attempted an old game, which he played off to advantage on two former occasions. At the General conference of 1836 he and the Philanthropist, edited by Mr. Birney, presented a garbled view of the proceedings to the public, which became the stereotyped text of abolitionists when they saw fit to assail the Church, which they did in those times without stint. In 1840 a special six-months paper was got up, which published caricatures of the doings of the conference; and now again, Mr. Scott proposes to do the same thing. He thinks the next session of the General conference will be an occasion of *thrilling interest*, and seemed disposed to make a gain of its acts, in publishing a six-weeks paper, commencing May 1st, for twenty-five cents, and wished to get one thousand subscribers. He says, "The *True Wesleyan* will contain full and faithful reports of its proceedings. The probability is, that six columns or more per week will be occupied for some six weeks."|| An abolitionist, in *Zion's Herald*,§ asks, "And what is the object of Mr. Scott and others, in proposing this flagrant violation of denominational etiquette? Nothing, but to accelerate the *glorious work of secession*; that is, in plain English, to *plunder* the Methodist Episcopal Church, and *seduce* and kidnap as many of her members as possible after the session of the General conference. And wherefore? Only to build up a rival sect, and increase the personal importance of a class

\* *Z.*, March 20, 1844. † *Z.*, February 28, 1844.

‡ *Id.* *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, pp. 36, 38, 46.

|| *W.*, April 19, 1844. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 70.

§ *Z.*, May 1, 1844. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, p. 54.

\* *Z.*, May 1, 1844. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, p. 54.

† *Z.*, February 28, 1844.

of men, from whom all honorable and high-minded Christians must turn away with emphatic dissent in this strange course."

Rev. Luther Lee traveled in western New York, and north-western Pennsylvania, lecturing in favor of secession. He detailed all the accusations charged on the Methodist Episcopal Church by the abolition press, and maintained that these were all well sustained! He was met by Professor Kingsley, in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, with overwhelming success.\*

4. The memorials prepared for signature may serve to show the state of sentiment and measures of the times. We have two such now before us.

The first is prepared by M. Trafton, secretary for a meeting of some of the preachers of Boston and its vicinity, favorable to "the immediate abolition of slavery in the Church and nation," dated January 22d. It professes to be prepared in "accordance with the expressed views of the New England conference, as published in *Zion's Herald*, of August 9, 1843," and must, therefore, be orthodox. The petition expresses a conviction of the "great evil and enormous wickedness of slavery as connected with the Church." It asks the General conference to rescind the resolution on colored testimony, not to elect a slaveholder for bishop, and "to take such measures or adopt such means as shall directly tend to effectually rid the Methodist Episcopal Church of the great evil of slavery."†

The second memorial is one prepared by the Worcester convention, February 27th, as a model one for circulation and signature by the people, and then for presentation to the General conference. The petition asserts that the "General Rules explicitly, and by clear construction, forbid the practice of slaveholding by members of the Church." It further states, that "the tenth section is so construed in some portions of the Church, as to be inconsistent with the fundamental rules of the Church, inasmuch as it virtually allows what the General Rules forbid. 1. It virtually allows that slaveholding shall not prevent his enjoying the rights of a private member of the Church. 2. A traveling preacher only forfeits his ministerial character by refusing to emancipate his slaves, but not his private membership. 3. In states where the law will not permit the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom, slaveholding works no forfeiture of any privilege of the Church." The petition then asks the General conference, "to so alter the answers to the question in the tenth section as to make them distinctly conform to the General Rules, by making all slaveholding inconsistent with membership in the Church."‡

Both these petitions are placed in the collection of documents.¶ They indicate two classes or schools of opinions. The one school considered the tenth section in keeping with the General Rules. Of this, Messrs. C. Adams, Trafton, Sargeant, and others, were the representatives. The other class had Messrs. P. Crandall, Porter, and Wise, as the expounders of their views.

At a future day, South Carolina, Georgia,

Bishop Soule, and others, became even more opposed to the tenth section than the opponents of the section in the north. The articles of Bishop Soule, B. T. Crouch, and others, denounced it as the consummation of folly, and more injurious than any other heresy; while their northern antipodes consider it, in general, with respect, but in its working having a deleterious effect. In no cases can the example of the meeting of extremes be more clearly seen, than in this case.

5. The sentiments and positions of Methodist abolitionists at this time were any thing but harmonious. The quotations and references already made furnish full proof of this. Mr. Stevens, editor of the *Herald*, complains of this; he was overwhelmed with articles on the subject.\* The discussions became acrimonious. He called attention to the rules which he had adopted when he took charge of the *Herald*, that it could not be the vehicle of radical sentiments; it should not be the organ of personal attack; and that controversial matter should not predominate. He then complains of the violent and personal language of the article. He mentions that some of his oldest agents complained that the former ultraism of the *Herald* led some to discontinuance; they began to take it again, but were now dissatisfied. Mr. P. Crandall laments the character of the discussions.† A Methodist abolitionist‡ laments that the slave has good reason to pray, "save me from my friends." Their course only tends to divide and weaken the antislavery forces. The Scottite movement is an illustration of this; the south was excited against antislavery societies. He thought nothing could be gained by the abstract declaration that slaveholding is sinful in all possible circumstances.

The articles of Mr. De Vinne were praised by some for great moderation and good feeling. This was just, but his sentiments, both historically and doctrinally, were certainly erroneous, if we judge of them by the sober tests of historical and doctrinal truth. It is a historical error that slaveholding entered the Church in the manner he describes, and that Mr. Wesley never allowed slaveholders to be members. His articles contain much excellent matter, but greatly paralyzed by the local ultra sentiments of those surrounding him. He would repeal the tenth section, require emancipation in all cases, employ no missionary who was a slaveholder, receive no funds into the missionary treasury the fruit of slave labor, with other points in conformity with these.¶

6. The consideration of the missionary labor and success, among the slaves of the south, for the years 1843 and 1844, deserves peculiar attention. The true state of the missions, up to the close of this period, must be put to the account of the Methodist Episcopal Church; for though the new Church may date its incipient organization in May and June, 1844, the missionary operations of this period were such as were carried on under the economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We will first survey the action of several conferences on this topic, and then notice other matters of a general nature.

\* *Z.*, January 10, 1844.

† *Z.*, February 28th. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, p. 38.

‡ *Z.*, March 20th. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, p. 60.

¶ See his articles in *Zion's Herald*, of November and December, 1843, and January and February, 1844. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, pp. 8, 19, 22, 24, 26.

\* *C.*, May 8, 1844. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 72.

† *Z.*, January 31, 1844. *Scraps*, p. 18.

‡ *Z.*, March 13, 1844. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, p. 43.

¶ Document, No. 46. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, pp. 18, 43.



The Methodist Episcopal Church at an early day took up the religious instruction of the slaves and colored people. In ten years after the introduction of Methodism into the colonies there were nearly seven thousand Church members. In 1800 there were thirteen thousand, four hundred and fifty colored members. These were connected with the regular circuits and stations; but this did not reach the plantation negroes, of whom there were about seventy thousand in South Carolina alone. The Methodist Episcopal Church organized the first missions among the neglected field or plantation slaves of South Carolina, as we have already seen. Hon. Charles Colesworth Pinckney had turned his attention to the religious instruction of slaves, from witnessing the happy results which had followed the religious instructions of a Methodist overseer, on the plantation of one of his friends in Georgia. In the fall of 1828 Mr. Pinckney called on Dr. Capers to know if he could recommend to him a Methodist exhorter, as superintendent of his plantation on Santee. Mr. Capers thought he would find it difficult to find the exhorter such as was wanted, but he believed the bishop would send him a minister, for whose character he would vouch. This was done in the beginning of 1829. Shortly after, Col. Morris and Mr. Baring made similar requests for Pon Pon, and their requests were met promptly.

We give below the statistics of the South Carolina conference missions which lie out of the way of the circuits, where no Methodist would have access to the negroes on their circuit rounds; and all effected is the result of a special interest for them. We give below the statistics of fourteen years for fourteen missions:

Year.	Church members.	Children catechised.
1829.....	417.....	no report.
1830.....	831.....	"
1831.....	972.....	260
1832.....	1,395.....	490
1833.....	2,128.....	1,203
1834.....	2,683.....	1,203
1835.....	3,861.....	1,425
1836.....	4,417.....	2,609
1837.....	4,772.....	2,590
1838.....	5,349.....	2,590
1839.....	5,612.....	3,551
1840.....	6,123.....	3,579
1841.....	6,500.....	3,755
1842.....	6,110.....	3,552
1843.....	8,122.....	about 3,560
1844.....	9,102.....	" 5,328

The number of children for the years 1843 and 1844 we did not find in the current statistics; but as the usual mode of catechetical instruction was continued, we deem it safe to give for these years the same proportion of children that were instructed in 1842, and have put down the figures as above.

The good effects of the missions soon became palpable. The Missionary Report for the South Carolina conference for 1833, gives voluntary written testimonials to this point. "We feel," say they, "no ordinary gratification in being able to testify, each one of us for his servants, that the past year has presented perhaps unprecedented manifestations of God's goodness to his servants." Another says, that "since the preaching of the missionaries, a marked change is observable in the negroes. The mask of hypocrisy is no longer used as a cloak for vice, the necessary discipline of the plantation is maintained through moral influence, and the amount of crime has been abundantly lessened." The Report of 1843 says, "The call

for more laborers is waxing louder and louder. The fields are white to the harvest."\*

Imitating the good example of the South Carolina conference, other conferences commenced missions among the plantation slaves. The North Carolina conference, in its Pastoral Address in 1843, treats the subject as follows:

"Need we remind you, dear brethren, of your obligation to provide for the religious instruction of your slaves? The relation in which you stand to them points them out to you as the special objects of your solicitude. The duty of securing for them the means of religious knowledge devolves on you with a weight of responsibility which you can not throw off, and we look forward with deep interest to the time when your liberal provision for this object will effectually remove the imputation cast upon us by those who have assailed, most zealously, the institution under which we sustain the relation of masters, 'that we care not for the souls of the slaves.' Much has been done in other conferences to improve the spiritual condition of our colored population. The jealousy which once existed, too strong for argument, has been forced to yield, since the results of our missions to the slaves have appeared before the public, and their utility has been demonstrated by facts that were too obvious to be denied. Wealthy and extensive proprietors, unconnected with any Church, have solicited the services of our ministers, and liberally provided for the efficient performance of their missionary work among their slaves. Within the bounds of this conference we have made but a beginning, however, as to raise our expectations, that, at no remote period, we shall be able to furnish satisfactory evidence that we are following the indications of Providence in the methods we may adopt to mitigate the evils of an existing system, which we have no power nor authority from God or man to overturn. Secure in the confidence of our fellow-citizens among whom we live and are known, we shall entertain no proposition from any quarter, nor adopt any measure likely to impair that confidence, and thereby rashly close the door which the providence of God has opened to preach the Gospel to perishing multitudes. In connection with this subject, we do earnestly recommend that, in the construction of our houses of worship, you will consider and provide for the accommodation of the colored population, and secure their attendance on the regular circuit preaching as far as practicable."†

The Mississippi conference, in its report on missions, presents the subject as follows:

"But the field which mainly occupies our labors, in the missions of this conference, is that of the colored population in parts where this class is most numerous, and least favored with the preaching of the Gospel. These missions do not generally lie at a distance from the usual circuit rounds, though they sometimes do. But in country places they are invariably so located as to serve such as have no access to the means of grace at the circuit appointments, whether far or near.

"There are towns, also, where it has been deemed expedient to institute missions for the colored people, as in New Orleans and Natchez.

\* R., September 21, 1843. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 44.

† R., December 1, 1843. C., Vol. XVIII, p. 85, col. 3. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 48.

"It is not our province, and is equally foreign from our disposition, to interfere with the question of civil policy, which discourages or prohibits large meetings of colored people, even for worship, in parts of the country where they are numerous. Things of the household of Caesar belong to Caesar's care.

"But it belongs to the Church, and binds her with the force of a divine obligation, to furnish the doctrine and sacraments of the Gospel of God to all within her reach, especially the poor. Perhaps the time was when we could make the regular circuit plan more available to the colored people than at present; if so, and as far as present disabilities arise out of civil regulations—no matter for what cause adopted—it is our unquestionable duty to conform ourselves, as far as may be, to the exigencies of the times, exerting ourselves, to the utmost of our power, to fulfill our calling of God, but with such meekness and humility as shall prove inoffensive. If, therefore, we can not procure for the colored people such provisions as that they may attend on the ministry of the Gospel, at the times and places ordinarily set apart, or if, at such times and places, they can not be so fully provided for as is clearly needful, then other times and places must be substituted, that, at all events, those who constitute the most needy portion of the people be not left without the bread of life. Still, we have not one Gospel for the white man and another for the negro; nor different classes of the ministry for these different descriptions of the people; but one *Gospel only* for all alike, and one and the same ministry for the service of all.\*

The Alabama conference this year had eight missionaries, principally among the slaves. The secretary of the conference presents the subject thus:

"The evident necessity there is for special care and pains in the instruction of those who have not the benefit of reading the holy Scriptures, that they may be made wise unto salvation, early induced the missionaries to the colored people to adopt the plan of catechising them on the chief duties and doctrines of Christianity. This, of course, has always been done orally, by the missionary stating a question, out of a short catechism prepared for them, and giving the answer, they repeating such answer after him till both the question and answer have become familiar to them. In this way the children are taught the fundamental principles of religion, and all children and adults are made acquainted with the nature and obligations of the sacraments and our whole Christian profession. . . . We advise and request the missionaries to the colored people to bestow the utmost pains in this department at every place, and, as far as in them is, to see that both the children are catechised and the grown people instructed in the nature and obligations of the holy sacrament previously to their being taken into full membership."†

In the Pastoral Address of the Georgia conference, held at Columbus, January 17, 1844, we have the following:

"Without pretending to define the mode precisely, we desire to call your attention particularly to the duty of providing religious instruction for your slaves. The relation of master

and servant, as defined in the Bible, involves solemn obligations with regard to spiritual things, that no man can neglect without impairing the integrity of his conscience. Long and profound as the slumbers of many good people may have been, the developments made by the missionary spirit of the Church, partial as that has been, and yet is, have torn away the veil that hid the truth, and left the membership to stand or fall, accordingly as they now rouse to action or continue to sleep. This field of labor is white to the harvest; let the reapers come to the gathering. In these neighborhoods, where more efficient arrangements can not be made in consequence of peculiarities of location, what more useful mode of spending a Sabbath afternoon, than for the master to sing and pray with the servants, read and expound to them, in simple language, the word of the Lord? It has been adopted by some with great advantage. Let others try it. . . . It is very desirable, at every Sabbath appointment on the circuits, where a sufficient number of the colored people can be collected to justify the additional labor, that arrangements should be made for organizing them into societies, with regular circuit preaching, for their benefit. The conference passed resolutions making it the duty of the circuit preachers to test the practicability of this plan, and it is confidently hoped that our brethren of the laity will cooperate in this work of Gospel charity. The plan is necessary, expedient, feasible, and, with suitable self-denial and zeal on the part of the ministry, and the proper encouragement of the membership, will make this comparatively waste and uncultivated field to bring forth in glorious abundance.\*\*

From the foregoing it will be seen that the religious instruction of slaves in the Methodist Episcopal Church was placed on a firm basis in 1844, notwithstanding the clamors of some southern men that the abolitionists would break up the missions, and the similar clamors of the abolitionists that no means of any value were put forth to instruct the negroes. Indeed, the transition from the colored people in the circuits and stations to the neglected plantations was inevitable. The good effects of pious overseers and masters on the moral conduct of the slaves, in all parts of the south, were manifest, in curing indolence, and making moral influence do, with less expense, and to greater profit, what the whip and the iron laws of the south failed to do. The salvation of the souls of the slaves was the only object in view by the Church, whether slaveholders or others, in preaching the Gospel. The saving of expense, and the production of more labor in an easier way, was a powerful argument to unprincipled slaveholders to encourage the missionaries; and the latter could well afford to bear an outlay in erecting churches, in paying missionaries, in allowing time for religious instruction, when they were benefited with better crops, a less expense, and a vast diminution of care. But we can not suppose that this unworthy motive swayed many of the slaveholders who allow the missionary to labor. Let us believe and admit that a better feeling was at work. This is not only the award of charity but of justice.

The following, we think, is the true state of the question: In the course of one hundred and fifty years previous to the Declaration of

\* N., January 5, 1844. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 65.

† N., January 12th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 67.

\* C., March 6, 1844, Vol. XVIII, p. 117, col. 6.

American Independence, there were about five hundred thousand negroes in the United States, very few of them being free. These have increased to over three millions, or nearly four. Human nature, in colored as in white people, without the fear of God, and the knowledge of a future state, is, of course, abandoned to the impulses of gross and destructive vices, unchecked by any sufficient restraints: hence, ignorance, indolence, insubordination, and every evil work, which nothing but the coercion of the whip, the stocks, banishment by sale, and the various modes of correction necessary to restrain, could enforce unwilling submission. On the other hand, religious instruction, administered by faithful and competent men, lays the foundation for morality, eradicates the tendencies to dissipation, which destroys health and life. It teaches contentment, or submission to the allotments of life; it promotes industry and fidelity beyond what the fear of corporeal punishment can do; it adds a thousand-fold to the comfort and security of the master; and secures the public tranquillity. Such was the effect of Methodist labors among the slaves both in the West Indies and in the United States; and this was a historical fact well established, and that could not be denied.\*

And though the Methodist Episcopal Church has done much for the instruction of the colored people, much was needed to be done. The endeavors and success in the extreme southern conferences put to the blush the comparative inactivity of the middle states and conferences. A Marylander, in the *Christian Advocate*,† presents us with the following state of things. He says that no societies have been formed to promote their religious instruction, and the press had said little concerning it. In the middle states they are greatly neglected. In the Methodist Episcopal Church pastoral visitation is little attended to; Discipline is loosely administered among them. The great extent of the circuits makes it difficult or impossible to attend to them. It is true there are many congregations well attended to; but of the great mass the painful fact must be admitted that they are sunk in the grossest ignorance and vice. Idleness, improvidence, quarreling, fighting, Sabbath-breaking, profane swearing, falsehood, theft, drunkenness, and lewdness are enumerated, by those best acquainted with them, as their general characteristics. Such is the testimony of a Marylander.

In May, 1845, a meeting was held in Charleston, South Carolina, on the "religious instruction of the negroes," the design of which was to ascertain the state of religious instruction among the slaves. In March previous a committee issued a circular to many of the large slaveholders of the south, proposing five questions to be answered. When these letters were read at the meeting, the answers were found to be very satisfactory indeed. Respecting the operations of the several Churches, we gather from the proceedings the following:

The Episcopal Church had recently entered the field of catechetical and other religious instruction of the slaves.

The Methodist Episcopal Church is thus represented by the meeting, in the report of a committee, which was adopted: "This branch of the Church of Christ has advanced beyond all others in direct and well-sustained efforts in the colored field. It is the only denomination which furnishes statistical information respecting its colored membership and missionary efforts for that class of our population. The present number of colored communicants can not be less than one hundred and sixty thousand in the slaveholding states. Beside the attention paid by the traveling and local preachers to the negroes in their regular ministrations, there are between eighty and ninety missionaries to them, who have under their charge over eighteen thousand Church members, and one hundred thousand attendants on their services. Over one thousand negroes are in connection with the Methodist Church in Texas. The South Carolina conference has sixteen missions to the negroes; the Georgia conference, twelve; Tennessee, five; Alabama, seven; Memphis, nine; Arkansas, one; Mississippi, seven; North Carolina, two; Virginia, two. The catechising of the children and youth is a prominent part of their labor. Dr. Capers's Catechism, prepared expressly for the purpose, is extensively used. Four thousand, three hundred and eighty children are catechised in the missions of the South Carolina conference, and the expense of these missions is over eleven thousand dollars annually.\*"

The meeting could not furnish any general information of the feelings and efforts of the Baptist Church. They supposed about one hundred thousand colored persons were members of Baptist Churches. No course of catechetical instruction had been pursued.†

The Presbyterian Church, in ten years, from 1835, had made gradual progress, and for the two years past rapid and extensive. "There are three grand features which the Presbyterian Church is endeavoring to make prominent in the religious instruction of the negroes: *First*. To unite the masters and servants in one charge, that each class may receive its just proportion of ministerial labor. *Secondly*. To establish in all the Churches Sabbath schools and classes of instruction for children and youth especially, and for adults also, and to encourage such schools privately in households. *Thirdly*. To open the field as fast as possible to missionaries duly qualified and employed."‡

Through the blessing of God on the labors of Methodist preachers generally, and to a limited degree on the part of others, among the slave population of the West Indies and the United States, the most salutary effects were produced. The ignorant and vicious slaves were reformed; they labored better; their lives were prolonged; the expense of overseeing was diminished; so that to the most vicious master there was a present benefit both of *gain*, and *comfort*, and *safety*, in consequence of which he coveted the labors of missionaries, and was willing to spend five hundred dollars annually to save or gain five thousand dollars. The Christian masters and the Church labored for

\* See Dr. Wightman's article in *Southern Methodist Quarterly Review*, for July, 1847, Vol. I, p. 319, entitled, *Religious Instruction of the Negroes*.

† C., Vol. XVIII, pp. 89, 102, January 17, 1844.

\* See "Proceedings of the Meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, May 13-15, 1845, on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes, together with the Report of the Committee, and the Address to the Public." Charleston, South Carolina, 1845. 72 pp. octavo. Pamphlets, XXIII, pp. 601-662.

† Id., p. 69. ‡ Id., p. 71.

the salvation of the slave only and primarily, and all the rest was the natural "gain of godliness," which had the "promise of the life that now is, and the life that is to come." Thus the wicked became committed in the cause beyond the power of retraction. The door was open, and no man can shut it. This the meeting confesses, composed of slaveholders, in the heart of South Carolina. They say, in conclusion:

"What is peculiarly a subject of gratitude is, that *all denominations* of Christians are entering the field. It is wide enough for all. It lies at our own doors, and God, in his providence and holy word, has laid the duty upon us to cultivate it. We can anticipate nothing but his displeasure if we neglect it. Indeed, we look upon the religious instruction of the negroes as the GREAT DUTY, and, in the truest and best sense, the FIXED AND THE SETTLED POLICY OF THE SOUTH. We believe God has so moved—and will continue so to move—upon the understandings and consciences of our Christian citizens, and so opened the door of access to the negroes, and so demonstrated by his blessing his regard for the work, that we can never go back. The flood has fairly set in. Difficulties and obstructions we may encounter, but the stream will rise higher and higher, and flow with a current that must sweep every thing away before it. *The work must go on.* Let us look humbly and believingly to the sustaining grace, wisdom, and power of the great God and our Redeemer, and all will be well."\*

Thus, by the grace and providence of God, the instruction of the slaves is "THE GREAT DUTY, AND THE FIXED, SETTLED POLICY OF THE SOUTH;" that "this is demonstrated by his blessing;" and "the work must go on." Now, all this was begun, continued, and brought to this state of fixed maturity through the instrumentality of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with her strong antislavery creed, and her antislavery disciplinary regulations. And to talk about the *necessity* of a change of procedure in 1844, merely to favor the system of slavery, and to contradict the principles and practice of the Church, is one of the most preposterous conceits in the world. The above testimony to our position is given by the leading slaveholders of South Carolina, in their published declaration, and the capitals and italics, which give emphasis to this, are their own; and all this was done while the whole south was under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; that is, up to May, 1844.

Indeed, the outcry, earnestly or affectedly made, that the missions would be destroyed by the movements of the abolitionists, was a false or mistaken alarm; for whatever was exceptionable in abolitionism, even as it may have existed in some members of the Church, could never reach the slaves; for the broad and impregnable shield of the Church was a guarantee safeguard against all this. Wesleyan Methodism in the West Indies never countenanced, much less encouraged, insubordination or insurrection among the slaves. The same did Methodism in America. It does it now; it will do it.

7. The state of religion in the south has been represented by some as hopelessly corrupt. We

will content ourselves to speak of our own Church. It will be readily allowed that the system of slavery is a great impediment to the progress of pure religion in any country, even to those who are not slaveholders, or to those who are, but detest the system. We must maintain, however, as a matter of history, and of current matter-of-fact, that the members of our Church in the south, in general, are entitled to the character of good Christians, and good Methodists. The proofs of this are, that they have repented and forsaken sin, and live a religious life. They are slaveholders, in general, by inheritance, and not from choice, or by their own act. And owing to the general usages around them, it is not marvelous that some of them, yea, many of them, do even purchase and sell slaves. And of this last class, there are doubtless some who are unworthy members of the Church; and yet, there seems to be but small opportunity to remedy the evil, as things now exist in the social state of the south. The exertions and success, too, of our brethren in the south, in instructing the negroes, furnish also a proof of their Christian character.\* The following from the editor *pro tem.* of the Nashville Advocate, will probably give the real state of the case: "That slavery, as it exists in the south, has its attendant evils, every southerner will readily admit; but that these evils fall with the greatest destructiveness upon those who own slaves, is a truth, to be convinced of which it is only necessary to examine, without any prejudicial bias, the usages of the south in this particular. A large majority of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the south, would hail the emancipation of the slave, if it could be done upon any plan comporting with justice and the civil regulations of the land, with a philanthropic gladness, unsurpassed by the most zealous advocate of the abolition of slavery."†

8. On the state of parties in the Church on the opening of the General conference, May, 1844, a few remarks will be necessary.

There was what may be called the Church proper, or the conferences, in the middle states—New York, and the west—who maintained the Discipline as it is, and were determined it should not be altered, or practically nullified. These were strongly antislavery; but not abolitionists, in the recent American use of that term. They were not pro-slavery, or apologists for slavery; though they believed men might be slaveholders without being sinners on that account.

There was the abolition party in the Church, confined principally to the New England conferences. These, for the most part, believed all slaveholding to be sin, and all slaveholders to be sinners; or they so taught, defined, and made abstract distinctions, of such kind, that they virtually, if not intentionally, placed all slaveholders in the class of sinners. They also thought the Church to be greatly corrupted in the south with the sin of slavery.

There was also the southern party, who, as a whole, at this period, we can not place in the list of pro-slavery men. But they were not truly antislavery. They seem to have yielded to the pro-slavery influence around them, so far as to give up, or hold loosely their antislavery sentiments. They yielded, or began to yield, the things of God to Cæsar; overlooking our Lord's

\* See "Proceedings of the Meeting in Charleston, South Carolina, May 13-15, 1845, on the Religious Instruction of the Negroes, together with the Report of the Committee and the Address to the Public," p. 72.

\* C., Vol. XVIII, pp. 139, 143, 146, 150.

† N., May 23, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 80.

command: "Render to Cæsar the things of Cæsar, and to God, the things of God." They ceased to claim as a right the great principle, that the civil power is supreme only in civil matters, and the ecclesiastical power is supreme in

moral and religious matters. As a claim, too, they set up the plea for a slaveholding bishop.

Such was the state of parties in the Church, as nearly as we can discern, when the General conference met in May, 1844.

## CHAPTER XX.

### REV. FRANCIS A. HARDING'S CASE.

1. THE case of the Rev. Francis A. Harding, of the Baltimore conference, is one which opened the controversy on slavery at the General conference of 1844, and was the precursor to the case of Bishop Andrew. Mr. Harding married a wife possessing slaves. The Discipline required emancipation, if *practicable*. It was practicable; for others in like circumstances found it practicable, and did emancipate. And this was the usage of the Baltimore conference in reference to all its members, ever since its organization, and this course had been always approved by the General conference. Mr. Harding refused to emancipate. The conference suspended him. He appealed to the General conference from the decision, and this brought his case before the General conference as an appeal.

2. On Saturday, May 4th, when the chair, in the ordinary course of business, called for appeals, Rev. J. A. Gere presented the appeal of Francis A. Harding, of the Baltimore conference. The appeal was made the order of the day, for Tuesday, 7th of May.\* Accordingly, the appeal was taken up on the 7th, as the special order of the day.† Mr. Early announced that the appellant was present, and had chosen W. A. Smith to conduct the appeal on his behalf. Mr. Collins had charge of the case on the part of the Baltimore conference. The secretary then read from the journal of the Baltimore conference the proceedings in the case, to this effect:‡

"That the name of Francis A. Harding having been called, the presiding elder said that he had, by marriage, become connected with slavery.

"Mr. Steele moved the reference of the matter to a committee of five, which was adopted.

"The committee reported that Mr. Harding had become possessed of five slaves—one named Harry, aged fifty-two; one woman, named Maria, aged fifty; one man, named John, aged twenty-two; a girl, named —, aged thirteen; and a child, aged two years—and recommended the following preamble and resolution for adoption:

"Whereas, the Baltimore conference can not, and will not, tolerate slavery in any of its members:

"Resolved, That brother Harding be required to execute a deed of manumission, and have the same enrolled in the proper court, and give to this conference, during this present session, a pledge that this shall be done during the present year.

"Brother Harding having stated the impossibility, with his views, of his compliance with this resolution, Mr. Collins moved for his suspension till he gave sufficient assurance of his compliance.

"The matter was again referred to a committee of five, for further investigation, who reported that they had entirely failed to induce brother Harding to comply with the wishes of the conference.

"Brothers Collins and Emory moved the following resolution, which was adopted:

"Resolved, That brother Harding be suspended till the next annual conference, or till he assures the Episcopacy that he has taken the necessary steps to secure the freedom of the slaves."

3. We will give the strong and leading points on which Mr. Smith based his plea against the decision of the Baltimore conference, and also the grounds of Mr. Collins in supporting the decision of this conference.

The grounds of appeal, assumed by Mr. Harding, were, 1. That, according to the laws of Maryland, he was not the owner of the slaves. They were held by his wife, by descent from her parents. 2. The laws of Maryland did not allow the liberated slaves to enjoy freedom, and under the rule of Discipline he was not required to comply with the condition of the conference; and, therefore, the pledge required was impracticable, and contrary to the rule of Discipline. 3. The practical results would be inhuman, as the demand, if acceded to, would separate parents and children, which a conscientious man could not consent to do.\*

In pleading the cause of Mr. Harding, Dr. Smith maintained the four following grounds, namely:‡

*First.* The appellant violated no rule of Discipline in refusing to comply with the condition of the Baltimore conference; because, by the laws of Maryland he did not, by marriage, become the owner of the property which fell to his wife. He then quotes the opinion of Judge Key, dated April 25, 1844, which says: "By an act of Assembly, no person can manumit a slave in Maryland; and by another act of our Assembly, a husband had no other nor further right to his wife's slaves than their labor, while he lives. He can neither sell nor liberate them. Neither can he and his wife, either jointly or separately, manumit her slaves, by deed or otherwise."‡

*Secondly.* The rule of the Church makes provision in his favor. Mr. Smith then quotes the rule in the Discipline concerning official members, and then the rule concerning traveling preachers, and applies them *both* to the case of Mr. Harding; though contrary to the express terms of the Rules, as will be seen by inspecting them where they are quoted below, and distinguished by Mr. Collins. He next quotes the laws of Maryland of 1831 and 1832, and con-

\* Journal of 1844, p. 23.

† Debates of 1844, p. 18.

‡ *Id.*, p. 29.

\* Debates of 1844, p. 19.

† *Id.*, pp. 20, 24.

‡ *Id.*, p. 20.

tends that these laws support his version of the case.\*

*Thirdly.* He argues that this construction of the Discipline has received the sanction of the General conference, in the report in 1840, on the petition of the Westmoreland local preachers, and quotes the resolution from the report. But, 1. This resolution is not in the Discipline, and, therefore, it is not a rule, or law of the Church. 2. It is a mere resolution in the report of the committee on the Westmoreland petition, and respected local preachers only. 3. So far as it is, in its language, applicable to traveling preachers, it is apocryphal; because it was passed the last night of the conference of 1840, in a hurry, without examination, so that the conference was not aware of its true character. 4. It has since been also applied to bishops as well as traveling preachers, so that it seems to be used as one of those expedients employed to introduce a doctrine which could never be allowed on its own merits. For instance, the time never was when such a resolution would be passed were it declared in terms that it was applicable to bishops or traveling preachers.†

*Fourthly.* The spirit of our Discipline, any more than the letter of it, does not justify the Baltimore conference in the suspension of Mr. Harding; for, while the Discipline deprecates the evil of slavery, it requires the members of the Church to conform their action to the laws of those states in which they live.‡

4. The foregoing comprises the outlines of the strong points insisted on by Mr. Smith. Before we give the reply of Mr. Collins, we will give some quotations from Mr. Smith, on the moral character of slavery. He says, in the outset: "I have always held myself to be, and now do, an antislavery man—not, however, an abolitionist in any sense of the word. And in this I differ not from my Methodist brethren in the ministry, and out of it. The sense which I attach to antislavery will be explained."|| "Our Discipline is conservative. Hear it: What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery? Answer, 1. We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery. I believe it—with all my heart I subscribe to it. And I can repeat that language with a feeling that none, except those from the south, like circumstance, can possibly do. I say it is an evil, because I feel it to be an evil. And who can not say the same who has trod the soil of the south? It is an evil. The Discipline declares the truth, the whole truth, and so far as it relates to the case, nothing but the truth; and a truth which, from our connection with the subject, we are not ashamed to own, nor afraid to proclaim from the house-tops, here or elsewhere. This is conservative, which always involves principles appropriate to both sides. On the other hand, while the Discipline deprecates the evil of slavery, it requires the members of the Church within those states to conform their action to the rules or laws of those states in which we live. This is assuming the doctrine, that though slavery is an evil, and a great evil, it is not necessarily a sin. We, of the south, take both sides of the question—it is a great evil, it is not necessarily a sin."§ "Who are the conservatives? Those who maintain one side of the Discipline, that slavery is a great evil, but who will not concede the principle that

it is not necessarily a sin? or are they the conservatives who take both sides of the book? . . . Now, on this broad platform the southern Church stands—slavery is a great evil, but beyond our control; yet not necessarily a sin. We must then quietly submit to a necessity which we can not control or remedy, endeavoring to carry the Gospel of salvation to both masters and slaves."\* "Does any one doubt that the patriarch Abraham was a slaveholder, or that slavery existed among the Jews, and that, too, under the Divine sanction, and by Divine appointment? Of that we are assured on the authority of God's word."† "They affirm of slavery in the south, that its origin was wicked—that the slaves were first acquired at the expense of our brother's blood."‡

Here is a mixture of truth and error, which, for the present, we let pass without observation.

5. Mr. Collins responded to Mr. Smith in a masterly manner, in a fair and open course of argument, without evasion or sophistry. He said that this appeal will bring up the connection of Methodism and Methodist preachers with slavery, more distinctly and clearly than any other question ever brought before this conference. He congratulated Mr. Smith for his conversion to antislavery principles; and while the southern brethren were according plaudits to him, he could not but think on the resolution of the Georgia conference, declaring "slavery to be no moral evil." He could not see that circumstances could make that thing good which in its commencement was evil. Beside, Mr. Smith, while speaking of the abstractions of slavery, placed human beings on the same ground as land, goods, and chattels.

The case of Mr. Harding was thus: He refused to abide by the decision of the conference. Hence he must bow to the conference or the conference to him. When all attempts at reasoning with him were disregarded, he was suspended as the only way of meeting his case. After this statement, Mr. Collins proceeds to show the fallacy of Mr. Smith's four positions, the brief outlines of which are as follows:||

*First.* The laws of Maryland do admit of manumission. The law of 1831 specifies the course to be taken with regard to manumitted slaves. It provides three modes of disposing of them. 1. They may go to Africa. 2. Or to free states. 3. Or if they fail to do so, the sheriff is required, not to take them up and sell them into slavery, but to convey them beyond the bounds of the state. The slave once free in Maryland is forever free. So the law is against Judge Key's statement. The law of 1832 simply concurs in this provision of the former law, and increases the fine on the sheriff if he refuses to execute the law. But all its enactments clearly and distinctly recognize manumission. The law of 1843 is against the law of God, for it makes the woman the head of the man. This law will work so much evil that it must, of necessity, be repealed. We can not answer for all the changes of the law of Maryland, and can not conform to them. The lawmakers may have intended to rivet the chains of slavery more firmly. They attempted to pass a law which outraged public sentiment on this subject. This raised the indignation of the Methodists and others, so that it was neces-

\* Debates, p. 25. † Id., pp. 26, 30. ‡ Id., p. 30.

|| Debates, p. 18. § Id., p. 26.

\* Debates, p. 28. † Id., p. 29. ‡ Id., p. 30.

|| Id., p. 33.

sary to retract after getting into the senate. Foiled in that, they may have intended to do by stealth what they could not accomplish openly. Still the design of the law of 1843 may have been benevolent, in preventing the property of females from being wantonly squandered. And no pious and intelligent woman would jeopardize the standing of her husband, as a minister, for the consideration of a few slaves. If the appellant wanted to manumit these slaves, his wife would not stand in the way one moment. The difficulty is with himself, who is at heart a slaveholder, and this plea is only put in for effect.

Manumission has frequently taken place in Maryland. Mr. Cornelius Howard left his slaves free by will, and the deed is on record in the proper court in Maryland, in 1843. Brother Blake, of the Baltimore conference, in the same predicament with Mr. Harding, had the deed recorded in Baltimore county court. The law in Maryland was inoperative. Slaves were set free all over the state.

*Secondly.* The rule of Discipline is against Mr. Harding. The Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church contemplates the relation of its members in a threefold point of view. 1. As it regards private members. 2. As it respects local preachers. 3. And as it concerns traveling preachers.

As to private members, the only rule that refers to them is in the General Rules, and only prohibits buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them.

In regard to official members, the rule reads: "We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; therefore no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom."

Here the rule is more stringent than that concerning private members. Official members are required to emancipate. The private member is not. The official member must emancipate if the laws will allow the slave to enjoy his freedom.

With respect to traveling preachers, the rule is still more stringent.

"When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives."

Here nothing is said about the liberated slave being permitted to enjoy freedom. The simple act of manumission is treated of, and made compulsory on the traveling preacher. "If practicable," he is to manumit; there is no other condition. Our private members are actual residents. Necessity rules them, to some extent, in this matter. The same is the case with local preachers; but traveling preachers labor in different states. The Baltimore conference has portions of its territory in Virginia, Maryland, and Pennsylvania. So the Baltimore conference tried Mr. Harding under the rule that concerns traveling preachers, and not by the rule made for local preachers.

*Thirdly.* Mr. Smith's construction of the Discipline is not confirmed by the resolution of the General conference of 1840. This rule was not made for traveling, but for local preachers.

*Fourthly.* As to the spirit of the Discipline, that was all against Mr. Harding. It is opposed to slavery, and nothing in the Discipline sanctions slavery. The people that are supplied with antislavery preachers partake of the character of the ministry. In the Roman Catholic portions of the Baltimore conference, where the priests own, buy, and sell slaves, slavery exists in its worst form.

After overturning the positions of Mr. Smith, Mr. Collins maintains the four following grounds on which the decision of the Baltimore conference rests:

*First.* Because Mr. Harding violated the Discipline, in refusing to manumit the slaves.

*Secondly.* He entered into this difficulty voluntarily. It was his own act. He was no slaveholder when the Baltimore conference received him on trial. They ordained him deacon and elder, and he knew he never could be ordained had he been a slaveholder.

*Thirdly.* He took his course knowingly. He can not plead ignorance. He knew the law of Maryland, which allowed of emancipation, and the administration of the Baltimore conference, supported by the Discipline of the Church.

*Fourthly.* In becoming a slaveholder he rendered himself unavailing as a traveling preacher. The Baltimore conference is composed of slaveholding and non-slaveholding territory, in about equal proportions. As a slaveholder, in a free state, they would not receive him. He would have to be confined entirely to the slaveholding section. This course would require the same class of men to be always in the same territory. It would, therefore, tend to locality, and to trammeling an itinerant ministry.

*Fifthly.* The position the Baltimore conference has ever occupied on the subject of slavery, forbade indulgence to one individual. This conference never sanctioned the connection of any of its members with slavery. It has been tried by marriage contracts, and that has failed. It has been tried by other means, but they all have failed. She always maintained her independence. She is on the old original Methodist basis. Convinced of the great evil of slavery, it would be cruel to force it on them. They took no new ground. They were just where they always were—standing as a break-water to pro-slavery in the south, and the waves of abolition from the north. The influence of Methodism is great in Maryland and Virginia in promoting emancipation. The rigors of slavery, by the influence of religion, have been greatly abated. And the members of the Baltimore conference who have sustained these measures were mostly raised in the slave states.

Mr. Collins concludes: "He thought he had proved that the journal of the conference was correct; that the laws of the state of Maryland admit of manumission; that the Discipline of the Church did bear on Mr. Harding's case; that that Discipline had been violated by him; that he was righteously liable to the consequences of that violation; that he had acted in the matter voluntarily and contumaciously, and that he had rendered himself unavailing, as a traveling preacher, to his brethren of the Baltimore conference." Yes, Mr. Collins has proved all these things to be true.

6. On Saturday, May 11th, the pleadings closed. Mr. Early moved that the decision of the Baltimore conference be reversed. The yeas were 56, and the nays 117, being a ma-

jectory of sixty-one against the reversal. The chair decided that this decision affirmed the action of the Baltimore conference in suspending Francis A. Harding from his ministerial standing. W. Capers took an appeal from the decision of the chair. The decision of the chair was sustained by a vote of 111 yeas to 53 nays. So the vote affirmed the act of the Baltimore conference in suspending Mr. Harding.\*

7. The decision of Harding's case gave great umbrage to the southern members of the conference, and it was considered as the commencement of a stand against the encroachments of slavery. These encroachments manifested themselves too clearly at the conferences of 1836 and 1840. Mr. Smith, when the case was decided, urged that he would present a protest against the proceedings, and declared, "I wish my protest to go forth to the American Church, and the American people, to serve as a beacon-light to warn the Church against the movements of the majority who can obliterate justice, and trample on the rights of a minority."† Mr. Early said, "He hoped they would remember that large majorities were apt to be tyrannical—he hoped they would keep calm. He was quite so—as much as the affliction in which that vote involved him and those around him, would allow."‡

Dr. Capers§ writes mournfully in the Southern Advocate. He says, "We are in trouble, and know not what to be at, but to pray for the Divine direction. It appears that since the secession of Scott, Sunderland, and others, on the rabid principles of ultra-abolitionism, many of the preachers have leaned that way, for the purpose of persuading the people who were sympathizing with the seceders, that they could be as ultra as they pleased and continue in the Church; and probably they have fixed the people in the same persuasion, to a degree they did not dream when they began their work." He thinks the decision in Harding's case puts the Church in a most painful attitude, north to south and south to north, with respect to Bishop Andrew. The principal difference in the two cases is, that in Georgia, where the Bishop married, the laws allow neither of emancipation, nor that the liberated slave should enjoy freedom; while in Maryland the laws allow of emancipation, but do not permit the liberated slaves to enjoy their freedom. He says, "I feel that we have a vital interest in this connection. The south sink or swim together. There is no division, no possibility of division among southern men who are of the south in this matter. It is not worth the while to split the hair which divides the present *conservatives*, as they call themselves, from the abolitionists of a few years ago. Any thing short of the most rabid and fanatical abolitionism is called conservative." Dr. Capers, also, commences to proclaim the misrepresentation, which applies the local preachers' rule on slavery to traveling preachers; and even applies the resolution of General conference of 1840, in the report on the Westmoreland case, to traveling preachers, whereas it was passed with sole reference to local preachers alone, and not to traveling preachers or bishops.¶

Mr. Lee, too, under date of May 15th,\* writes that Mr. Harding could not emancipate the slaves; that the laws of Maryland did not allow it. He also applies the local preachers' rule to traveling preachers, and thus misrepresents the case. He says, the "decision is regarded here as the knell of division and disunion." "The question of a probable division of the Church absorbs every other interest, and holds every other feeling in abeyance."

Thus the proclamation of division was made not only by members on the General conference floor, but also by corresponding writers in the southern papers. We may safely judge that the private letters from members of General conference, contained more inflammable matter than what was published. The proof of this is manifest from the fact, that the minds of southern men in favor of secession were far in advance of what the published matter would account for.

8. In view of the present state of affairs in the Church, Messrs. Capers and Olin offered the following preamble and resolutions, on Tuesday, May 14th:

"In view of the distracting agitation which has so long prevailed on the subject of slavery and abolition, and especially the difficulties under which we labor in the present General conference, on account of the relative position of our brethren north and south on this perplexing question; therefore,

*Resolved*, That a committee of three from the north, and three from the south, be appointed to confer with the bishops, and report within two days, as to the possibility of adopting some plan, and what, for the permanent pacification of the Church."

Mr. E. Thomson moved to amend by inserting, and "three from the middle." The amendment was laid on the table. The motion was amended by reading a "committee of six," in the place of a "committee of three from the north and three from the south." The resolution thus amended was unanimously adopted. The names of the committee were William Capers, Stephen Olin, William Winans, John Early, Leonidas L. Hamline, Phineas Crandall.†

The most accurate, historical account, we can furnish respecting the position of affairs, is derived from the short discussion which took place on the foregoing motion. We will give the leading sentiments from the speeches of Messrs. Capers, Durbin, Olin, Early, Crandall, and Smith.

Dr. Capers, in reference to the addition of three members from the middle, remarked, that there were only two points named in the resolution—slavery and abolition. He did not intend to say that this General conference was made up either of pro-slavery men or abolitionists, and that there is a third party who are neither. The question has only two sides—slaveholders and non-slaveholders. These two positions present, perhaps, in their different aspects, the general state of the Church. He was far from intending to say, that all the brethren in the non-slaveholding states are abolitionists, any more than that the others are all slaveholders.

Dr. Olin, on the original motion, spoke in a strain of powerful emotion. He had feared, for two or three days past, that, though they might

\* Journal, pp. 33, 34. Debates, p. 52.

† Debates, p. 52.

‡ Id., p. 52.

§ Letter dated New York, May 13th, published in S., of

May 24th.

¶ Scraps, Vol. I, p. 83.

\* Letter in R., of May 23d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 80.

† Journal, pp. 42-44.



escape the disasters that threatened them, it was not probable. He had seen the cloud gathering, and so dark that there was no hope, unless God should give them hope. We stand committed on this question by our principles and our views of policy, and neither of us dare move a step from our position. He had a deep feeling of apprehension that the difficulties that are upon us now threaten to be unmanageable. He did not see how northern men can yield their ground, or southern men give up theirs. If our affairs remain in their present position, and this General conference do not speak out clearly and distinctly on this subject, however unpalatable it may be, we can not go home, under this distracting question, without a certainty of breaking up our conferences. He visited ten of the northern conferences, and with few exceptions they were influenced by the most ardent and the strongest desire to maintain the Discipline of the Church. The men who stand here as abolitionists are as ardently attached to Methodist Episcopacy as the south are. The northern brethren, who seem to be arrayed in a hostile attitude, have suffered a great deal before they have taken their position, and they are disposed, if they believed they could do it without destruction to the Church, to make concession. He looked to the measure now before the conference with desire rather than hope. If both parties consent to come together, and speak what is in their hearts, they will at least endeavor to adopt some plan of pacification, that if they go away, they may hope to meet again as brethren. If the southern brethren concede what the northern brethren wish—if they concede that holding slaves is incompatible with holding the ministry—they may as well go to the Rocky Mountains as to their own sunny plains. The people would not bear it. They feel shut up to their principles on this subject. But if our difficulties be unmanageable, let our spirit be right. If we must part, let us meet and pour out our tears together, and let us not give up till we have tried. If we push our principles so far as to break up the connection, this may be the last time we meet. I fear it! I fear it! I see no way of escape. If we find any, it will be in mutual moderation, in calling for help from God, and in looking upon each other as we were wont to do.

Dr. Durbin had both a *desire* and a *hope* that they would yet be delivered from the danger which hung over their heads. If they said slavery, *under all circumstances*, is incompatible with the functions of the Gospel ministry, they put their brethren in the south in a position which must destroy all hopes of usefulness. But we have not said this; we can not say it; the committee will not say it.

Mr. Drake deprecated the idea of division. He did not believe that ever a Church divided in which there was so much personal and Christian attachment and love between its ministers as in their connection at present. He prayed God to avert such a dire calamity from them.

Mr. Crandall said he was as much for peace as any man; but there was a dark shade of difference between the brethren of the two extremes. He supposed he should be taken as standing on one extreme. As such, they were standing on a volcano which might, at any moment, destroy them. There was slavery in the Church, and the Church tolerated it, and they must meet it. But the north showed no disposition for a division. He did not know a man in the north who desired division.

Mr. Early assured the conference that the south were prepared to make any concessions that would not affect their essential principles or their usefulness.

Dr. Smith declared that he had never, for one moment, cherished the desire for division. The south did not desire it. True, at Cincinnati, in 1836, the members from the south were supposed to have taken preliminary measures to disunion. But that was a mistake. Their course was designed to stave off those incipient measures which would result in division. The south did *not* desire disunion. Come when it may, it should be forced upon them.\*

9. During the debate on the resolution of Drs. Capers and Olin, several speakers referred to the importance of prayer to God on this occasion. Accordingly, Dr. Durbin moved the following resolution, which was adopted:

"Resolved, That to-morrow be observed by this conference as a day of fasting and humiliation before God, and prayer for his blessing upon the committee of six, in conjunction with the bishops, on the present difficulties; and that the hour from twelve to one o'clock be devoted to religious services in the conference."†

The day was spent with great solemnity and devotion by the members of conference, both privately, and in their conference capacity. On Thursday, May 16th, Bishop Soule, in behalf of the committee of pacification, reported verbally, that they had not yet been able to make a report. Accordingly, the conference granted them further time.‡

On Friday, 17th, Bishop Soule, in behalf of the committee of pacification, made a verbal report, requesting the delegates from the northern conferences to meet in the church, at three o'clock this afternoon, and those from the southern conferences to meet in the lecture-room, at the same hour.¶ Thus, after two days' deliberation, the committee were unable to agree on any thing that they thought would be of any practicable use. They therefore referred the matter to the parties themselves, by calling them to meet and consider.

10. Let us look at the matter for a moment. The Discipline allowed no traveling preacher to retain slaves in any of the conferences where the laws allowed freedom. Accordingly, the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, Kentucky, and Missouri conferences never allowed their members to be slaveholders. The south were determined to break down this, both in evading the Discipline and in urging the breach of it practically. They evaded the Discipline by the use of the resolution of the General conference of 1840, which referred to local preachers, in applying it to traveling preachers, and afterward they applied it to bishops. They also applied the rule in the Discipline, that concerned local preachers, to the case of traveling preachers. The traveling preacher was to emancipate, *if practicable*, whether the freed man could enjoy freedom in the state or not. But the local preacher was not required to do so, unless the freed slave could have freedom in the state where he was emancipated. The case of Harding tried the matter. In all the border conferences, the preachers were free from slaveholding; and then Bishop Andrew's case was about to come forward. In Harding's, the Discipline and the long Methodist usage were respected. The same fate

\* Debates, pp. 54-57.

† Id., p. 47.

‡ Journal, p. 43.

¶ Id., p. 49.

was to follow the case of the Bishop. It is true some abolitionists would exclude all slaveholders. But the great body of them were content with the Discipline as it was, and with the execution of it in the cases of Harding and Bishop Andrew. This puts the south in fault, and the secession

was of their own making, and they alone are chargeable with it.

The north and south had separately such private meetings as they deemed proper, from time to time, arranging their business to suit the exigencies of the occasion.

## CHAPTER XXI.

### BISHOP ANDREW'S CASE.

1. THE case of Bishop Andrew is a mere continuance, as to the subject, of the one already decided by the conference. In January, 1844, Bishop Andrew married a widow lady, who owned slaves by a former husband. He took no step toward setting them free, but rather took steps to have their freedom placed entirely beyond his power. His becoming a slaveholder was not noticed in any of the southern papers, and indeed little or nothing concerning it was known in the Church in the middle or northern states. The thing, however, was noised in Philadelphia, as the preachers were on their way to General conference; and it became generally known to the members of conference on their arrival in New York. The case of Harding, at an early day, was before the conference, and it was necessary to dispose of this before the case of Bishop Andrew should be entered on. Beside, the committee of pacification must try what they could do, for the case of the Bishop was the one which was to try the whole subject, and be the standard to decide matters finally. This committee, after several attempts, could do nothing. The southern members had schooled the Bishop so effectually that he became their tame, subservient instrument, by which to carry out their resistance to the Discipline of Methodism, or in failing to do this, the purpose was to divide the Church, peaceably, if they could, violently, if they must.

On Friday, May 17th, while the Church was threatened with disruption, twenty-two delegations from the north met, in order to consider what could be done to avert the serious disaster which now threatens us. After careful, mature, and prayerful consideration, five brethren of the oldest and most influential members were selected to have a friendly interview with Bishop Andrew, in order to converse with him as a brother, learn his views and feelings, and, if possible, ascertain what step could be taken among brethren to avoid the threatened mischief. The names of this committee were Nathan Bangs, Charles Elliott, George Webber, T. Spicer, and a fifth, whose name we do not now remember. These brethren were sent on an errand of peace only, without any instructions whatever, except to inquire what could be done to avert the danger which every one now both saw, felt, and deprecated. One thing only they were anxious to present to the Bishop—the state of the Churches in the non-slaveholding conferences, in regard to the admission of slavery into the Episcopacy. Dr. Bangs was chosen to be the spokesman. At this interview, after the statement of the case by Dr. Bangs, the Bishop declined to have any conversation of any sort with the committee. He said, however, that, had they any thing to communicate, they must do it by writing, and he

would give his replies in writing. As the object of the committee was purely fraternal and peaceable, they declined any such measure, and retired from the house, disappointed, grieved, and mortified. So deep was their mortification that they parted at the corner of the next street, without any conversation except that they expressed their deep sorrow in saying their attempts for peace were frustrated. The Bishop altogether unrepresents this committee, in his address to the public. The interview occurred May 18th.

2. On the 20th of May, Mr. Collins offered the following preamble and resolution, which were adopted; namely:

“Whereas, it is currently reported, and generally understood, that one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church has become connected with slavery; and whereas it is due to this General conference to have a proper understanding of the matter; therefore,

“Resolved, That the Committee on the Episcopacy be instructed to ascertain the facts in the case, and report the results of their investigations to this body to-morrow morning.

“J. A. COLLINS,

“J. B. HOUGHTALING.”

Mr. Collins, in offering the resolution, said that at present he simply offered the resolution because this matter met them at every turn, and interfered with the whole of their business. When the motion was offered, Bishop Hedding called the attention of the conference to the rule of the Discipline, requiring them to remember, in all their discussions, that the eye of God was upon them, and he hoped, at present especially, they would remember this.\*

3. A few days previous to the 20th, a report got into circulation that a plan was formed by northern members of the conference, to force the south into secession, and it was noised that Dr. Bond was privy to the whole affair. Dr. Bond addressed a note to the president of the conference, disclaiming any knowledge of the whole matter, and desiring to be heard before the conference on the subject. The note was read, and the Doctor declared that the report reached him last evening; that he had not heard of any such plans being formed at any time. He never heard a man from the north, east, or west, speak of a secession but as of a great calamity, that ought to be averted by any sacrifice consistent with duty to God and the interests of the Church. We never heard any say, even in reference to the case of Bishop Andrew, that a secession would be advisable or proper, under any circumstances. Others, also, disclaimed any knowledge of it. Dr. Smith explained the matter thus. It had been stated frequently in terms that led to the

\* Journal, p. 53. Debates, p. 68.

conviction that it was the purpose of many in the conference to pursue measures, in reference to the case of Bishop Andrew, which must necessarily result in division. It was of this that he and his southern friends spoke, and, as they thought, justly complained. The whole amounted to this: Many declared that Bishop Andrew ought to cease to be bishop, or give up, or be done with his slaves. The southern men declared that they would secede, should the Bishop be touched. This, therefore, is the whole of the rumored coerced secession, of which the south complained.

4. On the 21st of May, the Episcopal Committee reported, and their report was made order of the day for to-morrow. Accordingly, on the 22d, the report was taken up, and reads as follows:\*

"The Committee on Episcopacy, to whom was referred a resolution, submitted yesterday, instructing them to inquire whether any one of the superintendents is connected with slavery, beg leave to present the following as their report on this subject:

"The Committee had ascertained, previous to the reference of the resolution, that Bishop Andrew is connected with slavery, and had obtained an interview with him on the subject; and having requested him to state the whole facts in the premises, hereby present a written communication from him in relation to this matter, and beg leave to offer it as his statement and explanation of the case.

"*To the Committee on Episcopacy*—Dear Brethren,—In reply to your inquiry, I submit the following statement of all the facts bearing on my connection with slavery. Several years since, an old lady, of Augusta, Georgia, bequeathed to me a mulatto girl, in trust that I should take care of her till she should be nineteen years of age; that, *with her consent*, I should then send her to Liberia; and that, in case of her refusal, I should keep her, and make her as free as the laws of the state of Georgia would permit. When the time arrived she refused to go to Liberia, and, of her own choice, remains *legally* my slave, although I derive no pecuniary profit from her. She continues to live in her own house on my lot; and has been, and is at present, at perfect liberty to go to a free state at her pleasure; but the laws of the state will not permit her emancipation, nor admit such deed of emancipation to record, and she refuses to leave the state. In her case, therefore, I have been made a slaveholder legally, but not with my own consent.

"Secondly. About five years since the mother of my former wife left to her daughter, *not to me*, a negro boy; and, as my wife died without a will, more than two years since, by the laws of the state he becomes legally my property. In this case, as in the former, emancipation is impracticable in the state; but he shall be at liberty to leave the state whenever I shall be satisfied that he is prepared to provide for himself, or I can have sufficient security that he will be protected and provided for in the place to which he may go.

"Thirdly. In the month of January last I married my present wife, she being at the time possessed of slaves, inherited from her former husband's estate, and belonging to *her*. Shortly after my marriage, being unwilling to become their owner, regarding them as strictly hers,

and the law not permitting their emancipation, I secured them to her by a deed of trust.

"It will be obvious to you, from the above statement of facts, that I have neither bought nor sold a slave; that, in the only two instances in which I am legally a slaveholder, emancipation is impracticable. As to the servants owned by my wife, I have no legal responsibility in the premises, nor could my wife emancipate them if she desired to do so. I have thus plainly stated all the facts in the case, and submit the statement for the consideration of the General conference.

"Yours, respectfully,

"JAMES O. ANDREW."

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"ROBERT PAINE, *Chairman*."

A. Griffith and J. Davis offered the following preamble and resolution, which were read and debated:

"Whereas, the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has become connected with slavery, as communicated in his statement in his reply to the inquiry of the Committee on the Episcopacy, which reply is embodied in their report, number 3, offered yesterday; and, whereas, it has been, from the origin of said Church, a settled policy, and the invariable usage, to elect no person to the office of bishop who was embarrassed with this 'great evil,' as, under such circumstances, it would be impossible for a bishop to exercise the functions and perform the duties assigned to a general superintendent with acceptance, in that large portion of his charge in which slavery does not exist; and, whereas, Bishop Andrew was himself nominated by our brethren of the slaveholding states, and elected by the General conference of 1832, as a candidate who, though living in the midst of a slaveholding population, was, nevertheless, free from all personal connection with slavery; and, whereas, this is, of all periods in our history as a Church, the one least favorable to such an innovation upon the practice and usage of Methodism as to confide a part of the itinerant general superintendency to a slaveholder; therefore,

"Resolved, That the Rev. James O. Andrew be, and he is hereby, affectionately requested to resign his office as one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church."\*

Mr. Griffith, in support of his motion, said that the bishop was the chief officer of the General conference—the chief officer of the associate annual conferences, who have the primary authority to control the house of God. The bishop is the officer of the General conference, created for special purposes, and for no other than the purposes specified. Mr. Asbury refused to accept the office from Mr. Wesley, unless the General conference should elect him. The General conference has power to regulate its officers, and to provide for all exigencies. Suppose a bishop becomes alienated in mind, the conference may remove him, and put another in his place. Indeed, we have the signature of all our bishops, in their address to the conference, declaring that they are not a distinct order separate from presbyters, but that they are officers in the strict and proper sense of the term. Now, Bishop Andrew can not perform the duties of his appointment with acceptance to the people he was elected to serve;

\* Journal, pp. 61, 63. Debates, pp. 73, 81.

\* Journal, pp. 63, 64.

and because he has voluntarily placed himself in a situation that renders it impracticable for him to subvert the ends of his appointment, we request him to resign. We are oppressed by the act of an officer of this body. Are we not here to put ourselves right?\*

Mr. Sandford thought it highly expedient that the Bishop should resign, because, in the majority of the conferences, there would be convulsions, a large loss of members, and there would be furnished an opportunity for enemies to exert a destructive influence in the community. It was utterly impossible to leave Bishop Andrew in his present relation without doing a great injury to the Church. All they proposed to do, and all that was necessary, was just to place him where they found him when they put him into the superintendency.†

Mr. Winans, in commenting on the resolution, declared that a slaveholder would have been elected in 1832 had it not been for the management and interference of certain members of the Baltimore conference, and then argued that Bishop Andrew was not the candidate of the south, but the north. If the conference pass this motion, they will create an uncontrollable necessity that there should be a disconnection of that large portion of the Church from your body. This grows out of the established laws of society, under the control of political and civil government, which no minister can control or influence in the smallest degree. If you pass this action in the mildest form, you will cut us off from all connection with masters and servants, and will leave us no option but to be disconnected with your body. We will never go voluntarily. Already the evil effects of the abolition excitement are becoming apparent; for to that is to be traced the dire necessity you plead for. It has hedged in the poor negro, and shut him up from access to his minister, and it has shut the mouth of his minister.‡

Mr. Bowen said that whether the Bishop became connected with slavery, voluntarily or involuntarily, he ought to resign. We deprecate division. Our republic is connected by the two ties of civil and ecclesiastical union, and to dissolve one of these ties would weaken both. But it must be allowed that secession is preferable to schism. By schism, of course, is understood a division in the Church; and, if this must prevail through the whole connection, we would choose secession rather than schism. The Bishop has rendered himself unavailable as a general superintendent. We have the control over every officer in the Church, and the interests of the Church require the measure. If any portion of the Church should deem themselves called upon to secede, however we must deprecate such an event, it is unavoidable.¶

Dr. Pierce said, *First*. That the south are united; and he entered his protest against the consequences connected with the resolution. *Secondly*. He indorsed all that Mr. Winans said. To request the Bishop to resign was another way of requesting him to yield a principle vital to the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church. There can be no other conclusion than this reached by any man acquainted with the local affairs of the south. He affirmed that, so far as religion has been

concerned in the south, no question has ever done so much harm to saving godliness as the intermeddling of the Methodist Church with the question of slavery; and could the cap of hell be lifted to-day, he feared that the groans of many damned would be heard coming up, and dating the ground of their fall from the merciless act of the Church against a free constitution and laws of the land. Pass this resolution, and the whole of the southern states are hurled into confusion at once. He was against the resolution, not because he was a pro-slavery man, but because God did not call him to legislate on these matters.\*

Dr. Smith said the arguments of the abolitionists had been as harmless as the lisping of helpless infancy in their influence on the south. They had gained some bad eminence, and were the means of doing harm to the poor blacks.†

Mr. Stringfield said the resolution seeks to remove the Bishop by means so remote as to cast the responsibility on him. What we intend to do let us appear to do. But it is inexpedient to remove him, because to put another in his place would be difficult indeed. His removal would be ascribed to his connection with slavery. To remove him would be yielding a vital principle. It would concede that slavery is a disqualification for ministerial office where, as in his case, emancipation is impossible.‡

Mr. Crowder said it was conceded that Bishop Andrew violated no precept of Christianity, nor any rule of Discipline in becoming connected with slavery. The ground of the expediency of calling on the Bishop to resign is from abolition. This has done much evil in the south. Time was when colored men were permitted to preach in the south, but it is not so now. Abolition, in connection with other causes, induced the legislatures of the south, by law, to close the mouths of the colored men, except in a few favored instances. Abolition has brought strife and division between north and south.¶

Mr. Spencer contended that there was a rule in the Discipline to meet the case. A bishop could be expelled for imprudent conduct, and the course of the Bishop was imprudent. For, though he were as pure as an angel, yet, as a slaveholder, he is utterly unqualified for the functions of his office in the greater part of the Church. He ought, therefore, to resign, or be deposed. He is a bishop of the whole Methodist Episcopal Church, and is bound to go into every part of the work. If he can not get rid of slavery where he lives, let him remove to where he can be rid of it.

Dr. Bangs thought that there were many things that would disqualify a man for holding the office of a bishop that did not amount to an immorality. If Bishop Hedding held and maintained that it was a sin to hold slaves under any circumstances, this would disqualify him for his work as superintendent over the whole Church. Again: should a bishop marry a free colored woman, this, in the view of the community, would disqualify him for his office, though it would not be an immorality. So, Bishop Andrew, by connecting himself with slavery, can not acceptably exercise his duties as a general officer of the Church. The Bishop acted imprudently in being connected by mar-

\* Debates, pp. 82-85. † Id., p. 87. ‡ Id., pp. 89, 90. ¶ Id., p. 90.

\* Debates, pp. 91, 92. † Id., p. 93. ‡ Id., p. 94. ¶ Id., pp. 94, 95.

riage with slavery, and disqualified himself for performing the duties of a bishop, and should, therefore, resign.\*

5. On Thursday, May 23d, Mr. Finley presented his substitute to the conference, which reads as follows:

"Whereas, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and, whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not, in some places, entirely prevent it; therefore,

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

J. B. FINLEY,

"J. M. TRIMBLE."†

Mr. Finley said, the resolution is based on the principle that the act of the Bishop had brought after it circumstances which would impede or prevent his circulation as an itinerant general superintendent. We don't depose him as a bishop; we only say it is the sense of the General conference that he ought to cease to exercise the office till this embarrassment ceases. A little time will, by and by, enable him, consistently with his interests in the south, to free himself from this incubus of slavery.‡

Dr. Olin said the Discipline neither contains, nor can it be deduced from it that it contains, any provision against the election of a slaveholding bishop. He looked on the subject, not as a legal, but as a great practical question. The brethren in the north look on the subject as unmanageable and overwhelming; and this is the opinion of the most prudent men in the Church. The General conference was restrained by constitutional restrictions. It can not do away episcopacy, nor infringe on its character as a general superintendency; it can not conflict with the General Rules and the rights of individuals. Slaveholding is not constitutionally a forfeiture of a man's right to the office of a bishop; but the Church has a right to determine whether slaveholding, or abolitionism, or any other fact, shall be taken into consideration in elections. He thought a bishop might as properly be deposed, if unacceptable, as an editor; but to leave the bishop in his office as a slaveholder would produce division in the north.¶

Mr. Drake declared that in no vital principle did the substitute differ from the original resolution, though its preamble was preferable. He saw no difference between the Bishop's resigning and desisting from the exercise of the functions of bishop; "nor can this course be pursued and the union of the Church be preserved. Bishop Andrew must be continued in the episcopal office, or you certainly divide the Church." Mr. Drake then recommended to district the conferences, and thus place Bishop Andrew in the south.§

Mr. Slicer would go for the substitute for the sake of the slave. It did not concede to the south or north all that they respectively desire. The middle conferences could all go for it. It

was well known there existed throughout the extreme south the most rabid and objectionable pro-slavery sentiments; and this idea of domestic slavery was the chimera, the hobgoblin which troubled so many at the north. Bishop Andrew had not infringed the Discipline, but he had offended against the law of expediency. The adoption of the substitute would meet with almost universal approval.\*

Mr. Crandall thought that the south would not thank the authors of the original or the substitute, since these resolutions declared how far the authors and favorers could go to meet the south by way of accommodation. If he thought the substitute had no loophole he would vote for it; but he feared, if the Bishop refused submission for four years more, it would then be difficult to control the matter at all.†

Mr. Cass affirmed the Bishop did wrong. Slavery, as it exists in the United States, is wrong, morally wrong. The Bishop did wrong in voluntarily becoming a slaveholder with his eyes open. He has, therefore, disturbed the peace of the Church; and, because he has done wrong, he ought to be censured. If Bishop Andrew hold his office there will be large secessions, or whole conferences will leave. A slaveholder can not sit in the episcopal chair in an annual conference in New England.‡

Mr. G. F. Pierce said: "I do not feel a great deal of solicitude about the issue of the case; and my solicitude is diminished because I regard the great question of unity as settled by the previous action of the conference in another case." The course pursued was part of a system designed to deprive southern ministers of their rights, and to disfranchise the whole southern Church. The action of the conference has brought the Church into a position of antagonism to the laws of the land. This action is not only an outrage on the common justice of the case, but revolutionary in its movements, and destined to affect all the ramifications of the Church. The argument from expediency, he thought, was of less weight, as New England would be incurable, at any rate, and there would be large secessions in the northern conferences if the Bishop be deposed, or resigns. The action would deprive the Bishop of a constitutional right. He has the right to hold slaves under the Discipline of the Church.¶

Dr. Longstreet, among other things, thus speaks of Bishop Andrew: "At length, by a train of circumstances, he who occupies one of the first places in the conference finds himself connected with slavery. When he reaches here he finds the conference in commotion; he is pained and agonized; he convenes the delegates from the slaveholding conferences, and, for the sake of peace, proposes to resign; but we to a man, without a dissenting voice, declared to him 'that, if he sought the peace of the Church by that course, he would be disappointed of his object; for that his resignation to appease the clamor of the abolitionists would but spread general discontent through the whole south. We can not lie down and see you deposed. If it has come to this, that being connected with slavery disqualifies you, we too are disqualified.'"§

\* Debates, pp. 97, 98. † Journal, p. 65. Debates, p. 100. ‡ Id., p. 100. § Id., pp. 100-105. ¶ Id., pp. 105, 106.

\* Journal, p. 107. † Id., pp. 109-112.

† Debates, p. 108. ‡ Id., pp. 112-115.

‡ Id., p. 109.

Mr. J. T. Peck replied at length to Mr. G. F. Pierce, that the case of Bishop Andrew was a practical question, bearing not on the south merely, but on the whole Church; that the action, however, was widely different from that had in the case of Mr. Harding; that, though the north are not willing that a slaveholder should be a bishop, they have not determined that no slaveholder should be a minister. The Discipline prescribes the circumstances under which a traveling preacher may hold slaves, but it does not say under what circumstances a bishop may hold slaves. He is truly the pastor of the whole Church, and slavery will not allow him to be so. If the Bishop should resign he could exercise the office of an elder in the Church to advantage.\*

On Monday, the 27th, the case of Bishop Andrew was resumed, and Mr. Hamline made his celebrated speech, the brief outlines of which we give; but we refer the entire speech to our collection of documents.†

He said there are two questions: *First. Has the General conference constitutional authority to pass this resolution? Secondly. Is it proper or fitting that we should do it?* The resolution is a *mandamus* measure. Its passage will absolutely suspend the exercise of the superintendent's functions till he complies with the prescribed condition. The measure of power required to do this is the same which would be requisite to suspend or depose a bishop for such reasons as the resolution mentions, or, in other words, for *improper conduct*. He argued the existence of this authority in the General conference,

*First.* From the genius of our polity on points which the most nearly resemble it. Strict amenability in Church officers, subordinate and inferior, is provided for in our Discipline, and regards not only major but minor morals; not only the *vices*, but also the *improprieties* of behavior. In regard to office, the officer may be removed summarily or without trial, for no crime, by a sole agent, and without appeal. The same applies to the bishop.

He argues the authority of the General conference to depose a bishop summarily, for improprieties morally innocent, which embarrass the exercise of his functions.

*Secondly.* From the relations of the General conference to the Church and to the Episcopacy. The conference—with the annual conferences, in some cases—has *legislative, judicial, and executive* supremacy. It can make rules of every sort under a few restrictions.

It has *legislative power* in making rules and regulations; it has *judicial power*; it is a court of appeals, not only for appellants, but original complainants.

The General conference has executive or ministerial functions, which are supreme or all-controlling, for it is the *fountain* of all official executive authority. The bishop derives his authority from the conference.

From this reasoning the consequence followed that a bishop was as accountable to the General conference as any other officer or servant of the Church was to the power invested with control over him.‡

Mr. Comfort said, "The replicants urged against the proposition before the conference that *division* of the Church will be the conse-

quence of its passage. But he believed there was no element in the constitution authorizing this General conference to make any movement in that direction. It would be to transcend their province. Secession there may be, but not division.\*"

Dr. Smith made a long speech. He maintained the Bishop did not act improperly in his marriage, or his becoming owner of slaves. He then defined the position of parties; namely, the southern party, the abolition party, and the conservatives, who would receive the bishop; that the compromise of the Church on slavery protected the south. He then drew the following conclusions:

(1.) The adoption of either the substitute or the original motion would be in the highest degree proscriptive to the southern ministry, and insulting to the feelings of members and citizens in the south.

(2.) Submission, in the more southern states, will jeopardize our missions among the slaves, and debar us from a large portion of the colored people.

(3.) Sooner than submit, a division of our ecclesiastical confederation would become a high and solemn duty—a duty to which we stand pledged by the sacredness of our character, as ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ and our fidelity to the states in which we live.

Mr. Smith then adds:

"The General conference, I am aware, has no authority directly to effect this separation. This subject must go back to the organic bodies we represent, and to the people—the membership of the Church—who must be consulted, and whose voice must be regarded as an authoritative decision, from which there is no appeal."

Mr. Smith further says:

"Any interference whatever, on your part, with this question is insufferable. The political interests of the country forbid it; and will sooner or later demand, that all ecclesiastical bodies, who shall abuse the design of their union, *shall be dissolved*. If we can not maintain our union upon a more harmonious basis, we can not safely have it all."†

Mr. Collins contended that the Discipline had always been antislavery, and that Bishop Andrew had violated the Discipline, and read a preamble and resolutions, which were not acted on; but on account of their excellency and relevancy we quote them:

"Whereas, the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise; and whereas, a large portion of our ministry and membership in many of the annual conferences are known to have been always opposed to the election of a slaveholding bishop, believing that such an event is in contravention of the Discipline, which contemplates the Episcopacy as an 'itinerant general superintendency,' and calculated also to strengthen the bonds of slavery; and whereas, the peace and unity of the Church in the non-slaveholding conferences will be liable to serious interruption from the connection of Bishop Andrew with slavery, without some definite action of the General conference in relation to it; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved*, That the members of this General conference are constrained to express their

\* Debates, pp. 115-121.

† Document, No. 47.

‡ Debates, pp. 128-134.

\* Debates, p. 135.

† Id., pp. 136-144

profound regret, that Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the general superintendents, has become connected with slavery, in view of the fact, that while thus circumstanced he can not perform the duties of his office acceptably to a large portion of the ministers and members of our Church.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That Bishop Andrew be, and he hereby is, affectionately and earnestly requested to take the necessary measures to free himself from connection with slavery at the earliest period practicable within the ensuing four years.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That all the matter pertaining to the appeal of Rev. Silas Comfort, tried at the session of the General conference in 1840, be erased from the Journal."

Bishop Andrew then addressed the conference; gave an account of his election, of his second marriage, and of his slaves, and his labors among the colored people. He concluded by desiring that the conference would decide his case.\* His address is placed in the documents.†

Mr. Finley spoke next. He maintained that Bishop Andrew, in consequence of being a slaveholder, could not travel at large, and would, therefore, infract the constitutional rule that required a general itinerant superintendency; that our Discipline is against slavery; the evil increased by the marriage of preachers; and that to hold slaves through charity was inconsistent.‡

Mr. Winans argued, that "the General conference may expel a bishop for improper conduct if they deem it necessary. If they have a right to expel a man, it does not follow that they have a right to suspend or reprove him. On the contrary, the General conference have no power to suspend, depose, or reprove a bishop." He said, "The law applicable to a traveling preacher was applicable to a bishop, and he desired to be shown how it was not— not by inference or induction, but by putting their finger on the point." "Slaveholders had been making concessions from time immemorial—the brethren at the south must meet the question before them with solemn declarations, that they do not stand connected with the abolition body called the Methodist Episcopal Church." "He could not forgive the Baltimore delegation. Why? Simply because they claimed conservatism. Conservatism of what? Conservatism of the Discipline? No: they were immolating the Discipline on the altar of abolitionism. Conservatism of the Episcopacy? No: they had bound hand and foot one of their bishops, and intended to sacrifice him. Conservatism of Methodism? of the union of the Church? They were plunging a dagger into the very vitals of that union. He could not forgive them, unless they would take back the assumption of conservatism. In what were they conservatists? Why, they were conservatists of abolition, and they must either take back their claim to conservatism of the Discipline, or he could not forgive their inconsistency. He loved the Baltimore conference, but when they took him by the beard to kiss him, and then plunged a dagger into his breast, he must say it was too bad; it was the unkindest cut of all, and he could not help exclaiming, '*Et tu Brute!*' He should not quarrel with the

Baltimore delegation if they gave their vote according to the immutable laws of justice. He would never believe their conservatism, while they crushed the south and drove them to an independent existence, as drive they would. He had spoken too long, but if he had the strength, he would protract the debate till January, rather than that they should be driven forth a ruined community—dissevered, destroyed, and gloried over by other denominations, who were more prudent in these matters than themselves.\*\*

Mr. Cartwright said he had joined the Western conference in 1805, and in those early days he never heard a Methodist preacher who did not oppose slavery, in private and in public; nor was there an advocate at that time to be found for slavery among Methodist preachers. He stated that if we can regulate every person till we come to the bishop and then stop, we are in a deplorable condition. He then told how he became security for over two hundred emancipated slaves and had set his own free. He scouted the idea, that if we do not pass this resolution we become an abolition Church. He knew that Bishop M'Kendree was sternly opposed to slavery.†

Mr. Dunwoody, from South Carolina conference, said, "The southern men were generally charged with being pro-slavery men. It was not so, however. They were opposed to the principle of slavery, and would be as long as they lived. He believed slavery to be a great moral evil, because it could not be denied that there were people who treated slaves in some sort as they would the beasts of the field, and drove and sold them as they would cattle or merchandise; and, therefore, it must be a great moral evil, and it was a base imposition on the public to say that the south were favorable to it. Yet he did not believe it was a moral evil in every case." He strongly opposed the resolution in Bishop Andrew's case, and closed his remarks by saying, "He had a letter from one of the brethren in the south, from which it appeared the greatest alarm prevailed there, and he did not know but before the conference broke up, another conference would be called in the south, to take measures to secede from the Church altogether.‡ We give Mr. Dunwoody's speech in full.¶

Bishop Soule delivered a long speech, in behalf of the arraigned bishop, uniting in his own person the special pleader, the authority of the bishop, and moderator of the body before which he pleads. He had accustomed himself to this mode, on various occasions, in the annual conferences, contrary to the general use of our Church. He thus became a partisan pleader in special cases for his special friends, or to secure the passage of a favorite measure. The plea is verbose, and abounding in repetitions, containing many sound sentiments; but the special case of his client is never lost sight of, and the general cause of the southern party of course is the leading burden of the whole.

He began by an assumption of impartiality in regard to north and south, and declares his devotion to the unity of the Church. He next presented the case of Bishop Andrew, by stating that the whole subject was before the conference, all the facts in the case without reserve. He then quoted a long extract from the Episco-

\* Debates, pp. 148-150.

† Document, No. 48.

‡ Document, No. 49. Debates, pp. 150-152.

\* Debates, pp. 154-156.

† Id., pp. 163-166.

† Id., pp. 156-159.

‡ Document, No. 50.

pal Address of 1840, on the subject of slavery, and censured openly the author of Bishop Roberts's life, because "this document, as it stood connected with his name, has not appeared in his memoir;" as if that unpretending volume must be stuffed with Church annals, or made the vehicle of discussing the subject of slavery, in defiance of the advice of the General conference of 1836.

He then says, "I wish to say, explicitly, that if the superintendents are only to be regarded as the officers of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and consequently, as officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, liable to be deposed at will by a simple majority of this body without form of trial, no obligation existing growing out of the constitution and laws of the Church even to assign cause wherefore—I say, if this doctrine be a correct one, every thing I have to say hereafter is powerless, and falls to the ground."\*

"I desire to understand my landmarks as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church—not the bishop of the General conference, not the bishop of any annual conference."†

"Whether this conference is to sustain the position on which I have acted or not, they are very soon to settle in the vote which is before them; I mean they are to settle this question, whether it is the right of this body, and whether they have the power to depose a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; whether they have a right to depose my colleague; to depose me without a form of trial: see ye to that."

"Will this conference occupy this position, that they have power and authority to depose Bishop Andrew, without a form of trial, without charge, and without being once called to answer for himself in the premises?"‡

"The constitution has provided that no preacher, no person was to be deprived of the right of trial, according to the forms of Discipline, and of the right of an appeal; but if I understand the doctrine advanced and vindicated, it is that you may depose a bishop without the form of trial; you may depose him without any obligation to show cause; and, therefore, he is the only minister in your Church who has no appeal. It seems to me that the Church has made special provision for the trial of the bishop, for the special reason that the bishop has no appeal."||

"I hold that the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has an indisputable right—constitutional, sacred—to arraign at her tribunal every bishop, to try us there; to find us guilty of any offense with which we are charged on evidence, and to excommunicate—expel us. I am always ready to appear before that body in this regard. I recognize fully their right."§

"The adoption of that resolution deposes Bishop Andrew without form of trial; such is my deliberate opinion."¶

"I say that the resolution on which we are just about to act, goes to sustain the doctrine that the General conference have power and right to depose one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church without the form of trial—that you are under no obligation from the constitution or laws of the Church to show cause even."\*\*

The Bishop then proceeds to present to the conference the course to be pursued, in the following words:

"Now, it is the solemn conviction of my mind, that the safest course you can pursue in the premises, is to pass this subject without any implication of Bishop Andrew's character at all, and to send out officially the plain and simple facts in the case to all your societies—to all your conferences. Let it be read everywhere, and then we may have a further expression of opinion without any kind of agitation."\*

A few remarks on the above by way of correcting some of the gross mistakes will be necessary, though we reserve the full treatment of this to another place. There is no form of trial prescribed for a bishop in the Discipline. In Discipline, Part I, chapter viii, section 1, we have the question and answer which declare, that "a bishop is amenable for his conduct to the General conference." And the conference may expel him even for "improper conduct," though he is amenable for his entire conduct. In case of immorality, in the interval of General conference, there is a "provision made for the trial of a bishop," by a committee. But there is no form of trial for a bishop in the Discipline. The Discipline has left this to the wisdom and prudence of the General conference to decide on such cases as may come before it. And as to the cause, this was fully before the conference; namely, "Bishop Andrew voluntarily became a slaveholder, and refused to set the slaves free, or to allow them to be set free." The conference did show cause, and attended to the case in the usual way of examining into the "conduct of bishops," by bringing it first before the Episcopal Committee, as in Bishop Soule's own case in 1828, and in Bishop Hedding's case in 1828 and 1840, and then before the conference, by the report of the Episcopal Committee.

But Bishop Soule's new-fangled course, without Discipline, without precedent, but contrary to all usage, rule, justice, right, and prudence, to send a circular to the societies and conferences with the facts, and thus appeal to the multitude, and, therefore, produce general agitation, exceeds any thing the world ever yet saw in the annals of ecclesiastical matters. We account for it only from the fact, that Bishop Soule had now become the partisan for the south, and the special pleader for Bishop Andrew. He employed his influence as bishop and president of the conference in his partisan purposes; and we must think was the principal author in preventing the settlement of this affair which soon ended in secession, and he himself as the head, leader, and soul of that secession. We speak only of his acts and plans, without searching into motives.

Dr. Durbin followed Bishop Soule in a speech of great power, and triumphantly exposed the fallacy of the Bishop's statements and arguments, as well as some of the errors of others. He showed that the objections of Dr. Longstreet and others, lay against the uniform action of Methodism on the general subject. The sole question in Harding's case was, whether it was practicable for him to emancipate his slaves. It was practicable and is now practicable. And the decision of the General conference in his case, was not to sustain the usage of the Baltimore conference, but to sustain the laws of

\* Debates, p. 168, *infra*. † Id., p. 169. ‡ Id.  
§ Id. ¶ Id., p. 170. || Id., p. 171. \*\* Id., p. 172.

\* Debates, p. 172.



Methodism; that though there were differences of opinion in the north, all were agreed on one point, *that the Episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church ought not to be trammelled with slavery.* And it was a new doctrine indeed, though taught by the south, that the Bible sustains slavery. He showed, by quoting the Minutes of 1780, and the Discipline of 1784 and 1796, that the Church had been all along making concessions on slavery, in view of the necessities of the south; that while the anti-slavery principle has never been abandoned, our rules have been made less stringent and our language less severe, because experience has shown it to be absolutely necessary for the welfare of the Church in the south. He contended against the new doctrine of Bishop Soule, "that the General conference has no power to remove a bishop or to suspend the exercises of his functions, unless by impeachment and trial, in regular form, for some offense regularly charged;" and quoted Dickens's pamphlet of 1792 from the defense of the Fathers. He finally proposed that the matter should be left to the decision of the Church at large, did the south agree to this measure.\* We give Mr. Durbin's speech in our list of documents.†

Dr. Capers, on Thursday, May 30th, delivered a speech of great weight, and in the best spirit, though fully southern, with much excellent matter. He said,‡ "I am free to declare that I have no desire for the extension of slavery. I could wish no freeman to be made a slave. I could rather wish that slaves were freemen. I certainly could not wish my brethren who are served by freemen, to be taxed with such incumbrances as some of us are who have slaves to serve us." He thought the north are already as much involved by the unity of the Church and the unity of the ministry, as they could be in having a slaveholder for bishop. He showed historically that Mr. Wesley had societies in South Carolina under Mr. Hammet, and Mr. Wesley never prescribed any rule on slavery. Nor did the British conference ever enjoin any rule on slavery. He argued that the constitution of the Church should always be interpreted so as to conform to the great object of the Church's organization, namely, *to spread Scripture holiness over these lands,* and what militates against this object must be contrary to the constitution; and, therefore, to require the bishop to free the slaves, would be to require him to act contrary to the fifth and twenty-third Articles of the Church, requiring submission to the civil power. He then argued that our missions would be broken up in the south should the bishop be touched. On this he dwelt pathetically.¶ We give his speech in full in the documents.§

When Dr. Capers concluded his speech, there was a motion put for the previous question. On this there were 98 yeas and 80 nays; so the motion for the main question was lost, not having a majority of two-thirds.‡

6. Bishop Hedding then requested that the conference might not sit this afternoon, in order that the superintendents might have an opportunity to consult together with a view to fixing upon a compromise; and he requested the conference to revive the committee of northern

and southern brethren, discharged some days since, that they might meet the bishops in council on this important subject. The committee was not revived, the matter was left to the bishops by common consent, and on motion the discussion on the substitute was postponed till tomorrow morning.\*

On Friday morning, May 31st, Bishop Waugh said he had been requested to read to the conference the following communication relating to the present discussion on slavery, and Bishop Andrew's case. The paper was then read by the Bishop, and also by the secretary:

"ADDRESS OF THE BISHOPS.

"To the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,—The undersigned respectfully and affectionately offer to your calm consideration, the result of their consultation this afternoon, in regard to the unpleasant and very delicate question which has been so long and so earnestly debated before your body. They have, with the liveliest interest, watched the progress of the discussion, and have awaited its termination with the deepest solicitude. As they have pored over this subject with anxious thought, by day and by night, they have been more and more impressed with the difficulties connected therewith, and the disastrous results which, in their apprehension, are the almost inevitable consequences of present action on the question now pending before you. To the undersigned, it is fully apparent that a decision thereon, whether affirmatively or negatively, will most extensively disturb the peace and harmony of that widely-extended brotherhood which has so effectively operated for good in the United States of America and elsewhere during the last sixty years, in the development of a system of active energy, of which union has always been a main element. They have, with deep emotion, inquired, can any thing be done to avoid an evil so much deprecated by every friend of our common Methodism? Long and anxiously have they waited for a satisfactory answer to this inquiry; but they have paused in vain. At this painful crisis they have unanimously concurred in the propriety of recommending the postponement of further action in the case of Bishop Andrew, till the ensuing General conference. It does not enter into the design of the undersigned to argue the propriety of their recommendation, otherwise strong and valid reasons might be adduced in its support. They can not but think that if the embarrassment of Bishop Andrew should not cease before that time, the next General conference, representing pastors, ministers, and people of the several annual conferences, after all the facts in the case shall have passed in review before them, will be better qualified than the present General conference can be, to adjudicate the case wisely and discreetly. Till the cessation of the embarrassment, or the expiration of the interval between the present and the ensuing General conference, the undersigned believe that such a division of the work of the general superintendency might be made, without any infraction of a constitutional principle, as would fully employ Bishop Andrew in those sections of the Church in which his presence and services would be welcome and cordial. If the course pursued on this occasion, by the undersigned, be deemed a novel one, they persuade themselves that their justification, in the view of all candid

\* Debates, pp. 172-177.

† Document, No. 51.

‡ Debates, p. 178.

§ Id., pp. 177-183.

¶ Document, No. 52.

¶ Id., p. 184.

\* Journal, p. 74. Debates, p. 184.

and peace-loving persons, will be found in their strong desire to prevent disunion, and to promote harmony in the Church.

"Very respectfully and affectionately submitted.

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

"Thursday afternoon, May 30, 1844."\*

From the foregoing it will be seen that the bishops thought that any decision, whether affirmative or negative, would disturb the peace and harmony of the Church. They therefore recommended the postponement of the case till the next General conference. If the embarrassment of the bishop would not cease, the next General conference could better decide the case. In the mean time, he could be employed in those parts where his presence and services would be welcome and cordial. The object was to prevent disunion, and promote harmony in the Church.

The communication from the bishops was read a third time, was ordered to be printed, and its consideration postponed till next day, or Saturday, June 1st.† Some desultory remarks were made on the occasion of the postponement, that indicated that the paper was not looked on with much favor, though treated with due respect to the authors. Much conversation took place on its contents, and most of the delegates from the north thought it inadvisable to adopt the plan proposed by the bishops.

After some two items of business were transacted on June 1st, all the bishops on the platform addressed the conference, in the following order:‡

"Bishop Hedding wished to withdraw his signature from the document presented yesterday. He had not been drawn or persuaded into it. But in signing it he had been governed by two reasons, which he thought it his duty to present. First, he signed it as a peace measure. Second, he believed it would be generally acceptable to the conference. In both these expectations he was disappointed. Facts had come to his knowledge which induced him to believe that it would not make peace, and that it might be productive of a lengthened debate, and, instead of removing, would only increase the difficulty. He therefore wished his name to be withdrawn, but would submit if the conference decided that he had no authority to do so. No objection was made.

"Bishop Waugh said that in regard to the same document, a few remarks might not be unnecessary. He wished his name to remain, unless he saw other reasons than had yet appeared. He came into the measure without persuasion or entreaty, as the result of his own thoughts and voluntary inclination, though slowly and reluctantly. Yet it was under a train of circumstances that left him little or no option in the premises. He adopted it as a last resort, and with little hope of its success. It did, however, appear to him that it would be better to put that view before the General conference, and let it take its course, and so far as himself was concerned, he should be perfectly satisfied with the result. He should exceedingly regret if the communication were the occasion of a protracted debate, but he hoped that would not be the case. He did not

feel at liberty to withdraw his name from a paper that he designed to be for the preservation of the Church.

"Bishop Morris wished his name to remain attached to that document, as a testimony that he had done what he could to preserve the unity of the body.

"Bishop Soule said, perhaps he ought to offer a few words, in connection with his colleagues, and it afforded him pleasure to receive the assurances that they were in no way influenced or persuaded to put their signatures to that paper. He acknowledged that they went into the measure as freely and fully, and under the same conviction, as himself. Conference were aware that this matter came before the superintendents on motion. He put his signature to the document with the same views, and under the same convictions, as his very worthy colleagues did, and neither his views nor his convictions were changed in any way. And he wished his signature to that document to go forth through a thousand channels to the world. It is already before the American people, and he might not, and would not, withdraw it."

7. After the bishops had spoken as above, Dr. Bangs moved that the bishops' communication lie on the table, which, after some brief remarks, was carried, by 95 yeas and 83 nays.\* The southern members were disposed to accede to the postponement of the case. But this was thought by most to be a virtual decision of the matter, in favor of the south. It would, they thought, be indeed a *decision* in some sense, and any decision, in the estimation of the bishops, would be unsatisfactory. Accordingly, the northern members considered it in this light, and therefore voted to lay the address on the table. Mr. Durbin had prepared a substitute, but Mr. Blake, from the south, believed it would not reconcile the difficulties. The south, according to Dr. Longstreet, had not taken one step to adjust the matter amicably; nor, indeed, were they disposed to take any. A slaveholding bishop they were determined to have, and nothing could induce them to vary a hair's-breadth from this. Division, or no division—this was every thing with them, and nothing would avail without it.‡

In regard to New England, Mr. Porter said: "He did not believe they could live as one body with any thing less than the substitute. Bishop Andrew had declared that he could not recede from his position, and the south had taken the same ground."

Bishop Soule considered the resolution of Mr. Finley as judicial and mandatory, suspending Bishop Andrew from his duties as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.‡

J. A. Collins moved to take up Mr. Finley's substitute, which was carried. The previous question was carried by a two-third vote. The vote to sustain the substitute was carried—111 yeas, 69 nays. So the conference adopted the substitute of J. B. Finley, which is in these words:

"Whereas, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and whereas Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery, by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an

\* Journal, p. 75. Debates, p. 184.

† Journal, p. 76. Debates, p. 185.

‡ Journal, p. 81. Debates, p. 183.

\* Journal, p. 82. Debates, p. 189.

† Debates, p. 189.

‡ Id., p. 190.

itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

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

After the passage of the resolution, Dr. Pierce remarked, that, as had been stated before, the southern delegates would enter their protest against the decision, without dissent or falter, as they consider it an extrajudicial act, and that the protest would be presented at their earliest convenience.\*

8. On Monday morning, June 3d, the following resolutions were offered by H. Slicer and T. B. Sargent:

"(1.) Resolved, That it is the sense of this General conference, that the vote of Saturday last, in the case of Bishop Andrew, be understood as advisory only, and not in the light of a judicial mandate.

"(2.) Resolved, That the final disposition of Bishop Andrew's case be postponed till the General conference of 1848, in conformity with the suggestion of the bishops in their Address to the conference, on Friday, 31st May.

"H. SLICER,

"T. B. SARGENT.†

"June 3, 1844."

Mr. Slicer introduced the resolutions with a few appropriate remarks, and they were, for the present, laid on the table.

9. Dr. Capers then introduced a series of resolutions, which were read and laid on the table according to rule. They were referred to a committee of nine, appointed by the chair; namely, W. Capers, W. Winans, T. Crowder, J. Porter, G. Filmore, P. Akers, L. L. Hamline, J. Davis, and P. P. Sandford.‡ The resolutions are transferred to the list of documents.¶

On June 4th, Dr. Capers, in behalf of the committee on his resolutions offered yesterday, asked leave of absence for the committee during conference hours. Leave was given.§ The committee, however, could not agree on any thing to present to the conference, and the whole matter, as presented to the conference by Dr. Capers, fell to the ground.

This was intended to be a plan to divide the Church constitutionally. The committee did not find that they had any authority, or ground, from the Discipline, to divide the Church; and, therefore, considered themselves as incompetent to even undertake it. Still these resolutions proposed to do it in a constitutional manner. 1. They referred it to all the annual conferences, as the primary bodies, requiring a vote of two-thirds to make it binding. This was deemed indispensable in order to make it a division of the Church. 2. A geographical line was fixed on, so that the territory would be clearly defined. 3. A new and independent Church would be formed out of the Methodist Episcopal Church; but the Methodist Episcopal Church itself would preserve its organization and its identity. 4. They were to live on fraternal terms of friendship with distinct governments, having the common bonds of one foreign missionary association, and one common book concern.

And most assuredly, if this could be done, it would have much in its favor, and would be free, at least, from some of the difficulties with which the plan of separation was surrounded. As the

former professed to divide the Church constitutionally, the latter only provided for a secession, to all intents and purposes; although our southern brethren have endeavored to evade the imputation of secession, but without success, as far as sober ecclesiastical decisions and principles are concerned.

10. On Wednesday afternoon, June 5th, Dr. Longstreet, in behalf of the delegations from the southern and south-western conferences, presented the following declaration, which was read:

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

The declaration was signed by fifty-one delegates.\*

A motion was made by C. Elliott to refer this declaration to a select committee of nine. The select committee was ordered, and the paper referred to them. The names of the committee were, Robert Paine, Glezen Filmore, Peter Akers, Nathan Bangs, Thomas Crowder, Thomas B. Sargent, and William Winans, Leonidas L. Hamline, James Porter.†

The reference gave occasion to some remarks from different members. The mover for reference barely said, that "he thought the best present disposition of that document would be to refer it to a committee of nine"

Mr. Sandford thought the declaration alleged, that there had been extrajudicial proceedings against the bishop, which the General conference could not allow. He thought the paper was an insult to the body, and such as they could not yield to, and which the conference could not allow to be true. He could not, therefore, consent to have such a paper referred.

Mr. Longstreet said the decision was mandatory upon the bishop. It was a judicial sentence. Now, a judicial sentence was one on which the tribunal having cognizance of the case pronounces its judgment after due forms of law, on the finding of a court or jury, after hearing all the circumstances of the case. In the case of Bishop Andrew, he thought there was no proper judicial course. He added: "We have now the calmness of despair. This has been thrown out as an olive branch of peace. It is hoped that we can now meet on some common ground, for the thing is done, and the mischief has been accomplished, and now we are in a situation to come together, and, viewing the wreck, see what we can save from it. We express our opinion that it is no longer desirable that this conference should have jurisdiction. This continual harassing us on a subject that we can not escape, only brings us to quarrel with each other. Now, the question is, whether we can not meet with something that will harmonize us all."‡

\* Debates, p. 191.

† Journal, p. 85.

‡ Journal, p. 86. Debates, p. 192. ¶ Document, No. 53.

§ Journal, p. 99.

\* Journal, p. 109.

† Id., pp. 109, 111.

‡ Debates, p. 202.

Dr. Olin thought the resolution was neither judicial nor punitive, nor did it include even a censure. "He thought, however, that the conference had power over a bishop, something like that which a bishop had over a preacher. Thus, if a preacher placed in the south, who was otherwise a true and good man, were to become a violent abolitionist, and excite the whole country against himself, the bishop would have power to remove such a man, and would be expected to exercise that power. The conference had only put forth a prudential power to remove, or prevent an evil; and if, in so doing, they had pressed hard upon an individual, they did not mean to say that he was criminal; they only sought to remove the evil and save the Church. He never supposed the proceeding was judicial or punitive, but that it was only the putting forth of a power, conceded on all hands as incidental to the General conference, and arising out of its relation to the Episcopacy, and which had always been pleaded when their enemies spoke of the great power of the Episcopacy; and he considered that Bishop Andrew was not punished, was not tried; that the conference did not depose him, nor, in the legal meaning, or consequences of the terms employed in that resolution, did he consider that the bishop was in any way disqualified from performing the functions of his office. His acts now would not be invalid, though constitutionally he would be liable to appear before the next General conference and answer for his conduct."\*

Dr. Olin embodied his views in the two following resolutions, which were merely read to the conference, but not taken up or passed:

"Resolved, That this conference does not consider its action in the case of Bishop Andrew as either judicial or punitive, but as a prudential regulation for the security and welfare of the Church.

"Resolved, That having made a solemn declaration of what, in their judgment, the peace and safety of the Church require, it is not necessary or proper to express any opinion as to what amount of respect may justly belong to their action in the premises."†

11. J. B. M'Ferrin offered the following resolution, which was passed:

"Resolved, That the committee appointed to take into consideration the communication of the delegates from the southern conferences be instructed, provided they can not, in their judgment, devise some plan for an amicable adjustment of the difficulties now existing in the Church, on the subject of slavery, to devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the Church.

"J. B. M'FERRIN,  
"TOBIAS SPICER."‡

The committee on the resolutions of Dr. Capers had decided already that the Church could not be divided. It would be unconstitutional. It was impossible to be done according to Methodist principles. This Mr. Hamline declared, on the floor of conference, when the motion of Mr. M'Ferrin was before the house. It could not be *entertained* in the committee.¶ The "plan for an amicable adjustment of difficulties," presented by the committee of nine, and adopted by the conference, was what was called the "plan of separation," or "the plan on secession." It was no plan of division of the Church; it was the "plan

of adjustment;" or "the plan for an amicable adjustment;" or, yet more fully, "a plan for an amicable adjustment of the difficulties now existing in the Church on the subject of slavery." This was the plan the committee *devised*. They did not devise a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the Church. This they could not *devise*. It was attempted already, and failed of success, just as other measures failed. The measure for division failed on the non-adoption of Dr. Capers's resolutions. It is true, in after times, the resolution of Mr. M'Ferrin has been quoted to support the division of the Church; but it is a misapplication of it, and in our judgment a complete perversion of the subject.

This view is sustained by the declaration of Bishop Hamline on the subject. "He [Bishop Hamline] explained the action of the committee in reference to the sixth Restrictive Article. When the first committee met, they had before them a paper which proposed a new form, or division of the Church. The committee thought there were difficulties in the way of such a proposition; one provision was, to send it to the annual conferences, but that was unconstitutional and revolutionary in its character; and when their votes came back, the General conference would have no more authority than they had now."\* Bishop Hamline says again: "They had carefully avoided presenting any resolution which would embrace the idea of a separation or a division."† These statements confirm the views we have given above.

12. On Saturday, June 1st, after the decision of the conference on Bishop Andrew's case, Mr. L. Pierce gave notice that a protest would be presented by the minority, on this vote, at as early a day as practicable, to be entered on the journals of conference.‡ On Thursday, June 6th, J. Early asked that H. B. Bascom have leave to read to the conference the protest that Mr. Pierce on last Saturday gave notice would be presented by the southern delegates. When the reading, by Dr. Bascom, was finished, the chair decided that the protest be entered on the Journal.¶

Mr. Simpson then offered the following resolution, which was adopted:

"Resolved, That the conference appoint brothers Olin, Durbin, and Hamline, a committee to prepare a statement of the facts connected with the proceedings in the case of Bishop Andrew; and that they have liberty to examine the protest just presented by the southern brethren."§

13. On Thursday afternoon, June 6th, Bishop Soule presented the following communication to the General conference:

"REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,—As the case of Bishop Andrew unavoidably involves the future *action* of the superintendents, which, in their judgment, in the present position of the Bishop, they have no discretion to decide upon, they respectfully request of this General conference *official* instruction, in answer to the following questions:

"(1.) Shall Bishop Andrew's name remain as it now stands in the Minutes, Hymn-Book, and Discipline, or shall it be struck off of these official records?

"(2.) How shall the Bishop obtain his support? As provided for in the Discipline, or in some other way?

"(3.) What work, if any, may the Bishop per-

\* Debates, pp. 202, 203. † Id., p. 203. ‡ Journal, p. 111. ¶ See Mr. Hamline's remarks, Debates, pp. 223, 226.

\* Debates of 1844, p. 223. † Id., p. 226. ‡ Journal, p. 85. ¶ Id., p. 113. § Id.

form, and how shall he be appointed to the work?

"JOSHUA SOULE,  
"ELIJAH HEDDING,  
"BEVERLY WAUGH,  
"THOMAS A. MORRIS."\*

On a motion to refer this communication to a committee, a little debate arose, of no great moment. After several had spoken a few words, Mr. Durbin remarked that he was ready to vote the first two, and that, as it regarded the third, the determination of that question was with Bishop Andrew, and not with the conference and superintendents. He understood that the Bishop had taken advice from the south, who had given to him in writing their opinion as to what they thought his duty to do. The majority who voted that resolution intended to give Bishop Andrew *their* solemn sense and judgment, as to what they thought was his duty in the premises; and thus both sides were before the Bishop, and their object was to let Bishop Andrew say whether he would continue to exercise the functions of his office after receiving the counsels of the conference. Mr. Durbin adds: "And as soon as Bishop Andrew shall say to the bishops, that he differs in opinion from the majority of this conference, and does not feel at liberty to follow its counsels, the Episcopacy have no right to withhold from him his work, inasmuch as he is the only person who has a right to reply to that question." This last is a very doubtful position.

J. T. Mitchell offered the following resolutions, in reply to the several inquiries of the superintendents, all of which were adopted. The first resolution was passed, ayes 155, nays 17; the second was passed, ayes 152, nays 14; the third had 103 ayes, and 67 nays.†

"(1.) *Resolved*, As the sense of this conference, that Bishop Andrew's name stand in the Minutes, Hymn-Book, and Discipline as formerly.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That the rule in relation to the support of a bishop and his family applies to Bishop Andrew.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That whether in any, and if any, in what work Bishop Andrew may be employed, is to be determined by his own decision and action in relation to the previous action of this conference in his case."

14. The decision in the case of Bishop Andrew, sophistry apart, is about the following:

*First*. His being a slaveholder would greatly embarrass, or entirely prevent the exercise of, his office as bishop. The plain reason was, that this would give countenance, sanction, or approval to slavery; and this would be contrary to the letter and spirit of Christianity and the Discipline.

*Secondly*. He was to *desist from*, or *cease from*, or *suspend* the exercise of his episcopal office till he would be freed from slaveholding, or had made arrangements to that amount.

*Thirdly*. And this was the *sense, meaning, judgment, opinion, or decision* of the General conference. This has the force of a *rule* in the Discipline on the subject. It was virtually and formally enacting a rule of conduct for the Bishop, and applied to his case.

*Fourthly*. Hence disobedience to this *meaning, judgment, or rule* of the General conference would be an act of *contumacy*, to be punished at the next session of the General conference.

*Fifthly*. The other bishops could not assign work to a contumacious man without being contumacious themselves.

## CHAPTER XXII.

### REVIEW OF BISHOP ANDREW'S CASE.

1. HAVING given a historical survey of the case of Bishop Andrew in the preceding chapter, we may now present our readers with a brief review of its character. This is necessary in order to show that the action of the General conference in this case was in accordance with the Discipline of the Church, the holy Scriptures, and those well-defined, moral principles acknowledged and maintained by pious and intelligent men. The following survey of the subject is, therefore, presented:

And, in the first place, there are very strong reasons why the Episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church should not be entangled with slaveholding.

(1.) The Church has always borne its testimony against slavery as a "great evil," and has always inquired, "What shall be done for its extirpation?" And, though the Church was unable, by any means in her power, to do what she so earnestly desired, she never lost sight of the great moral evils of slavery.

(2.) The Church, therefore, tolerates slaveholders in the Church only through necessity. Mercy to the slave alone has induced all her

relaxations and adaptations of Discipline on the subject. The law of man makes men property; but, in the view of Christian obligation, they are only persons held to service from the necessity of their condition. Some of our southern brethren declared, at the General conference of 1844, to this amount, that "slavery is so great an evil that it should only be endured when we must; and that they only who dwell where it exists can estimate the magnitude of its evil."

(3.) It has never been alleged that non-slaveholding bishops have been unacceptable in the south previous to 1844; when at no time would a slaveholding bishop be acceptable at the north, west, or middle conferences, nor even in the southern or south-western conferences till very recently.

(4.) Were bishops to become slaveholders, then ministers might as truly, under the same circumstances, own and hold slaves, because the Episcopacy was free from slavery. The preachers of the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Ohio, and Pittsburg conferences, partly in free and partly in slave territory, were free from slavery; so, also, were the Kentucky and Missouri conferences, though in slave states. The admis-

\*Journal, p. 117. †Id., p. 118.

sion of slavery into the Episcopacy would lead to its introduction into the ministry in these conferences. In all these conferences the moral feelings of the community revolt against a slaveholding ministry.

(5.) Ministers who have slaves are liable to have refractory ones as well as others. The moral sense of the community would not tolerate in a minister the severity which a man of the world might resort to in enforcing obedience; nor could he have recourse to the slave-dealer to relieve himself without degradation. Now, all this is true, especially in regard to bishops.

(6.) Slaveholding bishops would naturally endeavor to break down what they would consider an unreasonable prejudice: hence, we might have ministers in the north who would hire out their slaves in the south or place them under overseers, while they take the pastorship of congregations in the north. Certainly this could not be tolerated on moral principles.

(7.) A Methodist bishop is not a bishop of the north or the south, but of the whole Church. And as slavery is not tolerated in preachers in the free states, a bishop owning slaves could not be tolerated in the free states, though he resides in the south. For, in reason, it is right that freedom should control bondage; therefore, the usage suitable to the free states alone can only be tolerated in a bishop who is as much a bishop in the north as in the south.

(8.) Add to all this, the example of a slaveholding bishop is the same in the north as in the south. And this example *sanctions, approves, or even justifies* the very system of slavery; and as this system is a moral evil, and a great moral evil, slaveholding in the Episcopacy would sanction moral wrong and sin, which could not be entertained in the Methodist Episcopal Church, much less tolerated or sanctioned.

(9.) Nor was there any necessity that Bishop Andrew should continue a slaveholder, because many individuals in the north offered formally to bind themselves to purchase all his slaves and their connections, and set them free; but he and his southern friends refused this, and clung with tenacity to the evil of slavery.

(10.) Hence, in former days, the most impartial men in the south, and their friends, declared that slavery could not be connected with the Episcopacy without untold mischief. Dr. Capers doubted even the heart of a man who would consent to be a bishop, he owning slaves; and Bishop Soule declared before the Baltimore conference, in 1844, that such a thing could not be. He has frequently said in the west, and once, at least, in our hearing, that a slaveholding bishop was impracticable.

Both the principles and the regulations of the Church are abhorrent to a slaveholding episcopacy. Its principles declare slavery to be a great moral, incurable evil; for to be cured it must be extirpated or destroyed. No private member is to buy or sell slaves when the intention is to enslave them, whether enslaving means originating or continuing slavery. No official member can own slaves where the laws allow emancipation, and permit the freed person to enjoy liberty. No traveling preacher is to own a slave where emancipation is practicable. In free states no Methodist can be an owner or holder of slaves, whether he be layman, official member, local preacher, or traveling preacher. And in conferences in territories

partly in free states, and partly in slave states, as Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, no preacher could be a permanent slaveholder. Every man is supposed to live where his work or business is. A preacher owning slaves, if called to labor in free territory, is compelled to free them. This is a principle in Methodism. Now, as a bishop has his work in both free and slave territory, both the moral principles of the Discipline and the rules of the Church, by all fair analogy, require that he should not be a slaveholder. It would be morally wrong in a bishop to be, or continue to be, a slaveholder; and it would be a moral delinquency in the Church to tolerate a slaveholding bishop. All this is clear from the moral principles of the Discipline, and the analogy existing between the bishop, and members, and preachers. Such have ever been the principles and practice of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

2. Accordingly, no slaveholder ever was elected to the episcopal office. And Bishop Andrew, in 1832, was elected because he was not a slaveholder. There were very few then in the south who entertained the opinion that a slaveholder could be a bishop. The north desired to elect one from the south, and they elected Bishop Andrew at the nomination of the south. To elect a slaveholder was not even entertained at that day, except by a few ultraists. On this point, however, we need not dwell, as the thing is a well-established fact.\*

3. It has been often asked under what rule of the Discipline was Bishop Andrew tried? If this mean a *written* rule in the Discipline by which to try a bishop, we answer that no such rule has ever been, or is now, in the Discipline. There are, and have always been, written rules in the Discipline by which to try private members, local preachers, and traveling preachers, but none for trying a bishop. There are also rules by which appeals for trying members, local preachers, and traveling preachers are conducted, but none for the appeals from bishops. There is no written law by which a bishop may be tried. The General conference takes such course as it sees fit to try a bishop, but there is no written rule in the Discipline to do this; and yet there is both written law and authority for the General conference to try a bishop, though there is no written rule to proceed by in doing it. There is a *rule* by which he may be *tried* and *suspended* by a committee in the interval of General conference, but no rule is given by which the General conference should do it; and yet the General conference "have power to expel a bishop" even for improper conduct; and the standard is, "if they see it necessary." The following is the rule to try a bishop in the interval of General conference, by a committee:

"Question 5. What provision shall be made for the trial of a bishop, if he should be accused of immorality, in the interval of the General conference?"

"Answer. If a bishop be accused of immorality, three traveling elders shall call upon him, and examine him on the subject; and if the three elders verily believe that the bishop is guilty of the crime, they shall call to their aid two presiding elders from two districts in the neighborhood of that where the crime was com-

\* See this noticed and discussed, Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 244, 423, 499, 504, 570, by Finley, Paddock, Lee, Bishop Andrew, etc.

mitted, each of which presiding elders shall bring with him two elders, or an elder and a deacon. The above-mentioned nine persons shall form a conference to examine into the charge brought against the bishop, and if two-thirds of them verily believe him to be guilty of the crime laid to his charge, they shall have authority to suspend the bishop till the ensuing General conference, and the districts shall be regulated, in the mean time, as is provided in the third and fifth sections; but no accusation shall be received against a bishop except it be delivered in writing, signed by those who are to prove the crime, and a copy of the accusation shall be given to the accused bishop."

There is a written rule to suspend a bishop by a committee, but there is no written rule to try, suspend, or expel him by the General conference, though the General conference can expel, and, therefore, suspend, censure, depose, and, therefore, try him in such manner as it sees fit, though there is no rule prescribed to do it by; nor is any rule necessary, as the General conference is the power by which the rules are made. At any rate, there is no rule prescribed in the Discipline by which the General conference is to proceed in the trial of a bishop.

That the power to expel, and, therefore, to suspend, depose, censure, reprove, or restrain a bishop exists in the General conference, is plain from the section which treats of the election, trial, etc., of a bishop. 1. He is amenable or accountable to the General conference for his conduct. 2. The conference has power to expel him, and, therefore, suspend or censure him. 3. Improper conduct, as well as immorality or ceasing to travel at large, may be cause for expulsion, or suspension, or deprivation. 4. The rule of General conference for improper conduct governs the case. 5. As a committee can *try* and *suspend*, so the General conference may try and suspend. 6. He may be deprived of his office for ceasing to travel at large, or for disqualifying himself for traveling at large. All these, drawn from the section treating on the bishop's accountability, go to show that the bishop can be tried, suspended, or expelled; and, as no mode of trying is prescribed in the Discipline, the General conference must prescribe the mode when a trial is necessary, or usage must govern the case.

But, though no formal rule was ever in our Discipline on the mode of trying a bishop, the *usage* of the Church became the rule. At each General conference a Committee on the Episcopacy takes cognizance of the conduct of the bishops. Their entire administration is inquired into, examined, and reported on to the conference, and the conference acts on this report. This course, we believe, was pursued in every General conference from 1812 to 1844.

And we have two cases of as formal trials in this way, at Pittsburg, in 1828, as any ever had in the Church in regard to any other persons in it. We mean the cases of Bishops Hedding and Soule.

Bishop Hedding had been aspersed in the Mutual Rights. He asked for an investigation of his case. It was brought before the Episcopal Committee, there examined and reported to the conference, before which he was acquitted by the adoption of the report.

Bishop Soule, too, was tried at the same conference. Rev. L. M'Combs and T. Merritt presented exceptions to his sermon delivered January 14, 1827, before the South Carolina con-

ference. These were referred to a committee, who examined the sermon, and reported on it. The report of the committee was adopted.

We refer the entire proceedings in these two cases to our collection of documents, which our readers may peruse at their leisure.\*

4. The accountability or amenability of bishops to the General conference is most clearly defined and asserted in the Methodist Discipline. It was the doctrine of our fathers, and the General conference has all along acted on this principle.

(1.) Our present Discipline declares this in the most unequivocal terms, as we have already shown in the preceding pages.

(2.) This was asserted in our first Disciplines, and in the notes on them by Bishops Coke and Asbury.

In the Discipline of 1790, on the section concerning bishops, in answer to question 3, the answer commences thus: "To preside as moderator in our conferences;" and the preceding section, on the constitution of the Church, recognizes a "moderate episcopacy." These views will not comport with the sentiments so current in the south respecting episcopal powers.

We quote the following from the notes of Bishops Coke and Asbury, attached to the Discipline in 1798. Comparing Wesley's authority to that of our bishops, they say:

"The latter are entirely dependent on the General conference." (P. 41.)

"But why, it may be asked, does the General conference lodge the power of stationing the preachers in the Episcopacy? We answer, On account of their entire confidence in it. If ever, through improper conduct, it loses that confidence in any degree, the General conference will, upon evidence given, in a proportionate degree, take from it this branch of its authority." (P. 41.)

"But the American bishops are as responsible as any of the preachers. They are *perfectly subject* to the General conference." (P. 42.)

"They are perfectly dependent; that their power, usefulness, themselves, are entirely at the mercy of the General conference, and, on the charge of immorality, at the mercy of two-thirds of the little conference of nine." (P. 44.)

The foregoing needs no comment.

(3.) The right of the General conference to depose a bishop at the discretion of a majority of the General conference, has always been maintained by our ablest and best divines, in their controversies with their opponents.

Dickens, who wrote with the approbation of Bishop Asbury, asserts it.

Bishop Hedding maintains it.

Bishop M'Kendree taught the same doctrine.†

The bishops, in their address to the General conference of 1840, maintain the same ground.

(4.) Beside, there are precedents to prove that the General conference may vacate the office of bishop, or restrict or suspend his functions at discretion.

The case of Mr. Wesley himself may be quoted. The General conference even dispensed with his superintendence when they thought it necessary. In the Minutes of 1784, it is said that the General conference voted that, "during the lifetime of Rev. John Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves as his sons in the Gospel, ready, in matters of Church government, to obey his

\* Document, No. 64.

† Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 741-750.

commands." In 1787 this resolution was rescinded, and his name left off the Minutes. Again, in 1789 his name was restored to the Minutes.

The case of Dr. Coke is immediately to the point. His services as bishop were dispensed with, and the resumption of them depended on the will of the General conference.

5. The trial of Bishop Andrew was strictly formal, and in the usual way of trying or examining into the character of bishops.

(1.) The Committee on the Episcopacy, having heard there was a difficulty growing out of his connection with slavery, sent a deputation to him, respectfully to inquire into the facts. He proposed to wait on the committee, and make his statements in person. He did so, and his statement was taken down by the secretary, read to him, and admitted to be substantially correct. Afterward he sent a written communication to the committee, which he desired might be substituted for the minutes taken by the secretary. This was consented to, and the committee reported this communication to the conference without note or comment. On this document, the subsequent action of the conference was based.

(2.) On this representation, he was charged before the conference, and the charge was, that he was "connected with slavery, by marriage and otherwise." Dr. Paine acknowledges the charge. He says, in his review, "It should be borne in mind that proceedings had been taken against Bishop Andrew as a slaveholder, in the Committee on the Episcopacy, at the first session of the committee after its organization; and that at this very time the prosecution of the Bishop was still pending."\* Mr. Finley thinks the Bishop's case was not introduced till after several meetings of the committee.† This variation of views seems, however, to be only circumstantial. No charge could be more specific. The Bishop drew up his own indictment, pleaded guilty to the charge, placed it in the hands of the Episcopal Committee, who laid it before the proper court. The book of Discipline pointed out no formal mode of trial. The conference proceeded as in the cases of Bishops Soule and Hedding, in 1828. The General conference may originate their own proceedings in any case of the kind, and one session could not establish a course that would bind a succeeding conference, possessing as it does equal authority with themselves.

(3.) The proceedings were strictly formal. The facts in the case were all admitted and voluntarily given up by the accused, in his own chosen way. The conference voted on the facts thus stated and admitted, that the Bishop, by voluntarily becoming a slaveholder, had disqualified himself for the Episcopacy. They did not deem it necessary either to expel, depose, or absolutely to suspend him, and the *legality* of the action is sustained by the indubitable authority of the General conference, "to expel a bishop for improper conduct, if they deem it necessary;" and of course they could do any thing less than expel him, such as to censure, restrain, suspend, etc.

The Bishop had no disciplinary right to bring slavery into the Episcopacy, and as he chose to do so, it was within the precincts of Methodist principles to prevent it.

(4.) Beside, the Bishop did violate an express

law of Methodism. It was a law of his office "to travel at large throughout the connection." He, and those who sustained him, desired to confine his labors to the south, and thus to violate an express constitutional rule. As was shown, all Methodists in free states must not be slaveholders, except to free them or show them mercy. No preacher, serving in free, or in free and slave territory, can be a slaveholder. Therefore no bishop could serve in his field of both slave and free territory, and be a slaveholder. Bishop Andrew, therefore, broke the fundamental moral law or principle of right in Methodism, as well as the law of its chief office, in connecting slavery with the Episcopacy.

6. We may notice here some of the objections made to the decision in the case of Bishop Andrew.

The misrepresentations of his case in the southern press have been so numerous and far-fetched, that it would be an endless task even to mention them. Dr. Paine gives, just after General conference, a distorted view of the entire case in several elaborate numbers, which we have mentioned before.\* Dr. Longstreet, or Elihu, has dwelt on the *expediency* argument, so as to change the entire case.† Others, indeed the majority of the south, have made the action of the General conference a just ground for secession, or disrupting the Church.‡ The idea of resignation by the Bishop has been scouted as unreasonable, unjust, and insulting.§ And then he is said to be punished *without law*, and contrary to law, and above law.¶ And indeed it was preached every-where in the south that all this was no more than an entering wedge by which to drive all slaveholders out of the Church, whatever the circumstances were.‡ We have referred in the margin to only a sample of these statements, for to give all would require the citation of many volumes. We content ourselves, as an answer to all these allegations, with this brief review of the case, connected as it is with the historical narrative in the preceding chapter. And here we let it rest.

7. It remains to make some strictures on the course of Bishop Andrew, and of those who have espoused his cause. On this part of our subject, we may repeat what we said in the Western Advocate of October 25, 1844.

The south have almost deified the man, in the place of commiserating him, as was natural they should. At the General conference he was thoroughly whitewashed, both by the majority and minority. As we view his case, we can not separate very grievous mistake or error from his conduct. He unnecessarily became owner of slaves, of his free will and accord. He retained them for the support of his family, or for gain. He even preferred this to hiring domestic help. He lent his official character to the support of pro-slavery principles and practices. He gave himself up to the control of a mistaken portion of the Church. He had no ear to listen to the fraternal voice of the majority, when a deputation of five brethren from the delegates of twenty-two conferences waited on him for brotherly conversation. He had no ear to listen to them, because he had already committed himself into the hands of men who were under the sway of pro-slavery influences, whether they themselves were pro-slavery or not—an accusation which we

\* S., August 30. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 243.  
† W., October 18, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 503.

\* Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 443, 444.  
† Id., pp. 323-226.  
‡ Id., pp. 479, 516.

† Id., p. 285.  
‡ Id., pp. 466, 407  
¶ Id., p. 475.



do not affirm, but which we are not well prepared to gainsay.

The Rev. Abel Stevens, at that time editor of Zion's Herald, thus writes in reference to the case of Bishop Andrew. At the time, we thought there was too much rhetoric in the survey, but the facts since show that the picture is not far from just:

"One man could have prevented it—he whose terrible distinction it is to have occasioned it. The southern papers are full of applause to him; during the anxious, the agonizing crisis in the General conference, he was treated with a delicacy never surpassed in a public body, and the northern papers since have been full of courteous references to his personal excellences. From these courtesies we would not detract, but amidst them all we must be permitted to speak out an honest word on his extraordinary position. His name has become prominent in the religious history of this land, and history will remember him not as a private man, but as an ecclesiastical officer. History will record three facts respecting him, which can not be forgotten:

"*First.* That, elected to an office, the integrity of which could not consist with slaveholding, be the latter right or wrong—elected to it by a Church which has ever denounced slavery as 'a great evil,' and proposed its 'extirpation'—elected to it in the stead of men otherwise preferable, solely because he was not a slaveholder, he did afterward deliberately, and at a time when all the civilized world was condemning the evil, connect himself with slavery, and, what aggravates the act, so identify it with the holiest relations of his private life as to make it unspeakably painful to the Church to redress itself, and impossible to himself to remedy it.

"*Second.* That he did this at a moment when the land was ringing with reproaches against the Church on account of slavery, when, through a large portion of it, thousands were leaving its communion on this account, and his brethren in the ministry, including many of the fathers who had laid the foundations of the Church, were weeping before the porch and the altar over its desolations, and struggling amidst desertion and want to stay them.

"*Third.* That when his resignation at the General conference could have anticipated the consequences of this cruel imprudence and saved the Church, he refused it, and allowed the agitation of that body and the committal of his friends to render it useless.

"On that one man, we repeat it, rests the chief responsibility of our deplorable condition. A word from that man in the outset could have forestalled all dangerous excitement, and saved the Church; but, clothed in the highest power of the most responsible religious body on this continent, that man sat day after day, week after week, amidst the anxious consultations, the tears and prayers of his brethren, when, if grief can enter heaven, the sainted dead of Methodism and God's angels must have bent over the scene, and refused the only word that could have spoken peace to the palpitating heart of the Church, and now it is broken and must bleed. There was a majestic terribleness in that man's position; we would have fled from it if we had to press through all the principalities and powers of earth; an archangel would have trembled in it, but he whose sacrifice of official integrity placed him in it chose to stand in it, and around him are now the desolations of the Church."\*

## CHAPTER XXIII.

### DETERMINED SEPARATION OR SECESSION OF THE SOUTH—THE PLAN.

1. THE separation or secession of the south from the Methodist Episcopal Church became a fixed determination with the leading ministers in the southern conferences, unless the Discipline of the Church or the practice on it would sanction slavery, in tolerating its existence in the Episcopacy. The proofs of this are ample and definite; and indeed avowals of secession were made from time to time, unless the Church would recede from its uniform practice since its organization, so as to elect bishops from among the slaveholders. Mr. Smith avowed this in his Circular of July 30, 1836. Correspondents and editors, in the southern papers, in the fall of 1843, openly declared for this course, or a secession. It was avowed by southern members, in the discussion in Harding's case. It was repeatedly declared in the debates on Andrew's case. The declaration of the southern members, after the decision on Bishop Andrew's case, asserted secession as already determined on. The Protest denounced the government of the Church in reference to the matter as intolerable, and therefore would not be submitted to. The stout resistance to the Reply to the Protest showed the same spirit. The manifesto of the southern delegates, in their Address to the south, the day after the close of the General conference, virtually called

on the south to decide for separation; and subsequent events proved the movement to be a secession, and a premeditated one, at least with many, or as many as carried the few recusants readily along with them.

2. Avowals of secession, unless slavery were acknowledged in connection with the Episcopacy, were made from time to time, between 1836 and 1844.

Mr. W. A. Smith, in his famous Circular of July 30, 1836, declared in favor of secession, unless the Church would change her course. This we have shown in a former chapter.† He says, respecting the General conference of 1836: "A large majority voted on the principles of abolitionism in the election of bishops. Will the southern Church submit to this? They will not; they can not! The general union of the northern and southern Church, however desirable, can not be perpetuated at the price of proscription. If the General conference do not recede from this position, I am free to declare to you that I will, on all suitable occasions, seek to establish a southern General conference. Will the General conference recede from this position?"

\* Z., October 9, 1844. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 109.

† See Chapter IX, p. 144.

Some think they will. For myself I entertain but little hope. Should they not, at the session of 1840, the establishment of a southern General conference will be the only alternative." He then proceeded to encourage the establishment of a southern paper and a southern bookstore, and adds: "Our paper and bookstore would give us a position of independence, the want of which would be sensibly felt."\*

Several correspondents, as we have already seen, have maintained, in the southern papers, in the fall of 1843, that the south must have slaveholding bishops, or separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church.†

Southern members, in remarking on the decision in Harding's case, declared that secession would follow.

Mr. Lee, in his letter of May 15th,‡ declares, in reference to Harding's case, "The decision is regarded here as the knell of division and disunion. The question of a probable division of the Church absorbs every other interest, and holds every other feeling in abeyance." This was the general feeling among the southern delegates.

It was loudly declared in the debates on Bishop Andrew's case. Mr. Crowder said, "Let it go abroad that this General conference requested Bishop Andrew to resign, and the division of our Church may follow—a civil disunion of this great confederacy may follow that."||

Mr. Drake said, "Nor can this course be pursued, and the union of the Church preserved. Bishop Andrew must be continued in the episcopal office, or you certainly divide the Church."§

Mr. Pierce said, "I do not feel a great deal of solicitude about the issue of the case, and my solicitude is diminished, because I regard the great question of unity as settled by the previous action of the conference in another case."¶

Mr. Winans said "they should be driven forth a ruined community, dissevered, destroyed, and gloried over by other denominations, who were more prudent in these matters than themselves."\*\*

Dr. Capers said "he did most conscientiously regard the situation of the Church to be a most painful one, and the Church herself was in immediate danger of secession or schism, call it what they would."††

Such were the general sentiments uttered in connection with the case of Bishop Andrew; and indeed no opposing views were presented by any southern man.

3. In order to make the Discipline conformable to the new views of the south, we find several attempts made to have it speak a different language from what it formerly did. The section on slavery had been occasionally mentioned in the south as injurious or inapplicable, and the General Rule, too, was interpreted so as to apply only to the extinct African slave-trade, and therefore means nothing now. But the resolution of the committee on the Westmoreland petition, passed in 1840, became a fit text on which to preach the new theory. It states that "the mere holding of slaves, in slave states or territories, where the laws do not admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the

election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church."\* This resolution, thus interpreted, contradicts the Discipline, when applied to a traveling preacher, who is required to emancipate, *if practicable*, whether the emancipated slave can enjoy freedom or not. And indeed the rule was made only in reference to local preachers, and not in reference to traveling preachers or to bishops. Mr. Smith, too, applied the rule for local preachers to traveling preachers, in arguing the case of Mr. Harding. The same course was pursued afterward in the Bishop's case; and the southern public were led, by these means, to believe that the Discipline was violated in the cases of Harding and Andrew. Thus the way for secession was prepared.

4. A division of the Church was considered unconstitutional in rejecting the resolutions of Dr. Capers, which provided for a division. These resolutions were offered on Monday, June 3d, four days after the decision of Bishop Andrew's case, which took place Thursday, May 30th. This plan of Dr. Capers provides for two General conferences; and that it was necessary for the three-fourths of the annual conferences to vote for this, to make it constitutional. This constitutional vote was deemed necessary to have it pass.† But this plan did not receive the sanction of the committee appointed to consider it; because they thought there was no power in the Church to provide for its division. The report of this committee was, that they could not agree. Thus, a division of the Church, though proposed, was rejected by the committee and by the conference.

And here we may mention a measure of the south, as given by Dr. Paine, on the somewhat official exposition of the case in his elaborate articles, explaining this matter, in October, 1844.‡ He states, that while Dr. Capers's resolutions were pending before the committee, the committee informed the southern brethren that they must ask formally for separation as a preliminary step, before any thing could be done. The southern delegates, at a called meeting, appointed a committee of three, namely, Drs. Longstreet, Smith, and Paine, to draw up a paper expressive of their views. This two of the committee prepared, Dr. Longstreet being unable to meet with them. They drew up a plan similar to that of Dr. Capers.§ This proposition was set aside by the committee on Dr. Capers's resolutions, because it asked for a division of the Church, which could not be entertained. The "declaration" of the south was then presented. Dr. Paine made another attempt, before the committee, to procure such a division as he wanted; but could not succeed. The south then accepted the terms of separation, contained in the plan, which meets, or anticipates, not division, but secession.

Rev. Dr. Paine, on July 12, 1844, explains thus:§

"Is the Methodist Episcopal Church divided? No. The General conference has no power to divide it. Ours was a delegated power, to be exercised under constitutional limitations, and for

\* Scott's Appeal, pp. 14, 15. Pamphlets, XLIV, p. 368.

† See Chapter XVIII, p. 266.

‡ R., May 23, 1846. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 80.

§ Debates of 1844, p. 95. ¶ Id., p. 106.

¶ Id., infra, p. 109. \*\* Id., p. 156. †† Id., p. 159.

\* Journal of 1840, p. 171, and observations on it, Chapter XV, page 223.

† Journal of 1844, p. 86.

‡ N., October 25th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 524, 529.

§ See Document, No. 77, and Scraps, Vol. I, p. 527, for this report.

¶ Dr. Paine in Letter No. I, of July 12, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 243.

specific purposes—as individual delegates we organized and acted on this principle.”

On August 23, 1844, Rev. J. B. M'Ferrin explains thus:

“To be sure we did not divide the Church; to do this we had no authority; but we adopted measures to lay the matter before our people, in such a way as to enable the Church to separate, provided our people would see, as we believed we saw, that we were compelled of evils to choose the least. . . . There is but one voice in the whole southern and south-western conferences; it is this: we regret the necessity of separation—but *separate* we must.”\*

Rev. Evan Stevenson, on December 27, 1844, asks the following question:

“Has the General conference any constitutional authority to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church?”

Mr. M'Ferrin answers it thus, January 10, 1845:

“This is a mooted question, and were we to give our opinion, perhaps brother S. would not regard us as the proper umpire to decide so grave a matter. The General conference, however, did not divide the Church. It only made provision for an amicable separation, in case the southern conferences found it necessary to form a distinct organization.”†

A division of the Church was rejected in 1806, though proposed by Dr. Coke. The Rev. Asa Kent gives the following account of this event, and argues that the General conference has no power to divide the Church. He says, under date of May 4, 1843, in *Zion's Herald*, in reply to some ultra-abolitionists, who wanted to divide the Church to get rid of slaveholders and slavery:

“It is plain to my mind, that the General conference has no such power, and in reason and justice ought not to have; for if they had such power, they might divide it into ten parts, as well as into two, if they were so disposed. We know that all deliberative bodies are liable to pass votes prematurely, perhaps by a bare majority; therefore, it is judged necessary, by a constitution, or otherwise, to set limits to their powers. For this purpose our General conference is limited by what are termed the *Restrictive Rules*, one of which was introduced on purpose to prevent such discussion.

“The history of the matter is as follows: In the year 1805 Bishop Coke, then in England, sent letters to all the traveling preachers in this country—mine is now before me—stating the conditions on which he would come and reside in this country. One was, that the seven conferences must be divided between himself and Bishop Asbury. Our conference, the next year, 1806, in Canaan, New Hampshire, passed a strong resolution against such a measure. Two years afterward these *Restrictive Rules* were adopted; the one I have alluded to reads thus: ‘They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency.’ (See Discipline.)

“Now, the moment they should make such a division as some of the conventions have anticipated, that moment the *general superintendency* would cease. We should never forget that the system of Methodism was based on the principles of holiness, union, and extension. But if a *division* should be judged necessary, the

subject must be brought before all the annual conferences; and if three-fourths of all the votes cast be in favor of it, then two-thirds of the General conference are competent to do it, or if two-thirds of the General conference should recommend such a division to the annual conferences, and three-fourths of the voting members in all the conferences approve of it, then it may be done. (See Discipline.)”\*

We have before us a copy of the same letters of Dr. Coke, addressed to Rev. Samuel King, Franklin circuit, Salisbury district, Virginia conference, dated New Chapel, City Road, London, June 1, 1805. Dr. Coke says, in regard to himself and wife: “If we come to you at all, we come for life. But if we come for life, we come under the most express, permanent, and unalterable conditions—I should be willing to come over to you for life, on the express condition, that the seven conferences should be divided between us, [Bishop Asbury and Dr. Coke,] three and four, and four and three, each of us changing our division annually; and that this plan, at all events, should continue permanent and unalterable during both our lives.”

The Western conference answered this circular in an able address, drawn up by Wm. M'Kendree, then presiding elder, and dated Ebenezer, Kentucky, 17th September, 1806. The address, or reply to Dr. Coke, says:

“We sincerely assure you that we are deliberately opposed to your proposed division of the seven conferences, nor have we the most distant thought of fixing you and brother Asbury in ‘the most express, permanent, and unalterable’ situation ‘for life.’ No! dear Doctor, much as we love you and brother Asbury, and highly as we esteem your services, we would sooner, much sooner depose you both, and commit the Church to the care of Him who hitherto hath proved so well, and brought her safe through so many storms! Hence, if we are not to see you till those terms are agreed to, we doubt whether we shall ever have the pleasure of seeing you in time. We are willing to comply with our engagements, and to be governed by the General conference, but not knowingly to depart from the principles established therein. And therefore [we] can not but disapprove of your addressing us in our individual capacity, to nullify the engagements entered into by you and the General conference; and, therefore, judge it most proper to answer you officially, and not individually.”†

It appears that the *division* of the Church was a thing not to be entertained in those days, and if bishops undertook to do it, it was thought better to depose them than to submit to it.

In the debates on Bishop Andrew's case, Mr. Comfort said: “It is urged against the proposition before the conference, that *division* of the Church will be the consequence of its passage. But he believed there was no element in the constitution authorizing this General conference to make any movement in that direction. It would be to transcend their province. Secession there may be, but not *division*.”‡

Mr. Smith said: “Sooner than submit to results so fatal to our prospects, a division of our ecclesiastical confederation would become a high and solemn duty. This General conference, I am aware, has no authority directly to effect this separation. This subject must go back to the organic bodies we represent, and to the people—

\* J. B. M'Ferrin, August 23, 1844, in *N. Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 23L. † N., January 10, 1845. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 60.

\* *Zion's Herald*, May 24, 1844, Vol. XIV, p. 84, col. 4. † Document, No. 55. ‡ *Debates of 1844*, p. 135.

the membership of the Church—who must be consulted, and whose voice must be regarded as an authoritative decision, from which there is no appeal.\*

5. The declaration of the southern delegates, presented June 5th, is no other than a declaration of ecclesiastical independence. It declares that the "jurisdiction of the General conference, over the conferences in the slaveholding states, is inconsistent with the success of the ministry." Individuals, as we have before seen, declared, from time to time, that division or secession must follow. Division was attempted, but could not be done. Now secession must ensue, as division failed. And, what individuals threatened, the southern delegates in a body *declare* to be their fixed purpose. This was a formal declaration, uttering a determination, that the "jurisdiction of the General conference" would no longer be submitted to. And this, too, before the plan of separation was passed, or perhaps thought of; for the committee which drew up the plan was appointed the same day in which the declaration was offered to the conference, but subsequent to, and in pursuance of the declaration.

6. On the 6th of June, or the day after the declaration was made, the Protest of the south was presented to the conference. This Protest declares in conclusion, "*the south can not submit, and the absolute necessity of division is already dated.*" The Protest of the south differs from all other protests we have ever seen, read of, or imagined. In the very nature of a protest, it is required that the minority, after presenting their grounds of protest, submit the whole matter to the Church at large, and continue in communion; and pursue the matter no further. Hence, the Protest of the south is a miscalled document; it should be named, "A DECLARATION OF DETERMINED SECESSION FROM THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH." They say "they can not submit;" they say "the absolute necessity for division is already dated." They call it *division*, but they ought to call it *secession*, or *separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church*; and this Protest, too, was read before the plan of separation was enacted.

7. We will briefly enumerate the several steps in the progress of secession or separation, that are clearly marked, previous to the adoption of the "report on the declaration of the south," or, as it has been improperly called, "the plan of separation."

*First.* The true cause for secession was, that the Church refused to change its original principles and uniform practice, which required traveling preachers to emancipate slaves, if *practicable*, whether the laws of the state will allow them to be free or not, and which required bishops to be non-slaveholders under all circumstances.

*Secondly.* *Secession, separation, or division*, was threatened, from 1836 to 1844, unless the Church would elect slaveholders to be bishops, or approve that one or more of the bishops already elected should become slaveholders.

*Thirdly.* Various misconstructions and perversions of the meaning of the General Rule and section on slavery, were resorted to, so as to force the Discipline to speak a language different, both from its grammatical construction, its true spirit, and the uniform practice under it. And all this was done to favor the introduction of slaveholding in the Episcopacy, or among the traveling

preachers, where emancipation was practicable.

*Fourthly.* The Methodist Episcopal Church steadily refused to adopt the new version of the Discipline, or the demanded altered practice under it. Hence the Baltimore conference was sustained in the case of Harding. And the General conference decided it to be their *sense, meaning, or judgment*, that Bishop Andrew should either cease to be a slaveholder, or cease to exercise the functions of bishop; and having so decided, they left it with him to take his course; but should he disobey, he should be found guilty of contumacy.

*Fifthly.* The attempt to divide the Church, as proposed by Dr. Capers, could not be entertained, except to be rejected, as the General conference had no power to divide the Church; or if they had it, they refused to exercise it.

*Sixthly.* Hence the south declared formally for secession or separation, with the view, however, if possible, to make it a constitutional division; or, rather, to break the constitution of the Church, in order to accomplish a constitutional action.

*Seventhly.* Their Protest was a mere declaration for secession, though they called it division, and was only an argument on their declaration, carried out in detail.

*Eighthly.* We will also note, chronologically, the steps of progress up to the time that the report on the declaration was adopted. We have, 1. The decision in Mr. Harding's case, May 11th. 2. The decision in Bishop Andrew's case, May 30th. 3. Dr. Capers's resolutions for the division of the Church, and their failure, June 3d. 4. The declaration of the southern delegates, June 5th. 5. The Protest was read June 6th. 6. The report as adopted, June 8th.

*Ninthly.* Hence, it will be seen that all the previous steps for secession were taken, so as evidently to secure it, independently of the report on the declaration, or the plan of separation, whether granted or not granted.

*Tenthly.* And all this was done in the absence of any thing done or said by the majority to grant, allow, or sanction a division of the Church in any way on their part.

*Eleventhly.* The manifesto of the southern delegates, after the close of the General conference, virtually, and in fact, though not in words, proclaimed secession as inevitable and certain.

*Twelfthly.* The decision of the General conference, in adopting the report on the declaration, was no other than a course pointed out, in the most amicable and peaceful way, to treat those who assumed the responsibility of renouncing the jurisdiction of the Church, and of organizing a new Church out of the Church members and ministers of the old. It was a great stretch of lenity, and going too far for peace. It was well meant, but greatly abused and perverted, as is mostly the case, by those who are bent on innovation, and are impatient of wholesome restraint.

With these preliminaries we proceed to consider the report on the declaration of the southern delegates, or, as it has been improperly called, "the plan of separation."

8. On the declaration of the delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding states, June 5th, the subject of their declaration was referred to a committee of nine, consisting of R. Paine, L. L. Hamline, James Porter, N. Bangs, Peter Akers, Glazen Filmore, William Capers, Thomas Crowder, and Thomas B. Sargent.

We have already noticed that Mr. M'Ferrin, June 5th, presented a resolution, instructing the Committee on the Declaration "to devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the Church." This had already been attempted, but without success, by the resolutions of Dr. Capers; and it was agreed on all hands that it could not be done. The division of the Church was a work which was not entertained by the committee, and it was so avowed when Mr. M'Ferrin's resolution was before conference. Indeed, Mr. Hamline remarked, that if the conference sent him to do that work, he could not serve, and he served only on the condition that division could not be entertained.

The only thing the committee attempted was the other part of Mr. M'Ferrin's resolution; namely, "to devise a plan for an amicable adjustment of the difficulties now existing in the Church on the subject of slavery." It is true the report in the Debates, page 217, is called "Report of the Committee of nine on the Division of the Church;" but this is an erroneous title put in by the reporter, because the first sentence of that report, as published both in the Journal, page 135, and in the Debates, page 217, calls it "the select committee of nine to consider and report on the declaration of the delegates from the conferences of the slaveholding states." Or, to give the document the customary technical form, it ought to be called the "Report on the Declaration of the Southern Delegates;" or, more briefly still, the "*Report on the Declaration.*" The word division is foisted in, in some way, by the reporter, but it has no proper or correct application. The title too, which afterward obtained, the "plan of separation," is equally exceptionable; for the conference did not strike out a plan for the procedure of the south in their course of secession; but it means that this is the plan, or course of treatment, they would meet with, provided they took on themselves the responsibility of separating or seceding from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and could furnish a certain reason for doing so. And, indeed, when the reason came to be explained, it was not that the missions would be broken up, or the south disfranchised or degraded; but it was, evasions apart, an unscriptural concession to the system of slavery, and nothing else. We transfer the plan to the documents, and will refer to it when necessary.\*

9. On the 8th of June the Committee on the Declaration made their report.† C. Elliott moved its adoption. It elicited debate, as might be expected, the leading outlines of which we will furnish:

C. Elliott believed the report would be for the best interests of the Church. He thought it a proper course for the conference to pursue in conformity with the Scriptures and the best analogies of ancient and modern Churches. History did not furnish an example of so large a body of Christians remaining in such close and unbroken connection as the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was found now necessary to separate this large body; for it was becoming unwieldy. To this conclusion they must eventually come. Were the present difficulty out of the way there would be good reasons for passing the resolutions contained in

the report. The body was too large to do business advantageously. The measure contemplated was not schism, but separation for their mutual convenience and prosperity.\*

The above remarks were made under the persuasion that the south would secede or separate, as presented in the foregoing pages, and that even then, though the evils and errors were great on their part, they were considered not such as to prevent reformation, or such as would be of finally destructive consequences; and, therefore, to meet them according to the provisions of the Committee would be the best mode of correcting the evils then existing. The size of the Church, too, had its difficulties in this case, and always has had; and such large organizations, spread over such extensive territory, where different interests and views must prevail, may be said to contain in themselves the necessary seeds of a new organization, unless there may be a centralization of power which, in its results, will be worse than separation or secession. And even secession may be, under proper circumstances, a duty, as, under other circumstances, it may be a sin.

Mr. Griffith thought this was an extraordinary measure, against which he would record his dissent if he stood alone in this matter. If to pass an act against the law be termed extrajudicial, then this measure was extra-legislative. They dared not refer this question to the annual conferences, which the constitution required them to do, but they put it on a very different issue. They put it in the power of any body of men to reorganize themselves and make a distinct body whenever they chose. None had a right to divide the Church. They were not sent here to divide the Church. If there was any such authority he had not seen it. Beside, the report went to disfranchise many members of their common right to choose where they will belong. Where, then, was that liberty of conscience of which no man could be deprived?‡

Mr. Cartwright said they had boasted that the Methodist Episcopal Church was one and indivisible—a unit. They had not had any schism, and perhaps they would not have any now. He would rather die himself than kill the Church. He thought the measure was a wicked one, and that it robbed both the north and the south of their rights. The proposed arrangements would create strife in the border conferences. While he disclaimed the right to lord it over the people, he also disclaimed the right to rob the people. The Methodist Episcopal Church was the creature of providence, and he wanted to know why Dr. Elliott's faith failed him when they entered on this ocean of slavery. Upborne by the majesty of truth and the baptismal fire of the Holy Ghost, they had outridden the storm, and were not wrecked. The Church was not a prison. There was a door in and a door out. The measure was a bad precedent, and would tend to break the Church into fragments. If they had come up to the conference in view of this state of things the case would be different. It would, therefore, be difficult to satisfy the people that they have not acted in advance of the Discipline and the constitution. They had no authority conferred on them, directly or indirectly, to divide the Church. He was willing to lay the whole case before the people during the next

\* Document, No. 56.

† Journal, pp. 130, 133. Debates, pp. 217-225.

\* Debates, p. 219.

† Id.

four years, and if the next General conference came up instructed to enact this measure they will have some excuse for doing so.\*

Dr. Paine said this had been pronounced a revolutionary measure. There is not, in any government, a provision made to divide itself, and, consequently, it must be done by violence, or in a peaceful manner, by common consent. Unless steps of conciliation were taken, of which he saw no prospect, the possibility of separation could not be denied; and this measure was taken that it might be effected pleasantly. He did not know for certainty that separation would take place; that it would become positively and imperiously necessary. He ardently hoped it would not. The south generally did not desire it; they were unwilling it should take place. The south had resorted to this measure to avoid a greater calamity. If, on arriving at home, they found it necessary to act upon this measure, they would feel bound to do it, and carry out the provisions of this enactment; but they would not thus act unless driven to it. The separation would not be effected by the passage of these resolutions through the General conference. They must pass the annual conferences, beginning at New York. They were not pugnacious and schismatic; they were not reckless men, but men of God, and Christians; they had no revolutionary designs; they would be one people still till it was formally announced by a convention of the southern Churches, that they had resolved to ask an organization in accordance with the provisions of the report. The south, however, felt seriously apprehensive that the necessity even now existed. They were not revolutionists. Brethren who had heard from their people were alarmed at the increasing dissatisfaction among them, and all the southern brethren desired was to have some ground to stand upon when they get home. Brethren had placed them in a sad dilemma; for they had practically disputed the equality of their rights. As to the allusions that had been made to border warfare, he could only say that the measure had been prepared as a peace measure. This measure had been concocted in a spirit of compromise and fraternal feeling in the hope of preventing agitation and schism.†

Dr. Luckey said they had come to a serious and eventful crisis in the progress of Methodism in this country. The resolutions were provisionary and preliminary, settling nothing at present, but providing, in an amicable and proper way, for such action as it might hereafter be necessary to take. He hoped such necessity would never arise, and that southern brethren would not find it necessary to leave them. Reference had been made to secession, etc.; but was it not better that they should separate than have a continuation of strife and of warfare? If the separation was necessary, it ought to be amicably and constitutionally effected, and there was no intention of doing it otherwise. Mr. Wesley had contended at one time for the unity of the Methodist body throughout the world, but he subsequently saw it necessary to permit the connection in the United States to separate; and had it not been for the best?‡

Dr. Bangs said the committee was formed by three from the south, three from the middle states, and three from the north. They were

instructed, by a resolution of the conference, that if they could not adjust the difficulties amicably, they were to provide for separation, if they could do so constitutionally. They had met the constitutional difficulty by sending round to the annual conferences that portion of the report which required their concurrence. The report did not speak of division. The word had been carefully avoided through the whole document. It only said, "in the event of a separation taking place," throwing the responsibility from off the shoulders of the General conference, and upon those who should say that such a separation was necessary. Of two evils choose the less. The choice was between the violent separation of the south, and its peaceable and amicable separation. The resolutions would not interfere with liberty of conscience, as the laws, Discipline, government would be the same. This was the course pursued by Mr. Wesley in reference to the Methodist Church in the United States. The same would apply to the Methodist societies in Ireland. The south wanted a separate conference, adapted to the institutions of that portion of the country. If they must separate, was it right to deprive their brethren of the south of their just rights, whether temporal or spiritual?

Mr. G. Filmore, one of the committee, explained the labors of the committee. The design of God in raising up the Methodists was to spread Scriptural holiness through the land. The brethren from the south feared they could not do this under existing circumstances. The north said if they yielded any of the ground they had taken, they should throw impediments in their own path in carrying out the same object. Methodism, as the child of providence, adjusts herself to the circumstances of the case. The resolutions do not say that the south must go, shall go, will go, or that any body wants them to go; but simply make provision for such a contingency. He did not think there was a man among them who would dare to lay his head upon his pillow if he held from his southern brethren one cent of their common funds.\*

Mr. Finley saw no proposition in the report to divide the Church; nor did he see any thing unconstitutional in it. The constitution did not require them to send abroad a proposition to divide the Church, and it would, therefore, be unconstitutional to send such a proposition to the annual conferences. Mr. Wesley separated the Methodist Church in America from the British Wesleyans, and in 1824 and 1828 there was an application made by the Canada conference to set them off as a distinct Church, and the General conference told them they had no power to do so, but gave them liberty to do just what they now proposed to do with the south.†

Mr. Hamline explained the action of the committee in reference to the sixth Restrictive Article. When the first committee met on Dr. Capers's resolutions, they believed these resolutions proposed a new form or division of the Church. The committee thought there were difficulties in the way of such a proposition. One provision was to send it to the annual conferences, but that was unconstitutional and revolutionary in its character; and when their votes came back the General conference would

\* Debates, p. 220. † Id., pp. 220, 221. ‡ Id., p. 221.

\* Debates, p. 220.

† Id., p. 223.

have no more authority than they now had. Why, then, send it? The Book Concern is chartered in behalf of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, and if they did separate till only one state remained still Methodism would remain the same, and it would still be the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States; but if they sent out to the annual conferences to alter one Restrictive Article, it would be constitutional, and to divide the Book Concern so that they might be honest men and ministers. The resolution goes on to make provision, if the annual conferences concur, for the security and efficiency of the southern conferences.\*

Dr. Bond understood the intention of the committee to be to provide for peace, and love, and harmony in the great Methodist family. As to the constitutional objection, he presumed no one would contend there was a constitutional provision for the separation of one part of the Church from another; and, if the necessity of the case now required it, it could be justified only by the adage that *necessity has no law*. The report was compelled to assume the right to prevent Churches and societies from deciding according to elective affinity; hence, interior societies could not change their relation to the conferences where they were found. This was justified only on the ground of necessity to avoid agitation. This will produce a border warfare. Adhere to the conference lines as they now stand, and then we shall have peace. If we must come to separation, let us provide for peace through the Churches, and part in peace. If it be necessary to abridge rights, they may as well be abridged on the borders as in the interior. In making out the resolutions, the committee have taken the worst course that arbitrators could take—*splitting the difference*. This is always a bad plan, where a great principle is concerned, as one side must be right.

Mr. Collins sought some common ground, on which they could all unite in kind and fraternal feelings. The committee were not able to come to that ground. He mentioned, when the vote on Bishop Andrew's case was taken, that he would move for a reconsideration, if any measure could be proposed which would render that action unnecessary, that they might recall it. No such measure was presented, and he, therefore, did not move a reconsideration. He thought the report contained the best proposition, under the circumstances. He hoped they would not come to a separation at all. The southern brethren had strong hold on their people. If the evil could be arrested he believed it would be; but if separation must come, let there be a *pro rata* division of the Book Concern. The preachers would have to let the members decide the question for themselves.†

Mr. Porter, one of the committee, said the committee had prepared that report as the best thing that could be done under the circumstances. The time was coming when separation must take place. The difficulty was greater now than it was four years ago, and it would increase. If there were defects in the document they could arrest it in the annual conferences. The south could take no action upon it till the annual conferences had decided

respecting the sixth rule; and if, when they got home, and calmly and deliberately examined it, they found any thing radically wrong, let them stop it in their annual conferences.

Mr. Sanford opposed the passage of the report and the resolutions. He had no wish to throw brethren into circumstances requiring a separation; nor did he desire, if separation were really and absolutely necessary, to refuse them their portion of the property of the Church. But there was a great difference between telling brethren, when they had separated, they should have their portion, and opening the door and inviting them to separate. Of the latter character he believed this measure. When they had taken their course it would be time enough to tell them what they would do. If they had separated, however, before he voted for their having their share of the property, he must be convinced that they had done so of necessity. In his opinion the course now proposed was an encouragement to separation. With these views he would record his name against the whole procedure.\*

Dr. Durbin wished the report amended so as to commence taking the vote in the south. When the south had taken action, and thus proved it necessary, the north would then know better how to act.†

Dr. Paine said if this amendment were adopted, it would be twelve months before it was laid before the annual conferences, and at least twelve months more before it was settled; whereas, if it began at once, in twelve months' time they should know whether they had leave peaceably to separate. He hoped it would not be postponed. The matter had been well considered in committee, where all interests had been adequately represented.‡

Dr. Capers said it would at once be seen by brethren that this was a compromise measure, designed to effect that peaceably which otherwise, he feared, would be done violently. Every mail increased the apprehensions of the southern brethren. If the General conference would put their plan into such operation as to show that they meditated action on the subject, it would materially tend to measures of peace and tranquillity. The brethren did not know the state of things in the south. He should feel thankful to God if that portion of the Church could be, by any means, preserved from violent disruption. The southern brethren had, he knew, taxed the charity of the brethren composing that conference, in their statements relative to their position with the people. It was thought they spoke without calmness and deliberation. The truth, however, was, that they stood like men at the death. If the conference suspended action too long it would come too late, and would not save them. O, that they could pour some oil on the troubled feelings of the south! O, that they could cause these waves to be still! He knew of nothing so likely to do this as the passage, cordially, and as brethren, of the resolution now before them.¶

Dr. Winans said there was only one provision of the whole report that went to the annual conferences, and that merely authorized the appropriation of the proceeds of the Book Concern otherwise than as now appropriated. They were not sending round to the annual conferences any proposition in which the action

\* Debates, p. 223.

† Id., p. 224.

\* Debates, p. 225. † Id. ‡ Id. ¶ Id., p. 226.

of the south, in reference to separation, was concerned. The only proposition was, that they might have liberty, if necessary, to organize a separate conference; and it was important that the south should know, at an early period, that they had such liberty, in order to allay the intense excitement which prevailed in that portion of the work.

Mr. Hamline said the committee had carefully avoided presenting any resolution which would embrace the idea of a separation or division. The article which was referred to the annual conferences had not, necessarily, any connection with division. It was thought, as complaints were abroad respecting the present mode of appropriating the proceeds of the Book Concern, it would be for the general good that the power to appropriate the proceeds should be put in the power of a two-thirds vote, instead of in the power of a mere majority, thus making it more difficult to make a wrong appropriation; and the occasion of this report was taken hold of by the committee to make it more difficult to misappropriate the funds, in which they believed they would serve both the particular object of the report, and the general good of the Methodist Episcopal Church.\*

Mr. M'Ferrin presumed that there were none there who would withhold from the south their share in the Book Concern; and there could, therefore, be no harm in passing this resolution, which he believed would go through the annual conferences almost without a dissentient voice. And if, after it came round to the south, they saw it unnecessary to organize a separate conference, no mischief would have been done.

Mr. G. Filmore said the views of the committee had been fully and clearly explained. Their design was to put a restriction upon the General conference, and to make the two-thirds vote necessary to all appropriations of the produce of the Book Concern, instead of a majority only. The whole of the southern delegates, who had spoken at all, had declared it to be their honest conviction that the cause of God required immediate action on the part of the north; and if they were convinced that immediate action would deliver the south, they all went for relief.†

10. The sentiments uttered in debating on the plan go to show that no proper division of the Church took place, and, therefore, it was nothing else than a secession.

(1.) The report did not speak of division, properly so called, nor did it divide the Church, or authorize its division.

Mr. Finley "could see in the report no proposition to divide the Church."‡

Mr. Hamline said, "When the first committee met they had before them a paper which proposed a new form or division of the Church. The committee thought there were difficulties in the way of such a proposition."§

Dr. Bond said, "As to the constitutional objection he presumed that no one there would contend that there could have been any constitutional provision for the separation of one part of the Church from another; and, if the necessity of the case now required it, it could only be justified by the adage that 'necessity has no law.'"¶

Dr. Paine said, "There is not, in any government, a provision made to divide itself, and, consequently, it must be done by violence, or in a peaceful manner, by common consent."\*\*

The same said, "Unless steps of conciliation were taken, the possibility of separation could not be denied, and this measure was taken that it might be effected pleasantly."‡

"The report did not speak of division; the word had been carefully avoided through the whole document; it only said 'in the event of a separation taking place,' throwing the responsibility from off the shoulders of the General conference, and upon those who would say that such a separation was necessary."‡

Mr. Griffith "denied that any one had a right to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church. He wanted to know if they were sent here to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church. If there was any such authority he had not seen it."§

Mr. Cartwright "contended that they had no authority conferred upon them, either directly or indirectly, to divide the Church."¶

(2.) It was asserted, too, that the constitutional vote of the annual conferences would be necessary to give validity to the plan.

Dr. Paine said, "The separation would not be effected by the passage of these resolutions through the General conference; they must pass the annual conferences."‡

Dr. Bangs said, "They [the committee] had met the constitutional difficulty by sending round to the annual conferences that portion of the report which required their concurrence."\*\*

Mr. Porter said, respecting the whole report, "If there were defects in the document they could arrest it in their annual conferences. The south could take no action upon it till the annual conferences had decided respecting the sixth rule; and if, when they got home, and calmly and deliberately examined it, they found any thing radically wrong, let them stop it in their annual conferences."††

That the alteration of the sixth restriction only was submitted to the conferences we are aware, but it was not submitted as an independent and abstract proposition, but as a part of the plan. That proposition came to the annual conferences from the General conference as a portion of the plan. As a part of the plan it was received by the annual conferences, reported on by committees as such, and discussed as such, even in its constitutional aspects. But the twelfth resolution decides this point:

"That the bishops be respectfully requested to lay that PART OF THIS REPORT requiring the action of the annual conferences before them as soon as possible, beginning at New York conference."

It was as a "part of the report, or plan," that this proposition came before the annual conferences, and as this part failed the whole failed.‡‡

11. The Protest declared the secessionary character of the new Church in the most unequivocal manner. It declared that the jurisdiction of the General conference could not be tolerated; and as

\* Journal, p. 220, *in/ra*. † Id., p. 221. ‡ Bangs, p. 222.

§ Debates, p. 219. ¶ Id., p. 220. †† Id., p. 221.

\*\* Journal, p. 222. †† Debates, p. 225.

‡‡ P., December 17, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 682.

\* Debates, p. 226. † Id. ‡ Journal, p. 223.

‡ Debates, p. 223. § Journal, p. 224.



the Church refused to change, the Protest declared, in italicized terms, "*the south can not submit, and the absolute necessity of division [secession] is already dated.*" The word *division*, in the foregoing sentence, is manifestly used in the sense of *separation*, or *secession*.

12. The stout resistance to the Reply to the Protest showed clearly that secession was the watchword. When a protest is filed, the majority always have the right, without the interference in any way of the minority, to draw up and authorize their reply, if they see fit to reply. But the minority, after even producing a protest, couched in offensive terms, and misrepresenting the case, claim also to correct and interfere with the reply of the majority. None but seceders in spirit could do so.

13. Beside, the proclamation of the southern delegates at the close of General conference, showed a determination for secession. This was truly a revolutionary document; but it was only a link in the chain. The declaration, the Protest, the resistance to the Reply, preceded this step, and it was one to be followed by a series of others, in order to complete the work of secession. On this we need not enlarge, as this matter has already been presented in sufficient detail.

14. The plan itself, as far as the south is concerned, gives a secessionary character to the new Church. For the plan, we refer to the documents.\*

(1.) The plan is based on a determined prospective renunciation of the government or jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the fifty-one southern delegates, in behalf of their constituents. The declaration to which the plan refers, teaches this very plainly. It says, "A continuance of the jurisdiction of the General conference [is] inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states."<sup>†</sup> The plan, still referring to the declaration, says, "The objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization can not be successfully accomplished under the jurisdiction of the General conference, as now constituted." Here the *jurisdiction* of the Methodist Episcopal Church is *not* to be continued in the new Church, and the new Church will not be under this jurisdiction.

(2.) The reasons for renouncing this jurisdiction, or the Church itself, are the following. The plan speaks of the "various reasons enumerated" by the protesters, and they are as follows:

*First.* Continued agitation on the subject of slavery and abolition in a portion of the Church.

*Secondly.* The frequent action on that subject in General conference.

*Thirdly.* Especially the proceedings against Bishop Andrew, resulting in his virtual suspension from his office.

*Fourthly.* "The objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization can not be successfully accomplished."

(3.) The *remedy* for this was a determined secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The plan says the *separation* was *not improbable*, or, in other words, it was very *probable*.

The south, as we have seen, were determined on this course before General conference, unless the Church would recede from the principles of the Discipline, and introduce new elements into her constitution.

(4.) A new Church was contemplated by the sole and voluntary act of the south.

The plan says, "Should the annual conferences of the slaveholding states find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection?"

(5.) The conditions or terms on which the General conference agreed to treat them, if they found it necessary to secede and form a new Church, as their own act and deed.

*First.* It was considered as an *emergency* or extraordinary state of things—a *necessity* which knows no law. It was a case that did not allow the application of the ordinary rules of Church polity; yet so that no unconstitutional measure would be resorted to, on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in providing against this emergency.

*Secondly.* The most northern limit of the protesting conferences were to be the most northern limits of the new Church; namely, the Virginia, Holston, Kentucky, and Missouri conferences. (See Resolution 1.) The new Church could comprise no portions whatever of Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois conferences.

*Thirdly.* This matter was left to be decided by a majority of lay votes in the conferences, societies, and stations in the northern range of the protesting conferences; and then this line was to be permanent.

*Fourthly.* The division of the Book Concern was to depend on the three-fourth vote of the annual conferences. (See Resolutions 3 and 4.) And when thus decided, it was a breach of the plan to go to law about it. So the south both broke the plan and their promise by entering into a lawsuit for Church property.

15. We will now present a few observations on the plan and its provisions.

It was a fixed point, decided in 1828, that the General conference could not divide the Church. Hence the failure of Dr. Capers's plan, and the non-entertainment of that part of Mr. M'Ferrin's resolution, which called for a division of the Church.

The plan was not made because separation was better than union, but because it was an alternative, seeing separation was inevitable.

The plan, indeed, was, however, in advance of supposed secession. It was asked by the minority; and it was supposed to be the most likely method to prevent secession, though it was made in prospect of one.

It was, too, to meet an *emergency*, to provide for which, as we have said, the ordinary rules of Church polity will not apply. It was a revolution, and a violent one, to meet which the conference had to prepare as best it can. It is true, it might have made no provision to meet it, except denial, resistance, and disownment; but then all thought that this was not the better way, though none were satisfied with the measures adopted.

The General conference did not *authorize* the secession by its acts; for this must be the sole act of the south themselves.

It was, however, intended as a *peace measure*, and certainly there is much to be said in favor of such a measure, compared to one founded in a different spirit.

The principal provisions of the plan could not apply till a secession should have taken place.

Hence the south *separated themselves*. They were neither expelled, nor disowned, till they should disown the Church, and renounce its jurisdiction.

\* Document, No. 56. Journal, p. 135. Debates, p. 207  
<sup>†</sup> Journal, p. 109. Debates, p. 200.

16. As several objections have been made to the report on the declaration, we may now pay attention to some of them.

It is objected that this plan deprives ministers and members in the interior, and ministers on the borders, of their membership, and is therefore unconstitutional or wrong. On this we remark: 1. That there is no act of the conference that deprives them either of trial or appeal, or of their membership. 2. The condition of such is something like that of the state in time of war, when statutory laws, providing for individual rights, must yield to the demands of public good. 3. There were ministers of societies in this country who joined under Mr. Wesley, that were opposed to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and regarded it as cutting them off contrary to rule. 4. In some places where outward circumstances break up a Church, there may be minorities of excellent character, who may suffer greatly, whose cases the provisions of the Church can not meet. 5. But there was an emergency. There was a revolution in the Church, and the ordinary rules of policy could not be made to apply, let the Church do the best she could.

It has also been objected, that the plan contravenes the ministerial call, in shutting it out of the south. The Methodist Episcopal Church does not send its ministers to occupy fields that are cultivated by ministers of the Canadian, Wesleyan, or Irish conferences; yet the cases are

very similar to this one. Beside, the commission of our Lord is not confined to the Methodist Episcopal Church, nor to any other Church; yet where there are already faithful ministers in any field, it is not in consistency with our Lord's commission for others to interfere with their labors.

It is said, too, that the plan furnishes a bad precedent, and provides for schism. That our Church went far for peace, and to preserve fraternal relations, is admitted; perhaps, indeed, too far. It is difficult, in an emergency, to keep within proper bounds. But the Church acted on the side of peace, fraternity, and good will; and if a proper use is not made of this by those concerned, it may be going too far to censure her for her moderation.

After all, perhaps, the wisdom of man could not well provide better or more Christian measures than the General conference of 1844 did, in adopting the report on the declaration. Nothing that has since been projected, we think, will compare with it, unless it may be to have done nothing at all. That may have been best; yet we doubt it. To preserve so large a Church in one great confederacy is not the better way, as the history, both of Popery and of great national Churches, fully shows. And even now it may be questioned whether two Methodist Episcopal Churches in the United States are not better than one, provided the new Church were such as the General conference expected it to be.

## CHAPTER XXIV.

### THE PROTEST AND REPLY TO IT.

1. As soon as the case of Bishop Andrew was decided, on Saturday, June 1st, by the passage of Mr. Finley's substitute, Dr. L. Pierce gave notice that a Protest would be presented by the minority on this vote, at as early a day as practicable; to be entered on the journals of conference.\* Five days after, on Thursday, June 6th, J. Early asked that H. B. Bascom have leave to read to the conference the Protest that L. Pierce gave notice on Saturday would be presented by the southern delegates. When the reading by Dr. Bascom was finished, the chair decided that the Protest be entered on the Journal.† After reading the report, a committee of three, consisting of Messrs. Olin, Hamline, and Durbin, were appointed, to draw up a statement of facts in the case of Bishop Andrew, as a reply to the allegations in the Protest. On the election of Mr. Hamline to the Episcopacy, and the departure of Dr. Olin, on account of poor health, Messrs. G. Peck and C. Elliott were appointed to fill their places.‡

We will now take a survey of the Protest and the Reply to it.

2. In presenting an analysis of the Protest, or in giving an outline of its principal parts, we are met in the outset with a difficulty nearly, if not altogether, insurmountable. We mean the verbose character of its phraseology, the use of unusual or far-fetched terms, and the illogical

character of its reasoning. By these means, there is a confusion of ideas, a want of definiteness, running through the whole, so that it is impossible, or extremely difficult, to obtain clear and distinct views of the meaning. This is the character of Dr. Bascom's style. In his preached sermons this was the case. We often heard the best judges declare that, after hearing his sermons, they were at a loss to collect and arrange his sentiments with accuracy. Let any one now sit down and read one of his sermons, and then attempt to give, in his own words, an outline, and he will be baffled in the attempt, in most cases. Yet there are to be found in his composition many beautiful passages, and sublime and noble sentiments. But when the analysis is attempted, the endeavor will be found to be unavailing. And yet in such a document, above many others, the most clear and definite language should be employed. It is a pity that Dr. Capers had not written the Protest, or some one whose style was befitting so important a paper. Add to this, the temper of the paper is deeply imbued with a degree of resentment, haste, and petulance, so as to furnish an element very difficult to come in contact with, without the danger of getting into a similar temper of mind. For these reasons, we approach the Protest with distrust of ourselves, and with no great hope of being enabled to give a clear outline of its contents, either in distinct propositions, or by a continuous narrative. Let any one read over the

\* Journal, p. 85. † Id., p. 112. ‡ Id., p. 133.

Protest, and then inquire whether we have mistaken its character or not.\*

The Protest assumes to be in behalf of thirteen annual conferences, and portions of the ministry and membership of several other conferences, embracing nearly five thousand ministers, traveling and local, and a membership of nearly five hundred thousand.

The Protest is against the act of the majority, in an alleged attempt to degrade and punish Bishop Andrew, by declaring it to be the sense or judgment of the General conference that he desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions, without the exhibition of any alleged offense against the laws or Discipline of the Church, without form of trial, or legal conviction of any kind, and in the absence of any charge or want of qualification or faithfulness in the performance of the duties pertaining to his office.

The minority protests against the act of the majority in the case of Bishop Andrew, as extrajudicial to all intents and purposes, being both without law and contrary to law. They recognize in the General conference no right, power, or authority, ministerial, judicial, or administrative, to suspend or depose a bishop, or otherwise subject him to any official disability whatever, without the formal presentation of a charge or charges, alleging that he has been guilty of the violation of some law, or some disciplinary regulation of the Church, and also upon conviction of such charge, after due form of trial. The act, in the case of Bishop Andrew, is a violation of the fundamental law, usually known as the compromise law of the Church on the subject of slavery.

They further protest that the act establishes a dangerous precedent, by placing in jeopardy the superintendency, by subjecting a bishop at any time to the will and caprice of a majority of the General conference, not only without law, but in defiance of the restraints and provisions of law.

The following are the reasons and grounds of the Protest, as enumerated:

*First.* The proceeding against the Bishop is on the assumption that he is connected with slavery—that he is the legal holder and *owner* of slave property. On this subject, both in regard to the membership and ministry, we have special law. In the case of Bishop Andrew, there is a simple question of law and fact, and no extrinsic considerations should lead from the law and facts in the case. In the late act of the majority, law is appealed from, and expediency is substituted for law as a rule of judgment. In the absence of law, it might be competent for the General conference to act upon other grounds.

The law of the Church has existed since 1785, but especially since 1804, and in view of the adjustment of the whole subject, in 1816, as a virtual contract between the north and south, then, as now, known as distinct parties, in relation to the questions of slavery and abolition. The law was designed to embrace every member, minister, order, and officer of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Is there any thing in the law and its reasons, creating an exception in the instance of bishops? If bishops are not named, no more are presiding elders, agents, editors, etc. The enactment was for the Church, and every member of it. This compromise was not a mere legislative enactment, but it partakes of the nature of a grave compact, or treaty, binding the parties. It is a legal compromise, in the shape

of public, recognized law. The law exists in the Discipline of the Church. It is a long-established law, originating in treaty, and based upon the principles of *conventional compromise*. Whenever this conservative law is violated, the Church, to every practical purpose, is already divided.

*Secondly.* The resolution censuring and virtually suspending Bishop Andrew is not mere advice or recommendation, as some now explain, but is imperative and mandatory in form; and it is the judgment and will of the conference that he cease to exercise the office of bishop till he shall cease to be the owner of slaves. A resolution requesting the Bishop to resign was laid on the table to entertain the substitute. A motion to declare the action advisory was rejected by the majority.

*Thirdly.* It is assumed by the majority that conscience and principle are involved, and require the act complained of as expedient and necessary under the circumstances. But Bishop Andrew, being protected by the law, his connection with slavery can only be wrong in the proportion that the law is bad or defective; and conscience and principle can not be brought to bear upon the Bishop without bearing on the *law* and the *Church*, having such law. The Church can not have settled policy and invariable custom in contravention of law. Nothing beyond peaceable acquiescence will ever be submitted to by the south, as it would amount to a denial of equal rights, and could not be submitted to without injury and degradation.

*Fourthly.* If connection with slavery is ruinous to the Church in the north that ruin is already wrought. The Discipline, laws, and legislation of the Church connect with slavery. Slavery is an element of society—a principle of action—a household reality in the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is part and parcel of the economy of American Methodism in every subjective sense. Every bishop, every minister, every member of the Church is, of necessity, connected with slavery. The only remedy, then, is the reorganization of the Church, or to get out of it as soon as possible. Impelled to the illegal arrest of a bishop, because he has by bequest, inheritance, and marriage, come in possession of slave property, in no instance intending to possess himself of such property, how long will other ministers, or even lay members, remain undisturbed?

*Fifthly.* As the Methodist Episcopal Church is now organized, and according to its organization since 1784, the Episcopacy is a coordinate branch, the executive department proper of the government. A bishop is not the mere creature—is in no prominent sense an officer—of the General conference. The General conference, as such, can not constitute a bishop; it does not possess the power of ordination, without which a bishop can not be constituted.

The bishops are, beyond doubt, an integral constituent part of the General conference, made such by law and the constitution; and because elected by that body it does not follow that they are subject to the will of that body, except in conformity with legal right and the provisions of law. In this sense they are subject to the General conference. In a sense by no means unimportant, the General conference is as much the creature of the Episcopacy as the bishops are the creatures of the General conference. Constitutionally, the bishops alone

\* Document, No. 57.

have the right to fix the time of holding the annual conferences; and should they refuse or neglect to do so, no annual conference could meet according to law, and, by consequence, no delegates could be chosen, and no General conference could be chosen or even exist. As *executive* officers, as well as pastoral overseers, the bishops belong to the Church as such, and not to the General conference, as one of its counsels or organs of action.

Because bishops are, in part, constituted by the General conference, the power of removal does not follow. Episcopacy even in the Methodist Episcopal Church is not a mere appointment to labor. It is an official, consecrated station under the protection of law, and can only be dangerous as the law is bad or the Church corrupt. The power to appoint does not, necessarily, involve the power to remove. When a bishop is suspended, or informed that it is the wish or will of the General conference that he cease to perform the functions of bishop, the whole procedure becomes an outrage upon justice as well as law.

*Sixthly.* They protest against the act of the majority because it is the exponent of principles, destroying the unity of the Church.

*Seventhly.* Allowing that Bishop Andrew is unacceptable to the north on account of slavery, any bishop violating, or submitting to a violation of the compromise, can not be acceptable to the south, and need not appear there. The majority, therefore, dissolve the Church by crippling a coordinate branch of it.

*Eighthly.* The abandonment of the compromise is the principal ground of complaint. If the compromise law be either repealed or allowed to remain a dead letter, *the south can not submit, and the absolute necessity of division is already dated.* And should the exigent circumstances in which the south find themselves placed render it finally necessary that the southern conferences should have a *separate, independent* existence, it is hoped their character and services will suggest the moral fitness of meeting this great emergency with strong and steady purpose to do justice to all concerned, and thus secure an amicable division of the Church upon the broad principles of equity and justice.

3. We will now proceed to give the outlines of the Reply to the Protest. The circumstances of the case may be given as explanatory of the character of the Reply. Dr. Olin and Mr. Hamline had been first placed on the committee; but owing to the absence of the one on account of sickness, and the election of the other to the Episcopacy, Messrs. G. Peck and C. Elliott were put in their place. The Protest was not placed under their command till Friday afternoon, June 7th, and immediately two of the original committee had to withdraw, nor were their places supplied till Saturday evening, June 8th. On Monday, June 10th, late in the afternoon session, the report was read. Dr. Olin, we believe, did nothing more than to make some brief notes. The last two members of the committee did nothing except to hear the report read, with almost no time to canvass or amend it. It was, therefore, entirely written by Dr. Durbin, except some aid in transcribing, or perhaps in preparing, by Dr. Robert Emory. The Reply, however, speaks for itself in plain, unadorned phraseology, and presents the subject in a very intelligible form, without verbosity, circumlocution,

repetition, or ambiguity; and, as a Church paper, is vastly superior to the Protest. We find ourselves at no loss in giving an outline of its contents.

The Reply states that, as the proceedings of the General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew were not judicial, its decision has gone forth to the public unaccompanied by the reasons and facts upon which this action was founded; and the deficiency is but partially supplied by the published debates. The speakers were restrained by delicacy from all avoidable allusions that would give pain to the Bishop or awaken unpleasant emotions in any quarter. The Reply then goes on to state that no slaveholder was ever elected bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and several candidates, though eminently qualified for the office, failed of success solely on account of this impediment. Of the nine bishops elected, natives of the United States, three have been northern men, while six were natives of slaveholding states. Not one, however, was a slaveholder. This shows that a decided and uniform repugnance has, from the first, been manifested against the occupancy of the Episcopacy by a slaveholder; and Bishop Andrew was elected because he was, at that time, free from slavery.

Since the year 1832, the time of Bishop Andrew's election, the antislavery sentiment has been in the advance in the Church and the civilized world; and, within the last year or two, it has been roused to a most earnest opposition to the introduction of a slaveholder into the episcopal office. Such was the state of sentiment in the north when the delegates of the General conference learned, on reaching New York, that Bishop Andrew had become a slaveholder.

It was ascertained, too, that Bishop Andrew had been a slaveholder for several years. Soon after his election to the Episcopacy, a lady bequeathed him a female slave, on condition she should be sent to Liberia at nineteen years of age, if her consent could be obtained. She refused to emigrate, has since married, and is now a slave, she and her children, and is liable to all that may befall slaves. He inherited another slave from the mother of his former wife. By his second marriage he became the owner of some fourteen or fifteen slaves. These belonged to Mrs. Andrew, in her own right, before her marriage. That act, according to the laws of Georgia, made them the property of Bishop Andrew, to keep or dispose as he pleased. He conveyed them to a trustee for the joint use of himself and wife, of whom the survivor is to be the sole owner. This conveyance was made for the security of Mrs. Andrew. The earnings of the slaves, as well as the reversionary title, are his; and the arrangement shows that there was nothing done to satisfy the well-known sentiments against a slaveholding bishop. And his connection with slavery is not an assumption, as the Protest says, but he is the owner of slaves in the full and proper sense of the term. His title was acquired by bequest, by inheritance, and by marriage, by far the most common grounds of ownership in slaves. All the usual conditions of slavery exist in the condition of his slaves. Their labor and earnings are his, and inure to his benefit and that of his family. They are liable to be sold, and their offspring doomed to perpetual bondage. It is said the deed of

trust put it beyond his power to free the slaves even if there were no other obstacle. Thus the Church must have a slaveholding bishop in spite not only of its known will, but of its standing laws.

Beside, Bishop Andrew could not exercise his functions, under existing circumstances, in the north without producing disastrous results to the north; and if the General conference had been disposed to evade the case, the consideration of it was forced on them by the Episcopal Address itself.

As to the mode of treating his case, few doubted that sufficient ground existed for impeachment or charge of improper conduct, under the express provisions of the Discipline. It was improper conduct for the shepherd of eleven hundred thousand souls, either deliberately or heedlessly, to place himself in conflict with the moral sentiments of his vast flock; yet no step was taken to impeach or punish. The case was dealt with merely as a fact—as a practical difficulty—for the removal or palliation of which it was the duty of the General conference to provide. "The action of the conference was neither judicial nor punitive. It neither achieves nor intends a deposition, nor so much as a legal suspension. Bishop Andrew is still a bishop; and should he, against the expressed sense of the General conference, proceed in the discharge of his functions, his official act would be valid."

As to the law in the case, the Reply affirms that the General conference violated neither the constitutional nor the statutory law of the Church. As to the constitutional law, what is said on it in the Protest is merely gratuitous, and without foundation; and, in regard to the statute law, the rule for traveling preachers does not apply to bishops. And when the Protest asks, "Is there any thing in the law or its reasons creating an exception in the instance of bishops?" the answer is, "There is in both." So far as judicial proceedings are concerned, the Discipline divides the Church into four classes—private members, local preachers, traveling preachers, and bishops—and establishes distinct tribunals, and different degrees of responsibility for each. The whole tenor of the Discipline is adverse to slavery; and a bishop, by the constitution of the Church, is required to labor throughout its entire territory, and, in the greater portion of it, the services of a slaveholding bishop would not be acceptable.

As to the plea of the Protest, from the constitutions of the United States, and of the states, the law of the land allows citizens to hold slaves; but it also allows them to keep grog-shops and theaters. If the Protest means to say the law requires citizens to keep slaves, it is denied; and unless it is shown that the Methodist Episcopal Church requires any citizen to do what the laws of the land require him not to do, it is unfair to draw the parallelism.

The authors of the Protest have been driven to the necessity of claiming for the Methodist Episcopal powers and prerogatives never advanced before, except by those who wished to make it odious, and which always have been repudiated by the defenders of the Church.

The Protest maintains that "the Episcopal is a coordinate branch of the government;" that the bishops are an integral part of the General conference; that the General conference is as much the creature of the Episcopal as the bishops are of the General conference.

The Reply shows that these are mere assumptions, contradicted by the Discipline and the nature of the case.

The Protest maintains that the General conference has no power to subject a bishop to any official disability whatever without charge and trial. The Reply affirms that this is contrary to Methodist economy, and it is an attempt to exempt from the action of a general system those who least of all should be excepted. The Church can not sanction the doctrine that while all other officers of the Church, of whatever name or degree, are subjected to a sleepless supervision; are counseled, admonished, or changed, as necessity may require, and the Discipline directs; that a bishop, who decides all questions of law in annual conferences, stations ministers, etc., enjoys a virtual impunity for all delinquencies or misdoings, not strictly criminal. Such a doctrine is contrary to the genius of Methodism, the express language of the Discipline, and the exposition of it by all our standard writers. The Reply then quotes from Emory, Asbury, Coke, Hedding, and Dickens to sustain this view of the subject.

The Reply justly complains that the Protest not only assails the General conference with harsh language, but even threatens that no bishop need appear in the south whose sentiments differ from their own. The Protest charges the General conference as lawless; as acting without law, and contrary to law; as violating the compromise law; that its public faith can be no longer relied on.

The Reply then says: "When all the law and the facts in the case shall have been spread before an impartial community, the majority have no doubt that they will fix the responsibility of division, should such an unhappy event take place, where, in justice, it belongs. They will ask, Who first introduced slavery into the Episcopacy? and the answer will be, Not the General conference. Who opposed the attempt to withdraw it from the Episcopacy? Not the General conference. Who resisted the measure of peace that was proposed, the mildest that the case allowed? Not the majority. Who first sounded the knell of division, and declared that it would be impossible longer to remain under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church? Not the majority."

The Reply concludes in the following amicable words: "Finally, we can not but hope that the minority, after reviewing the entire action of the conference, will find that, both in their declaration and their Protest, they have taken too strong a view of the case; and that, by presenting it in its true light before their people, they may be able to check any feelings of discord that may have arisen, so that the Methodist Episcopal Church may still continue as one body, engaged in its proper work of spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands."

4. The passage of the report of the committee of nine, Saturday, June 8th, was received, with great satisfaction by the south as a peace measure that exceeded even their expectations for its liberality, and which passed with nearly a unanimous vote. On Monday, the 10th, at the house of one of the Harpers, New York, when waiting there with Dr. Peck to hear the Reply read, while Dr. Durbin was employed up stairs in finishing the Reply, we had a long conversation with Dr. Capers, who, as we understood him, was still anxious for the continued unity of the Church. He informed

me—as his discourse was directed to me—that he thought the report of the committee of nine might yet be used to prevent separation. He said the south were greatly excited; that every mail brought them this intelligence. He had received a letter from Mr. Calhoun, requesting him to take Washington on his way home. Dr. Capers thought that he might avert the catastrophe by drawing up a paper, stating the case as it was, and obtain the signatures of Mr. Calhoun and other distinguished southern statesmen attached to it, recommending the continued unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, without periling the interests of the south. With such a statement he was manifestly more desirous than confident of success; yet he thought it worth trying, and, as we gathered from him, was resolved in making the attempt. We must, therefore, give Dr. Capers full credit for having a very strong desire to preserve the unity of the Church; and we must not allow ourselves to suspect him of having a different course in view. But the proceedings of the evening on the Reply to the Protest, we suppose, went to say that such an attempt would be entirely unavailing, or would not be entertained by other southern men.

5. When the Reply was under consideration, it elicited some rather desultory debate. Though the southern brethren had been permitted to present their Protest, and it was ordered to be entered on the Journals, the majority made no remarks on it. But when the Reply was before the conference, the southern men were as forward to debate about the Reply, as if they had a right to dictate, or prescribe to the majority what should be the answer to the Protest.\*

Mr. Crowder said, as the matter stood before that report was brought in, he had hoped they might yet avoid division. The passage of that report would render division inevitable. They had no choice left. And there were statements in that report which were contrary to fact. The document was an insult to the whole south. He would not be surprised if its publication led to a civil war, so utterly did it deny the rights and trample on the feelings of all the slaveholding states.

Mr. Early begged the brethren not hastily to adopt the report. He never had such sad and fearful forebodings as he had experienced since he came into that evening session. Already the south was in a flame in consequence of the past action of that conference, and the Reply to the Protest was calculated more than any thing to increase the dissatisfaction. He denied the right of a majority to take such a course. The eyes of the brethren had never fallen upon a page where the protest of a minority was so treated. He should have been rejoiced to have gone home prepared to say that the brethren down east, and those of similar sentiment, had, by common consent, agreed to a peaceable division of the Church; and that, being free from this difficulty of slavery themselves, they were prepared to aid the south in any measure which would relieve them from their difficulties; and that thus they would remain members of one family, and love as brethren. The south was in a high state of excitement. He had now in his pocket a letter from one of the first merchants in Richmond, mentioning the fact, that the excitement was such that the most influential men in the city declared in the public market, that if those men

who had denounced Bishop Andrew and the south, were to visit that city, it would be impossible to secure them safety from the indignation of the people. A mass meeting had been held, and it was said that when gentlemen applied for admission, they were refused on the ground that it was a meeting of the society alone. Let that report go forth as it was, and he could tell the two doctors, and the president of one of their universities, that they had sounded the death-knell of the union of the Church. Adopt it and enter it upon the records, and to all intents and purposes this would be the case. It was unparalleled that such a reply was made to a simple protest.\*

Dr. Bangs inquired whether it was in order to debate this matter. The Protest was allowed quietly to go upon the records. Whereupon Bishop Waugh reminded him that a motion was made for spreading it upon the Journals.†

Dr. Longstreet said, that some of the facts connected with the case the committee had stated in such a way that they would make a false impression. Bishop Andrew had solemnly declared before them, that he could not, in his conscience, deprive his wife of her property, simply because he had married her. It was not once said, in all the report, that he could emancipate them. He—Dr. Longstreet—boldly asserted that Bishop Andrew did not own the slaves. If he should get in debt, they possibly might be taken for his debts, and that was suggested to him; but there is no fear on that point, for he did not intend to go in debt. But it was not true that the slaves belong to him. How far his creditors might assert a claim to them, might be a grave question; but as between his children and his wife, in case of his death, they would go to her and not to his children.‡ Dr. Smith said that creditors in Georgia had peculiar claims over and above children and heirs.

C. Elliott thought the course proposed by the committee was agreeable to the strictest rules. The minority had a right to present their Protest without debate from the majority. And the majority had an equal right to present their Reply to that Protest without debate on the part of the minority. Dr. Smith called for a case in proof. C. Elliott endeavored to get the floor and give the case or cases; but could not get the floor, and no other person presented one. The cases he proposed to give were as follows: the eighth chapter of the Presbyterian Discipline in the United States was a case in proof; so the Presbyterian Church of Scotland; and also the Covenants, the Reformed, and Associate Reformed Churches in this country. And it is believed of all other Presbyterian Churches in Europe and America.¶

Mr. Ames defended the report on the ground that other ecclesiastical tribunals pursued the same course the conference were following in this case.§

Dr. Durbin said the committee did not look upon the Protest of the minority as a protest, but as an elaborate argument of the case; and they thought that a minority had no right to an argumentation on their Protest. In this he spoke the sentiments of his former colleagues in committee—Dr. Olin and Mr. Hamline. He and his colleagues, however, consented to omit the parts which referred to the examination of leaders before the quarterly meeting conferences, and that which said that

\* Document, No. 59.

\* Debates, p. 237. † Id., p. 238. ‡ Id. ¶ Id. § Id.

Bishop Andrew might be called to an account at the next General conference, if he continued to exercise his functions.\*

Dr. Peck consented to the erasure of that part of the report relating to the contingency that the Bishop might be arraigned before the next General conference for contravening the expressed will of the present General conference, not because he relinquished the principle, but because he thought, perhaps, it might be better to leave it out of the report. He also consented to the alteration of the statement as to class-leaders. Though the spirit of that statement is borne out, at least as far as the argument is concerned, by section ii, chapter ii, part 1 of the Discipline, yet, as its verbiage is somewhat incorrect, he was willing to spare it. The argument was a valid one. But the committee were willing to go all reasonable lengths, in removing those features of the report deemed objectionable.†

Dr. Smith said he did not pretend to very accurate information on the subject of the rights of minorities to present their protests. The object of the motion was to have the report adopted by this conference. That was what he wanted them to do, for it was what they believed. He wanted them to sign their names to that paper, and let it go out before the world. They had attempted to gull the public long enough, and he now wanted them to show their hands, and tell the five hundred thousand Methodists at the south what they intended to do.‡

On Monday afternoon, June 10th, when the Reply was read, E. R. Ames moved that the report of the committee be entered on the Journal and printed. At the night session, Dr. Bangs moved to lay on the table for the present the motion of Mr. Ames, but this did not carry. The discussion was resumed and continued, as given above. After some time had elapsed, J. Perkins moved the previous question, which was carried. The yeas and nays were demanded, and ordered by the number deemed necessary. The call was made by the secretary, and 116 voted in favor of the resolution to record and print the report, and 26 against it. So the report, by the above vote, was ordered to be entered on the Journal and printed.‡

6. Some remarks in this place may be proper on the nature of a protest, in order to understand more easily the true position of things; especially as this Protest was the development of the declaration made by the south when Bishop Andrew's case was decided. We take for our model the chapter in the Discipline of the Presbyterian Church of this country, on "Dissents and Protests."§ We refer this to our list of documents.¶ A protest is a solemn and formal declaration, made by members of a minority, bearing their testimony against what they deem a mischievous or erroneous judgment; and is generally accompanied with a detail of the reasons on which it is founded.

If a protest be couched in decent and respectful language, and contain no offensive reflections against the majority of the judicatory, those who offer it have the right to have it recorded on the minutes.

A protest, though not infringing the rules of decorum, either in its language or matter, may impute to the judicatory whose judgment it opposes, some principles or reasonings, which it

never adopted. In this case the majority may appoint a committee to draw up an answer to the protest, which, after being adopted as the act of the judicatory, ought to be inserted on the records.

Those who entered their protest may be of opinion that fidelity to their cause calls upon them to make a reply to the answer. This, however, ought by no means to be admitted; as the majority might, of course, rejoin, and legislation might be perpetuated, to the great inconvenience and disgrace of the judicatory.

When the protesters consider the answer of the majority as imputing to them opinions or conduct which they disavow, the proper course is to ask leave to take back their protest, and modify it in such a manner as to render it more agreeable to their views. This alteration may lead to a corresponding alteration in the answer of the majority; with which the whole affair ought to terminate.

The foregoing are plain, common-sense, and practical views of the proper character of a protest and its answer; and if we apply these rules to the Protest of the minority in 1844, it will not bear scrutiny.

The Protest is not couched in "decent and respectful language." We give a few instances out of the many that might be adduced: "Any bishop of the Church, either violating or submitting to the violation of the conference charter of union between the north and south, without proper and public remonstrance, can not be acceptable in the south, and need not appear there." The action of the General conference is represented as "lawless;" as "without law and contrary to law. The General conference is represented as acting on "the promptings of a fugitive unsettled expediency."

The Protest, too, imputes to the majority "principles or reasonings which it never adopted." The General conference is represented as acting contrary to law, and above law—of violating solemn pledges; as having violated the compromise law. "The public faith of the body can no longer be relied on as the guardian for the redemption of the pledge." They demand "that there shall be no further curtailment of right as regards the southern ministry."

Strictly speaking, it would have been right in itself, as well as consistent with the requirements of treating protests, had the General conference rejected it altogether, on the ground that it was not clothed in "decent and respectful language;" and because it imputed to the majority "principles and reasonings" which they never adopted.

Beside, the minority not only violated the reasonable rules that governed protests, but they also proceeded to question, dispute, and debate on the Reply, as if they were to be the judges how the majority should answer them. Any one can see, that as the minority alone had the right, from the nature of the case, to decide as to their own Protest, it was equally true, from the nature of the case, that the majority should prepare their own answer, which the minority had no right to interfere with; yet they proceeded to discuss its merits as if they were entitled first to protest, and then to regulate the answer to it!

The truth is, the Protest was a violent paper, drawn up in uncourteous and illiberal terms, casting unfair imputations on the majority. It was also a sort of declaration of independence; or, rather, it was the defense and development of

\* Debates, p. 239. † Id. ‡ Id. § Journal, p. 143.  
 ¶ Discipline, Presbyterian Church, Chapter VIII, of  
 Dissents and Protests. § Document, No. 58.

the previous declaration of the southern delegates, argued in detail, and that too in offensive terms and imputations. It reflected very clearly the image and superscription of pro-slaveryism. The southern preachers had yielded to the pro-slavery spirit around them. They were awed by it. They then yielded to its dictates. The nullification spirit of Calhoun had seized them. They seemed to be as servilely submissive to the civil power, as ever some others had been to the ecclesiastical power. The distinction of Christ in awarding supremacy to both civil and ecclesiastical powers within their proper jurisdictions, was overlooked. Render to Cæsar and to God

their own, was the maxim of Christ. At Rome the supreme power over both temporal and spiritual, is with the spiritual. The Scriptural and American principle is, the civil power is supreme in civil matters; the spiritual power is supreme in spiritual matters. Southern slaveholders claimed, under the civil plea, all religious power also; and the Churches of the south, alas! conceded very generally to the demand. And now, Methodist preachers, in the year 1844, are yielding up the principles of the Bible, of the religious liberty of the country, in complaisance to the demands of pro-slavery men.

## CHAPTER XXV.

### EVENTS SUCCEEDING THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1844.

1. We may occupy here a paragraph or two in noticing the various opinions uttered, both in the north and in the south, respecting the cases of Mr. Harding and Bishop Andrew, by correspondents of the papers, while these cases were pending, or after they were decided. And we may say in advance, that the correspondents in the southern papers misrepresented the cases to the southern public, which was a principal cause of the revolutionary movements which succeeded.

Dr. Capers, under date of May 13th, two days after the decision on Harding's case, writes a very exciting letter, which was published in the Southern Advocate of May 24th. He states that many preachers in New England, leaning to ultra abolitionism, persuaded the people that they might be as ultra as they pleased and remain in the Church; that the decision in Harding's case was contrary to Discipline, as well as contrary to the resolution of 1840, in the Westmoreland case, thus misrepresenting these two points; that the south were united; and that the hair could not be split which divided the members of the Baltimore conference, and other conservators, from the abolitionists of a few years ago.\*

Mr. Lee, editor of the Richmond Advocate, under date of May 15th, writes for his paper, that in the case of Mr. Harding, he did not own the slaves; that the Discipline sustained him if he did own them, thus applying the rule that relates to official members to traveling preachers; that the decision was the knell of division and disunion; that the vote was governed by considerations growing out of abolition and slavery; and that the decision was a declaration that slaveholding, without exception, constitutes a disqualification for the ministerial office.†

Dr. Bond, to correct the misstatements in the southern papers, especially those of Mr. Lee, under date of May 29th,‡ states that full reports had been published in all the Methodist papers, both of the official acts of the conference and of the speeches; and that the whole Church was therefore furnished with the facts in reference to all interests coming under discussion. Hence he justly considered discussions by editors or

correspondents, as improper, as these increased rather than allayed the irritation arising from differences of opinion. He stated that there were few abolitionists, in the common acceptation of the term, in the General conference, understanding by the name one who contends for immediate and universal emancipation, regardless of consequences—one who holds that slaveholding is a sin under all circumstances, and that all such should be expelled from the Church. He insisted that the decision in Harding's case was obviously right, and absolutely necessary. He further maintained that the decision in Harding's case did not go to say that those preachers who through necessity endured the relation of master, were sinners. He also contends that the present case is not one which should produce divisions.

Dr. Bond concludes his article by saying that Bishop Andrew's case forms the difficulty. He said the Bishop had long since signified a wish to resign, on considerations wholly unconnected with slavery, and would have done so, had it not been for his southern advisers. Had he resigned before any action was had in his case—and action was long delayed to give opportunity—he would have been under no necessity to advert to the circumstance of his having acquired slaves; the point of honor now so formidable with the southern delegations would not have been raised. Even now the Bishop can relieve the Church by a generous pledge not to exercise his functions as general superintendent, till he can free himself from the embarrassment which renders the constitutional exercise of his office impossible. Bishop Andrew is, by the constitution, a pastor of the whole Church, more than half of whom are strongly opposed to an institution, which in the south is tolerated by a very general consent. Without this course there is no hope for a distressed Church; unless, in answer to prayer, God would condescend to take the case into his own hand.\*

The course of Dr. Bond was exceedingly offensive to the south. The editors of the Richmond and Southern Advocates attacked him violently. The Richmond declared that Methodist abolitionists had created a storm they could not allay; that they were in a dilemma;

\* S., May 24, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 83, 84.

† R., May 23, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 80, 82.

‡ C., May 29th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1069, 1062.

\* C., May 29, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1062.



for if they censured the Bishop they destroyed the unity of the Church, and if they sit still they destroy themselves; and that there will be no unity any where except in the south.\*

The Southern Advocate declared that the north was ultra, and that the whole procedure in Harding's case was at variance with the 23d Article of Religion, which teaches that subordination to the civil powers was the duty of both ministers and members, thus misapplying the article; † that Dr. Bond had prejudiced the Bishop's case while it was pending, and held him up to obloquy as the obstinate cause of all the trouble and embarrassment felt by the conference; and that the "Protest was one of the ablest documents he had ever read—one which the civilian may study, and which, nevertheless, the common understanding may apprehend."

The Charleston Mercury, ‡ in noticing approvingly this eulogium on the Protest, says: "And it well deserves this rank; for it marks an epoch—the first dissolution of the Union."

The contest, however, was not, in truth, between the antislavery men and the south, but between the antislavery men and the south. So it is acknowledged in Zion's Herald by the abolitionists and others. On Friday, the 25th of May, the Herald says: "This is no controversy between abolitionism and the south, but between the old antislavery sentiment of the free states and the south. It is no measure of innovation on the part of the north, but opposition to innovation on the part of the south."§ It was no other than the moral principles of the Discipline and of the Scripture, and the constant usage of the Church, maintaining original and well-tried ground against the pro-slavery innovations of the south, who had begun to place the ecclesiastical neck entirely under the control of the pro-slavery spirit.

2. The General conference, as we have seen, provided, in their report on the revolutionary declaration of the south, that should the south separate, or secede from the Church, they would treat them with great tenderness, although the secession must be their own will and deed. The southern members, as we have also seen, had declared that secession would take place, and they seemed to be resolved on commencing it immediately, so as to leave no time for inaction or any further deliberation.

Accordingly, on the 11th of June, or the next day after the adjournment of General conference, the southern delegates met, passed resolutions, and published an address, manifestly calculated, and we must infer designed, to promote secession. The three following resolutions were passed in reference to the organization of the new Church:

"(1.) There shall be a convention held in Louisville, Kentucky, to commence the 1st of May, 1845, composed of delegates from the several annual conferences within the slaveholding states, appointed in the ratio of one for every eleven members.

"(2.) These delegates shall be appointed at the ensuing session of the several annual conferences enumerated, each conference providing for the expenses of their own delegates.

"(3.) These several annual conferences shall instruct their delegates to the proposed conven-

tion on the points on which action is contemplated, conforming their instructions, as far as possible, to the opinions and wishes of the membership within their several conference bounds."

The southern delegates also issued an "Address to the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states and territories."\* In this they declare that the various "action of the majority on the subject of abolition and slavery involved the proscription and disability of the south; but the General conference agreed to a *plan of formal and pacific separation*, by which the south might have an independent and distinct organization of their own; that the south are to be the judges of the necessity of availing themselves of this permission. They say "that they regard a separation, at no distant day, as inevitable," and they ask, "Shall that which, in all moral likelihood, must take place soon, be attempted now, or are there reasons why it should be postponed?" They say "the separation proposed is *not* schism; it is not secession." They say the legislation of the Church is in conflict with that of the state, and must generate an amount of hostility to the Church impossible to be overcome. Reference is made to the other publications on the subject.

Any one who peruses this Address, and the accompanying resolutions, taken in connection with the declaration and the Protest, will at once perceive that nothing less is intended or expected but a separation or secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church; and though the Address says, "As the Methodist Episcopal Church will be found north of the dividing line, so the Methodist Episcopal Church will be found south of the same line," this will not alter the case. There is not, and there never was, such a Church as the Methodist Episcopal Church north, as this artificial and sophistical distinction would suppose. Let any one read the Address, which we place in the list of our documents, as we do all such, to prevent the suspicion of misrepresentation, and he must conclude that it is only the mere sequel of the declaration and the Protest, which were nothing more nor less than the studied announcement for independence and a new organization, to be arrived at by a formal separation or secession. And though this is called sometimes division, and mostly separation, the term secession is its proper ecclesiastical name; and we use this name, not opprobriously, but properly, and in its strict sense, leaving circumstances to decide whether this secession was right or wrong.

The following resolution passed unanimously at the meeting of the southern delegates:

"Resolved, That, in the event the bishops do not assign Bishop Andrew work, he be, and hereby is, requested, as far as is in his power, to attend and preside in our conferences."

This resolution is an open, practical act of secessional character, and is the mere sequence of the previous announcements already made, with this distinction that the former declarations said that secession ought, and must, and will take place; but this resolution fairly commences the work. †

3. The views of Dr. Bond in reference to the case of Bishop Andrew, and the position of the

\* R., May 30th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 84.

† S., May 30th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 86-89. ‡ Id., p. 98.

‡ Z., May 29th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 63-67.

\* Document, No. 61.

† S., June 28th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 98.

south, in case of their secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, were exceedingly offensive to many in the south, as we mentioned before. In an article of June 19th, headed, "The position of the senior editor in relation to the case of Bishop Andrew," he states his positions as follows: That Dr. Bond had, in conversation with two distinguished southern delegates, advised the resignation of Bishop Andrew, in the manner already related, and that the Bishop had proposed to the southern delegates that he would resign; but they spurned it; and all this was done before the Bishop's case came up for consideration before the conference; that the editor of the Richmond Advocate, when Mr. Harding's case was decided, and before the case of Bishop Andrew was entered on, misrepresented the case of Harding, and denounced as abolitionists the majority of the conference, which, as all know, in the south, meant those who denounce all slaveholders as sinners of the deepest dye, without respect of circumstances; that in correcting these misstatements he offended the south; that in calling him a moderate abolitionist, Mr. Wightman said the same as if he had said that Dr. Bond was moderately rabid: yet Dr. Bond asserts that he viewed slavery in no other light than that in which Dr. Capers declared when he said that "he would doubt the heart of a man who would consent to go to the north as a slaveholding bishop;" and of Dr. Smith, who said "slavery is a great evil—an evil so great that it is only to be endured when we must—yet slaveholding is not necessarily a sin under all circumstances."\*

In his next week's paper, of June 26th, Dr. Bond gave an able article headed, "The true grounds upon which the southern portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church must rest, if the contemplated separation from their present connection should be effected." He stated that the question of separation or continued union is to be settled by the south, as the consent to and arrangements for the amicable withdrawal of the south was at the earnest request of the delegates of the southern annual conferences. We give the outlines of the true grounds as stated by Dr. Bond, and we believe they are substantially correct.†

Originally, slaveholding was not tolerated at all; but, at that time, the civil legislation of none of the states forbade emancipation. This state of things was soon changed, and it became impracticable to make them free in some states; and a discharge from the service of the master subjected them, by law, to sale at public auction to the highest bidder; and, in others, the liberation was incumbered with such onerous conditions as no ecclesiastical authority could righteously require the master to comply with. The General conference, by the force of circumstances, has been compelled gradually to relax her Discipline, not to favor slaveholding, but in mercy to the slaves; not to withdraw her opposition to the system which she still declared to be a great evil, but to avoid the absurdity of expelling masters for performing acts of humanity and mercy. With regard, therefore, to private members, the disciplinary rules of the Church were abrogated, except the "General Rule" which forbids the "buying and selling men, women, and children with an intention to enslave them." In the

extreme south this is interpreted to refer only to the slave-trade. The Church, however, still adhered to her original testimony as a great evil, and, moreover, did all she could do to keep her ministry free from it.

And though the Church action in the Discipline has no one attribute of a compromise, compact, or treaty between different parties in the Church, as no such parties existed at that time, yet it was a compromise with the stern necessity of circumstances growing out of state legislation, and beyond the control of the Church.

No new grievance or injury has been inflicted by Church action on the south. None, absolutely none! The south have no just ground for the disruption proposed.

No grievance was inflicted by the reception and consideration of petitions on slavery whose allegations did great injury to the ministers and members of the south, because the General conference did not sanction these unjust insinuations or accusations. The mere reception and reference of the petitions could form no new ground of offense; for such has been the uniform practice of the General conference.

The only grievance known is the historical fact that the ministry, acting by their delegates in General conference, have uniformly selected bishops from among the non-slaveholding elders, thus virtually excluding slaveholders from the highest dignity in the Church. No rule of Discipline ever excluded them; but the uniform practice of the conference was as decisive in regard to the principle of action as if it had been based on the most positive enactment. This was generally concurred in as the dictate of sound prudence. Even in 1832, when Bishop Andrew was elected, he was nominated by Dr. Capers, who would have been preferred had he not been inextricably connected with slavery. In 1836 a more formidable opposition was made to the exclusion of slaveholders to the Episcopacy; yet the General conference did not elect one slaveholder, though three bishops were elected. In 1840 no bishop was elected. In the fall and winter of 1843 it was vehemently urged that either a slaveholder must be elected bishop, or the south must suffer themselves to be degraded, or they must separate from the Church. With this purpose many of them came up to the General conference of 1844. Dr. Capers opposed, in the southern papers, this position. Bishop Soule frequently said that it was impracticable to place a slaveholder in the Episcopacy. Bishop Andrew's case changed the whole face of things. The southern delegates found a slaveholding bishop already made to their hand, and resolved to avail themselves of the occasion to contend for an alteration in the established usage and settled policy of the Church. They protested against his resignation, and the majority, adhering to the established principle of action, passed a resolution, giving it as their opinion, or judgment, that Bishop Andrew should desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions while his connection with slavery remained. This is the only cause of separation. Dr. Bond then proceeds to give the insufficiency of this alleged cause in five reasons; namely, that no non-slaveholder, as such, has been unacceptable in the south; the south always testified against slavery; evil effects are connected with a slaveholding ministry; the bishops are pastors over the whole

\* C., June 19th, Vol. XVIII, p. 178. † Id., p. 182.

Church; and the Church only tolerates slavery from necessity.

In consequence of these just statements and positions of Dr. Bond, he was vigorously, violently, and unfairly assailed by the leading men of the south—Dr. Wightman, Dr. Lee, Dr. Capers, Dr. Winans, and others.

Dr. Wightman, in his paper of June 28th,\* censures Dr. Bond for even insinuating that Bishop Andrew ought to resign, more especially for persisting in the justness of the plea for resignation, just as if the north alone were in danger, while the perils of the south were equally imminent. Now, all that remains is to prepare "for a peaceful and amicable adjustment of the terms of separation now unavoidable—a separation is inevitable. Destiny itself is not more so. All that remains is to carry out to a peaceful termination the negotiations set on foot at the close of the conference." He sanctions the resolution of the southern delegates, calling on Bishop Andrew to despise the act of the General conference, and preside in the southern conferences; and a list of the southern conferences is given as a directory to the contemplated disregard of the act of the General conference.

Dr. Lee, after considerable of the censorious, proceeds to state that the "south DEMANDED separation as the most desirable thing when the action of the General conference had put her upon the choice between evils. She separates to preserve her independence, to perpetuate the glorious work of God in the earth, and to bring both master and slave into the fellowship of the Gospel of Christ. We yielded to the necessities of the case, and sought a separate existence. . . . The separation was completed, *in fact*, when the secretary counted up the ayes and noes on the resolution of Mr. Finley. The great ligament of our union as a people was ruptured when that decision was announced. All that was subsequently done was simply to give form and legality to a separation that we had feared as inevitable, but now regarded as absolute, and embraced as essential to our safety. In the face of the facts in the case, it is a fruitless endeavor to persuade the south that their delegates went too far, or acted too precipitately, when they demanded for themselves, and the Church they represented, to be separated from, and be made independent of, the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church."†

According to Mr. Lee, the south demanded separation, and were determined to *secede* or *separate* when the case of Bishop Andrew was decided. They did not *petition* for it, but were determined to have it. Hence, the separation, or secession, or whatever else it may be called, was their own will and deed, and was neither the will nor deed of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Dr. Capers, under date of June 28th, replies to Dr. Bond, of June 19th. He stated that what he had said formerly, and what Dr. Bond quoted, respecting the reception of a slaveholding bishop in the north, was in regard to the individual feelings of the bishop himself, and not in regard to his public usefulness.‡ In regard to the article of Dr. Bond on the actual

position of the south, Dr. Capers, under date of July 2d, calls him to a strict account. He states that the south must separate from the north; but, at the same time, so words it that the north would be as much a separation as the south, and applies the sentiments in his own exploded resolutions to the report on the declaration, called improperly the plan. He says, "In view of the relation of the Church to common society and the law of the land, the southern and northern portions of it should be put under separate jurisdiction." Still, he confesses that the south wanted relief only with respect to the jurisdiction of General conference, as now constituted—or rather under its present policy—and to have the missions and the Book Concern as common interest. He then states: "But the northern brethren would not consent to this."\* Thus, Dr. Capers confessed the northern brethren would not consent to the plan of dividing the Church, because it would be unconstitutional; yet he maintains that this very thing was done by the plan. The truth is, terms and phrases were employed by southern writers, immediately after General conference, to make the plan speak the same language that was used in Dr. Capers's rejected resolutions, which called for a division of the Church.

Dr. Winans, on October 10th and 12th, wrote two articles, addressed to Dr. Bond, censuring him unsparingly for his sentiments and course; but as these letters were written so late, and others had exhausted the topic of denunciation against Dr. Bond, we need not give the particulars. These letters were manifestly written under the influence of irritation, and dealt in such terms and expressions as tend nothing to godliness. We pass them without further remark.†

4. A survey of the preambles and resolutions of meetings held in the south, by Methodists, both before and after the close of the General conference, will enable us to have some tolerably-correct view of public sentiment in the south. We will give ample extracts from the proceedings of these meetings, and give a brief analysis of their contents.

There are two or three notes proper to be made here: 1. The speeches of the southern delegates in the General conference seem to be merely copied by these meetings, both in spirit, sentiment, and phraseology. 2. The southern papers were editorially committed to give publication only to such views as accorded with their own. 3. The proceedings appear to be either controlled or dictated by the pro-slavery members. 4. The non-slaveholders in the south, especially the extreme south, are much under the control, and even dictation, of the slaveholders, and owing to this submission, and even dread, their sentiments were either suppressed or not made public. Yet there were many exceptions, such as Dr. Booth and others, as subsequent events went to say.

In regard to their own feelings and sentiments toward their northern brethren, they say "they are deeply afflicted and indignant." They "hold them in sovereign contempt." They declare their "unutterable indignation" toward the north.

The Baltimore conference is especially denounced. They speak of the "tyrannical innovation of the Baltimore conference—abrogating

\* Scrap, Vol. I, pp. 94-98.

† R., July 4th. Scrap, Vol. I, pp. 98-103.

‡ S., July 5th. Scrap, Vol. I, pp. 112-114.

\* S., July 12th. Scrap, Vol. I, pp. 122-124.

† N., Nov. 15th. Scrap, Vol. I, pp. 617-622.

the laws of Maryland—the capricious *jure divino* purpose of the Baltimore conference.”

As to the members, sentiments, feelings, and actions of the General conference, they employ such language as follows: They are “men reckless of consequences—the rapacious Juggernaut of northern fanaticism;” “the reckless and tyrannical conduct of a majority of the General conference.” “The act of the General conference was unwarrantable, oppressive, unconstitutional, and disorganizing.”

They ask the preachers “to take immediate measures for their secession from a conference which has placed so gross a stigma on them and their flocks—an insult that admits but of one remedy.”

It would be endless, however, for us to go through the whole. We must refer our readers to ample selections from the proceedings, which we throw into our collection of documents, which those may consult who are desirous of seeing the result of yielding to the sway of an erroneous public sentiment, and the usages of corrupt moral practices, both of which are inseparable from the slave system.\*

Indeed the unsparing denunciations in these preambles and resolutions are of a most vituperative character. Bishops Soule and Andrew are eulogized beyond both truth and propriety; the General conference, or rather the Methodist Episcopal Church, is denounced without stint; the Discipline is condemned in its requirements, while it is claimed for countenance and support; the other bishops of the Church are reprobated, especially Bishop Hamline. Indeed the temper of the resolutions differs very little from the language and spirit of the proceedings which characterize the political party proceedings of the day. So Dr. Bond said at the time.†

The Rev. Messrs. Lee and Smith attended the meeting at Norfolk, and said not a word against the revolutionary and unchristian sentiments uttered.‡ The editor of Zion’s Herald, on this point, says, “Our southern brethren have given themselves up to extravagances which give an air of ludicrous hyperbole to their writings and proceedings.¶

The editor of the Western Advocate, in publishing the proceedings of these meetings, took occasion to apologize for them as the *first*, and heated ebullitions of passion under supposed wrongs, and not the settled views and feelings of the south.‡

A southern man, who was refused the columns of the Richmond Advocate, but who had a hearing in the Christian Advocate of August 28th,¶ considers the resolutions of the most exceptionable character. Even Mr. Lee does not attempt directly to *justify* the language used. But he says their language has been misunderstood, or perverted. Yet some of these resolutions have grieved pious brethren of the south, although they could not have the privilege of publishing their views in the southern papers. Mr. Lee, as an apology for not publishing, says that the language of the resolutions complained of was the language of the people, and the meetings were the meetings of the people. It was the will of the people that was desirable to be obtained; the language was a mere circumstance. If the con-

demnation of resolutions were admitted, a defense must be admitted. Such were the reasons why Mr. Lee would allow of no contradiction.\* Thus Mr. Lee avowedly allowed the General conference and the Church to be *condemned*, and all this, too, was right; but he allowed of no defense. And this was the course pursued by the southern editors. They maintained one side—the side of revolt—the pro-slavery side. But the friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church and its unity could have no hearing, in defending unity and the Church.

Dr. Wightman, on “The Spirit of the Southern Portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church,”‡ does not exactly adopt or even justify all the language used; yet he passes it over as rather a venial offense, if offense at all.

Rev. Mr. M’Ferri, of the Nashville paper, is always sure never to acknowledge any thing wrong by himself or his party. In an article of July 26th,‡ he says, considering all the circumstances, he admires the calmness and Christian spirit manifested. He then notices the “lawless action of the majority,” and the strange infatuation by which they were led.

Dr. Capers, after quoting the descriptive picture that Dr. Bond gives of these denunciations, presents a variety of excuses, and endeavors to show that the doings were very little, if any thing, out of taste, or at variance with courtesy and truth.¶ He thinks that when the resolutions use such phrases as “the Juggernaut of perdition,” they denounce abolitionism, but not the General conference. He thinks the phrase, “the foul spirit of the pit,” though not euphonious, is not far wrong.‡

5. The Rev. Dr. Paine, since Bishop Paine, wrote three numbers for the southern papers, the first two dated July 12th, and the last October 25th, in which he greatly misrepresents the proceedings of the General conference.¶

Mr. Paine affirms that the course of the General conference on the subject of slavery was unprecedented, especially in the case of Bishop Andrew. In the place of applying the rule of *practical* emancipation peculiar to traveling preachers, he applies the one that refers to official members to the case of Mr. Harding; thus making out that the General conference condemned him for what he could not do, and that this was a victory of abolitionism over southern rights. He represents the conservatives as upholding revolutionary principles, and stabbing the south. He treats as chimeras the following points: that it was the settled policy of the Church to have bishops free from slaveholding; that a slaveholding bishop would be embarrassed in exercising his office in the non-slaveholding states; that Bishop Andrew was elected because he was not a slaveholder; that the present was not the time to introduce slavery into the Episcopacy. He complains, in his second number, that the General conference, without a regular charge, without trial, and without giving him the privilege of a hearing, deposed the Bishop. Yet he says, in his first number, referring to the case of Harding, that “proceedings had been taken against Bishop Andrew as a slaveholder,

\* R., August 1st. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 858-860.

† S., July 19th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 135-138.

‡ Scraps, Vol. I, p. 164.

§ S., December 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 719-724.

¶ Scraps, Vol. I, p. 722.

¶ For No. 1, see S., August 30th, and Scraps, Vol. I, p. 242; for No. 2, see N., August 2d, and Scraps, Vol. I, p. 177; and for No. 3, see N., October 25th, and Scraps, Vol. I, p. 524.

\* Document, No. 60.

† C., June 26th, July 10th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1062-1071.

‡ C., July 10th. Z., July 3d. ¶ Z., July 31st.

§ W., August 1st, 16th, 23d. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 207, 208, 210, 218.

¶ Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 236-241.

in the Committee on the Episcopacy, at the first session of the Committee after its organization; and that at this very time the prosecution of the Bishop was pending." Mr. Paine says: "The fact is, the General conference preferred to wrong the south rather than risk the displeasure of the north."

The foregoing are only a moiety of the misrepresentations which Dr. Paine spread before the entire south. And then, in consequence of a one-sided press, there was no way of correcting these injurious and schismatic allegations. Hence, by the publication of inflammatory resolutions and preambles, the letters of Dr. Paine, the weekly editorials of the southern editors, and the articles of their correspondents, the minds of the southern Methodists were inflamed, and they therefore became prepared for secession.

6. We have seen how the proceedings of the General conference have been misrepresented to the south, by Messrs. Lee, M'Ferrin, Wightman, Capers, and others; that these erroneous views were reiterated in preambles and resolutions; and that Dr. Paine had given a perverted or mistaken version of the leading facts. We are now called on to record the confirmation of these, by a formal Episcopal Address from Bishop Andrew "to the public," in which he enlarges considerably the list of errors contained in the former representations. This Address to the public is dated Oxford, Georgia, August, 1844.\* Dr. Bond responds to the Bishop on September 25th,† and Rev. James B. Finley on October 18th.‡

The Address of Bishop Andrew is an extraordinary paper, abounding in misrepresentations of his own case, and of the principal points then in controversy.

He asks, "Why has the Church all along maintained a guilty silence in her standards on the subject of slavery?" And yet the Church, in her Discipline, declared slavery to be a great moral evil, and not to be borne with, only where she is compelled to do so. Hence the Church could not tolerate slavery in the highest office in the Church, where there is no compulsion by any law of Church or state to do so. A slaveholder would never be chosen to be bishop; and Bishop Andrew, because he was not a slave-owner, was elected, though much more competent men from the south were rejected, merely because they were slave-owners.

He complains that the majority sought to *degrade* him. But he was connected with the free conferences as general superintendent, and, on moral principles, could not be acceptable to them while holding his fellow-men in slavery, and living on the fruits of their labor. The Bishop voluntarily became a slave-owner, and his degradation was of his own choice.

Of the committee of five, who waited on him to have a friendly interview with him, he says: "I knew that these same men were engaged, with others, in seeking my disgrace, and deemed it most expedient not to trust myself in a verbal conference with my avowed prosecutors, and, therefore, that any communication between us should be in writing. I heard no more of this friendly committee, except that I learned incidentally, afterward, that their object in waiting upon me was to persuade me to act on my own responsibility, and resign independently of the advice of the southern delegates." The committee were Dr. Bangs, Geo. Webber, Tobias Spicer,

Charles Elliott, and another. These were chosen from a full meeting of all the northern conferences, except Baltimore. They were not authorized to propose any course of conduct to the Bishop, but simply to have a friendly interview with him, so as to learn what could be done to preserve the peace and unity of the Church. The Bishop's statement is incorrect on this subject, from first to last. And after the committee had been treated so abruptly and ungentlemanly, they left, and did not even consult or report any further; for they presently parted, after having the interview with the Bishop. Sheer shame prevented them from even conversing, for they separated from each other in silence, being grieved for their want of success.

We will publish this singular Address of the Bishop in our list of documents.\* Those who wish to see the Bishop's Address freely examined, may consult the replies of Dr. Bond and Rev. J. B. Finley. Dr. Bond concludes his as follows: "I am confident, sir, that if you had kept your ear open to both sides, that which has happened would have never come to pass, and that the whole difficulty would have been removed, without any injurious consequences to either the south or the north. I am willing to accord to you purity and sincerity of intention; but I am equally confident you acted under the most erroneous and unfortunate view of the existing state of things."

7. The Wesley Chapel station, in Washington City, on the 23d of July, 1844, held a meeting, and after passing a preamble and resolutions, of a very temperate character, they sent out, in pamphlet form, an address to the Church at large. In this address they declare "that no provision exists in the law of the Church, or derivable from the doctrines of sound reason, allowing for a proposal for disunion. Such a provision is an attempt at revolution. To use the legal term, it is an act of treason, as involving the institutions, and endangering the existence of the Church." They say, "It is a matter of deep regret, that some milder alternative could not have been fallen upon, without making the minority feel they were coerced into a galling submission by the act of the majority." The brethren of Washington think the General conference contravened the Discipline and the word of God: *first*, by introducing and allowing to be referred the declaration; *secondly*, by referring this to a committee; and, *thirdly*, by adopting its report; and the moment the delegates commenced any action whatever, even preliminary, toward division, they became unmindful of the great trust committed to them. They maintain that the bishops transcended their power by presiding while these proceedings were had. They say the "northern division is made to be the Methodist Episcopal Church, while the southern department is cast off, to obtain another organization as best they may;" that, if it was intended to be a peace measure, this end would not be effected; that one division would serve only as a precedent for another; that there was a growing sentiment against slavery in the northern slave territory, while in the far south there was a contrary sentiment. They then propose the following compromise: "That the third of the Restrictive Articles be so modified as that a dividing line be fixed upon, south of which the bishops presiding shall be allowed, if they see fit, to hold slaves; and the delegates representing

\* S., August 30. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 244.

† Scraps, Vol. I, p. 369.

‡ W., October 18. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 499.

\* Document, No. 62. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 244.

conferences on either side in General conference shall elect their own superintendents. Nevertheless, providing, that for all purposes, other than presiding in the annual conferences, the superintendency shall be one and indivisible."

The majority would have acceded to any terms of agreement short of the permanent continuance of slaveholding in the Episcopacy; and Bishop Soule himself admitted this was *impracticable*. The southern delegates declared they could not move a hair's-breadth from their position; and should the case have been postponed, if the decision of 1848 would be against the south, they would separate after all, because they claimed the *right* to have slaveholding connected with the Episcopacy. Hence nothing could be gained by the postponement. The conference did not divide the Church, nor provide for its division. They, in their plan, declared how they would treat the south, provided, as they declared, they found it necessary to separate or secede from the Church.

The position that the General conference ought not to have entertained the declaration of the fifty-two protesters, nor to have appointed a committee to consider it, nor to have adopted their report, is, strictly speaking, very true, because the declaration was disrespectful and revolutionary. But then it was believed that the south had in purpose and declaration virtually acceded, and it was deemed no more than proper to treat them with great courtesy. This, we suppose, was an error, but then it was one prompted by kindness and Christian forbearance. Beside, the General conference could not treat the south according to ecclesiastical rules, as they were then in a state of commenced revolution.

8. Dr. Booth's plan of compromise will now call for consideration. In an article of July 12th, P. T. Scruggs and Wm. A. Booth, M. D., of Somerville, Tennessee, propose a plan of compromise in the Nashville Christian Advocate. The article appeared in that paper of August 23d, after various excuses for delay. Their plan was: "Let such steps be taken as will divest Bishop Andrew of all connection with slavery, without pecuniary loss to his amiable lady. This will satisfy the north. Let the north consent that, if there is now an abolitionist on the bench of bishops, he shall resign. Let both agree that neither a slaveholder nor an abolitionist shall ever be elected to the Episcopacy. If a southern brother is desired for that office, let the south see to it that his connection with slavery shall cease, and let both parties see that no brother shall be elected to the Episcopacy whose views on the subject of slavery are in the least offensive to the south."\* The editor of the Nashville Advocate opposed this plan, and said it would be unacceptable to the north and south. In regard to the south, he says: "If the south would now agree to the proposition that no slaveholder should be elected to the office of bishop, what, we ask, have they been contending for all the while? They have been guilty of a solemn farce. It is at once yielding the question of our equal rights in reference to the highest office in the Church; and when this point is given up, the second step would be to put out of the ministry every man in the south connected with slavery. The offer to remunerate Mrs. Andrew for her slaves we regard as a very injurious reflection upon her, and also

upon the Bishop, as well as the whole southern Church."\*

While the editor of the Nashville Advocate was delaying the publication of Messrs. Scruggs and Booth, the latter wrote to Dr. Bond, under date of July 18th, and his article appeared in the New York Advocate of August 7th, the publication of which urged Mr. M'Ferrin to publish the letter from Scruggs and Booth. This letter of Mr. Booth contained, in substance, the same with the former. It is as follows: "That the south agree never to attempt the election of a slaveholding bishop, provided the north will consent never to attempt the election of an abolitionist to the Episcopacy. Here you have our proposition."† Dr. Bond, in publishing Mr. Booth's article, thinks there is *hope* that the Church will remain one and indissoluble, and asks careful attention to the subject. But, to define who was an abolitionist seems to puzzle him; though he would fix it on one who justifies the measures of the antislavery societies. He thinks, however, the propositions should be fairly proposed and discussed.‡

In a communication, dated August 29th, and published in the Nashville Christian Advocate, of September 13th, the Rev. John T. Baskerville, of the Memphis conference, published seven articles of compromise.§ The leading points in this plan are, that the General conference would repeal all laws on slavery, and leave it entirely to the annual conferences; that neither a slaveholder nor an abolitionist should be a bishop, and other points connected with these. Mr. M'Ferrin denounced these articles, and said "Nine hundred and ninety-nine out of every thousand members of our Church, south, will be satisfied with nothing short of separation, unless the north *rescind* the resolution passed in the case of Bishop Andrew, and enter into a solemn pledge never again to molest the peace of their southern brethren on the subject of slavery."¶

A meeting was held in Somerville, Tennessee, October 4th, approving of Dr. Booth's plan, and complaining, in the following just terms: "That there has been an evident attempt, by a portion of the southern delegation, and the editors of all the southern Church papers, to forestall public opinion, and, thereby, force *disunion* of the Church, as is evidenced by the conduct of a portion of the delegates, and the refusal of southern editors to publish but little—if any thing—in favor of compromise, and every thing which is calculated to excite the prejudices of the south against their northern brethren."‡ Dr. Booth being repulsed entirely from the columns of the southern papers, in addressing the southern people, had recourse to the Christian Advocate and Journal, and uttered many things quite too plain, because true.\*\*

Mr. M'Ferrin scouted the idea of remuneration for the slaves as a paltry consideration. Yet the *gain* of slavery seems to have much to do with this whole business. Bishop Andrew, speaking of his wife's slaves, declares: "These servants were hers. She had inherited them from her former husband's estate. They had been her only source of support during widow-

\* Scraps, Vol. I, p. 233.

† C., August 7th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1085-1088.

‡ Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1087, 1088.

§ N., of September 13th, and C., of October 2d. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 402-404. ¶ Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 318, 404.

¶ See Booth's Pamphlet, p. 10, in Pamphlets, XLVII, p. 354. \*\* See his Pamphlet, pp. 20-50.

hood, and would still be her only dependence, if it should please God to remove me from her." Such is the Bishop's statements, which may well be set off as an answer to Mr. M'Ferrin's indignant retort, respecting the pecuniary consideration of Mrs. Andrew's slaves.

Dr. Capers warmly opposed Dr. Booth's compromise, or, indeed, any compromise at all.\* A New England man, who became an ultra-southerner, in a letter of September 17th, lectures the south on the folly of compromise, and ascribes the most ultra abolition principles to the entire north, especially to New England.†

The following are, in brief, the reasons which Rev. Abel Stevens gives why there can be no compromise:

(1.) Because no plan can prevent a separate organization in the south. With those who have committed themselves, separation, that is, secession, is an absolute necessity.

(2.) Dr. Booth's plan is scouted by all the papers and leading writers of the south.

(3.) It would be a concession, wrenched from the constitution of the Church, to slavery. Had the north encroached on the constitution of the Church, then we might have conceded, but we have only maintained its integrity.

(4.) This transference of all control of slavery to the annual conferences, would be an annihilation of all control. It would be an erasure, from the laws of the Church, of all hostility to slavery.

(5.) It would be a revolution in the constitution of the Church not desirable, especially as it refers to slavery.

(6.) We are not willing to abandon this legislative power over slavery, because the wisdom of our fathers approved it.

(7.) This plan must fail to secure its object—the harmony and peace of the Church.‡

9. As to compromise in general, it may be proper to present more particularly its friends and its opponents. Dr. Bond and Dr. Durbin, in the north, were in favor of compromise, and did their utmost, as good and enlightened ministers, to promote it. But it was strongly opposed in the south, by New England, and many even in the middle states. A brief survey of its friends and its foes, and the positions assumed, and measures employed, may not be unavailing.

Dr. Bond, in an editorial of October 2d, on compromise,|| referring to the compromise proposed by the brethren from the south, thinks, if the convention will direct its attention to existing difficulties, instead of proceeding to organize, and shall concede as well as demand concession, compromise may be effected. On the part of the non-slaveholding conferences, they might commit to the several annual conferences the exclusive authority to take such measures, from time to time, as their circumstances and the leadings of Providence may suggest, for the amelioration and final extinction of slavery. Yet there never has been, in any General conference, the slightest intention to justify or sanction slavery, as a system. In regard to the south he asks: Will our southern brethren concede any thing for peace and union? Must they contend for a slaveholding episcopacy as a *sine qua non*? Must they have a slaveholding bishop, or

divide the Church? If so, there is no hope of perpetuating the union. It is a fact, he says, well known to our southern brethren, that slaveholding can not be tolerated in the Episcopacy without producing commotions, strifes, and even secessions. He sums up the matter thus: "Upon the whole, it would seem, that the basis of a safe and righteous compromise has been laid. Let the southern Churches consent to preserve the Episcopacy free from all connection with slavery, as it has heretofore been; let them do this, not as an admission that slaveholding is necessarily sinful, but as a condescension to our weakness, if they please, or as a sacrifice on the altar of peace and charity. On the other hand, let all that relates to slavery and slaveholding, be committed to the annual conferences, who alone can adapt rules to their several circumstances in the premises.\* In the case of Bishop Andrew's slaves, he recommends their purchase, and the avails to be appropriated to the support of Mrs. Andrew.

Dr. Durbin, on the 16th of October, after having read Dr. Bond's views, and having considered the views of Messrs. Booth and Baskerville, presents the following three articles of compromise:

"(1.) No minister, who is a slaveholder, or who, by gift, conveyance, or sale, has continued men, women, or children in slavery, shall exercise the office of a bishop in the Church, so long as his connection with slavery exists, except so far as the allowance of reasonable time to enable him to release himself therefrom. The judgment of the General conference, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, shall be final, both as to the fact of the connection with slavery, within the meaning of the compromise, and of the reasonable time to be allowed for accomplishing the contemplated release therefrom.

"(2.) No minister, having avowed or acted upon the distinctive principles of abolitionism, of which fact the General conference shall judge, shall exercise the office of a bishop of the Church till he shall have recanted and given assurances for the future, to the satisfaction of the General conference.

"(3.) There shall be no appeal to the General conference, of any case or question connected with slavery, arising in any annual conference; but each annual conference shall have full and final jurisdiction over all such cases, judging and determining them according to the provisions now existing in the Discipline, except the right of appeal, which is hereby taken away."†

Dr. Durbin had just visited Pittsburg, Cincinnati, Baltimore, Philadelphia, New York, and had read the discussion in the papers; and he affirms that preachers and members, both north and south, were extremely averse to a division. He thought the principles of his compromise were such as conservative men would agree to, and always held. He concludes his article by saying: "*Separation was not advised or authorized by the General conference.* But, as it is deemed very probable, under the stress of necessity, as declared by the south, the resolutions were passed as a peace measure, asked by the south, and were intended to abate, if not wholly prevent, the evils which were apprehended, in case the south should find it necessary to separate. *The warrant for separation is not in the resolutions of the General conference; but, if it ex-*

\* S. from N., of August 23d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 227.

† N., October 11th, S., November 15th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 606-608, 449-453.

‡ Z., quoted in W., October 25th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 530, 531.

§ Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 398-401.

\* C., October 2d. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 400, 401.

† C., October 14th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 456, 461, 462.

ist at all, it is in the necessity of the case, of which the Church in the south must judge."

Dr. M'Clintock, under date of November 9th,\* opposed, strenuously, the views of Dr. Durbin. In reference to the other propositions which would give up antislavery legislation, it could not be entertained. For of the two, it would have been better to have let Bishop Andrew go uncensured, than to surrender our legislation; for by that we would have got rid of him in a few years, and then have taken good care never to have another. As it regards the rejection of an abolitionist from the Episcopacy, it would require the General conference to have a sliding scale of opinions that would be hard to regulate; for Dr. Durbin was called an abolitionist by the southern men. They can not split the hair that divides his sentiments from those of New England. As to the peace of the Church, it can not be secured, except by a compromise that will satisfy both parties. And Dr. Durbin's would satisfy neither. Besides, it is both wrong and unjust—wrong, because it concedes to slavery; and that, too, at a time when no concession can be justly made. He concludes thus: "Let us all, adhering to the old Methodist ground, that slavery is a sin, but that all slaveholders are not necessarily sinners, maintain the Discipline as it is, and we have nothing to fear. Let us sacrifice no principle to keep any man from seceding, north, south, east, or west; and the God of our fathers shall be with us still." This was nobly and justly said.

Compromise met with the most stern opposition from the south. Dr. Wightman† declares: "The time of compromise has gone by forever; it is rather late in the day to be of any avail; that the right feelings and constitutional privileges of five hundred thousand Methodists have been ruthlessly trodden under foot by a majority of the late General conference." He adds: "We tell him, [Dr. Bond,] in all honesty and godly sincerity, that the conferences, the opinions of which this journal has the honor to represent, can not, if they would, would not, if they could, agree to any such compromise. The great ground of separation—the stress of the necessity, is not touched by it." He concludes thus: "We grind Dr. Bond's last foundation stone of hope and joy, if this it is, to powder. We scatter it to the winds of heaven. We disavow all partnership in compromise proposals of this gist. We are in absolute, hopeless, helpless despair about any possibility of compromise that can now hold the east, south, north, and west in one ecclesiastical communion, *unless the majority will not only reverse their proceedings against Bishop Andrew, and set him free from the disabilities of the late action in his case, BUT GIVE UP ALL ANTISLAVERY ACTION WHATSOEVER, AS EXTRA-ECCLESIASTICAL, AND IMPROPER FOR THE FOLLOWERS OF HIM WHOSE KINGDOM IS NOT OF THIS WORLD.* Let the north call a General conference and agree to these terms, and there may be some prospect of reunion." Such is the decisive language of the Southern Advocate, italics, capitals, and all, just as it was written.

Dr. Capers uttered similar language. He writes in the Southern Advocate, in these terms; "Destiny itself is not more certain, than that such is the STATE OF THE PUBLIC MIND IN THE SOUTH, WERE WE NOW TO RETRACE OUR STEPS, EVEN UPON ANY CONDITIONS—UPON ANY

TERMS, HOWEVER FAVORABLE THEY MIGHT BE—WE COULD NO LONGER EXIST AS A CHURCH IN ANY OF THESE REGIONS! *No, sir! Ours is a struggle for life or death! and can we give it up? Never! no, never!*"

The opposition to compromise in New England was decided and strong, though mingled somewhat with ultra abolition elements. Mr. Hatch opposed it, because he wanted all slaveholders out of the Church.\* Mr. Barrows disagreed with him, and seemed very much averse to the course of Mr. Hatch.† The editor of the Herald opposed both division and compromise, with great force and reason.‡ We think, however, he mistook the case, in supposing the General conference divided the Church, or agreed to its division; whereas they only provided how they would treat a secession or separation. Yet, perhaps the conference erred in treating in any manner with the leaders of secession, leaving this for a future day. The Rev. C. Adams assaulted the compromise in an elaborate discussion, of some length.¶ Dr. Bond replied to Mr. Adams, and corrected his statements in regard to himself, and vindicated his views with great fairness and ability.‡ Rev. Mr. Husted, of New England, presented his views on the same subject with due moderation. But it would be endless to quote, or even refer to all the shades of sentiment on this subject. We refer our readers to the citations in the margin of this column.¶

In regard to the various compromises, the editor of the Western Advocate\*\* expressed the following sentiments, from which he sees no reason to dissent at this day:

That the Church can never give up her moral teaching on slavery, embraced in the General Rule, and the section on slavery. These express the great evil of slavery, contemplate its extirpation, and that the Church, as good Christians and good citizens, are bound to do what is consistent to do away slavery. These embrace great moral principles and duties, which can not be abandoned any more than the Bible and the religion of the Bible. It is idle to say that the Bible sanctions slavery in its origin, its continuance, its principles, or its practices. The Bible can not approve of the leading elements of the system, such as dispensing or annulling marriage, concubinage, ignorance, degradation, inhumanity, cruelty, injustice, disobedience to parents, etc., expressly forbidden in the word of God. For though slavery, as a mere equivocal term, may not be expressly forbidden in Scripture, all the leading constituent parts of the system are as expressly forbidden as drunkenness, Sabbath-breaking, stealing, and robbery are forbidden. Moral principles and practices, in the nature of things, can not be compromised. There can be no compromise in this matter, except to adhere to the Discipline, and separate slaveholding forever from the Episcopacy. To compromise so as to give up the sound principles of our Discipline, would produce greater evils than those that now exist.

Our General Rule can not be abandoned after nearly seventy years' standing; and though it is now, for the most part, nothing more than the

\* Z., October 9th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 102.

† Z., October 9th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 111.

‡ Z., October 9th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 104.

§ Z., November 6th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 126

¶ Z., November 6th, Vol. XIX, p. 66.

‡ S., November 15th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 610; and for D. of Alabama, see Scraps, Vol. I, p. 613.

\*\* W., October 25th and December 6th. Scraps, pp. 529, 680, 684.

\* Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 147-149.

† S., August 16th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 192-195.

‡ Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 122.



assertion of a great moral principle, and left, in the application, to the conscience of every man to judge how far he is concerned, it is, nevertheless, of great worth, and could not be abandoned without departure from principle.

The uniform *testimony* of the Church, on the extirpation of slavery and its evils, is also of great importance. Something is to be done for this purpose; and the conviction is expressed that the Church is as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery. This declaration must be preserved, if principle and consistency be of any value.

Nor can we see how any more can be transferred to the annual conferences than what now belongs to them. If these important principles be omitted, and transferred to annual conferences, then principles and regulations on them on other topics, may also be transferred; and hence the General conference will be only a mere name. The carrying out of the regulations on slavery properly belongs now to the southern conferences. But, then, there is no more reason to exempt them from accountability to the General conference, than to exempt other conferences on other points. To relinquish cognizance, so as to dispense with appeals on the subject of slavery, would require a change in the Restrictive Rules; and this exception might hazard appeals in general, and tend greatly to anarchy.

To exclude abolitionists from the Episcopacy would be a very uncertain process. This would lead to perpetual contests, because it would be difficult, if not impossible, to decide who is an abolitionist. In the north, those generally pass for abolitionists who belong to the Garrison school, or who are members of abolition societies. The south put down as abolitionists the whole north, without distinction, except such as did, or would protest against the doings of the General conference. Indeed, many ministers and laymen in the south must be put down as abolitionists.

If our present Discipline will not be a basis of settling difficulties, there is no prospect of settling them by any half-way process. The south press the necessity of slaveholding bishops; and while this is the case, there can be no compromise.

The mode struck out to meet the exigency, by the General conference, appears to be the best that could be done, for any thing that has yet been proposed; and whatever defects pertain to it, they are more easily mended than any other mode yet presented.

10. Under date of July 22d, Dr. Tomlinson published an article in the *New York Advocate*,\* on the division of the Church. He maintained that, according to the plan, in case of a separation, the south would, in law, thereby vitiate our title to Church property; that, according to the terms of the plan, the southern Church would be a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church; and, therefore, they could not hold the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church. If there must be separation, he preferred the plan of Dr. Capers. Dr. Tomlinson was attacked by Messrs. M'Cown and Stevenson, especially the latter, and Mr. M'Ferrin, in a manner too coarse to mention.† The veil of charity is in this case a very useful protection to those even who refuse to wear it. Mr. T. M. Smith corrected Mr.

Crouch in a pleasant manner. The latter spoke of the south as "an integral part of the slaveholding department of the Methodist Episcopal Church."\* Rev. M. M. Henkle, too, attacked Dr. Tomlinson. For some time Messrs. Stevenson and Crouch assailed him, both in the columns of the *Western Advocate*, till their articles became intolerable, and in the *Nashville Advocate* at the same time. The *Nashville Advocate* would allow no replies to the misrepresentations against Mr. Tomlinson, though the paper laid no restraints on his assailants. But this was now the settled course of the three southern papers. We refer to the columns of the *Nashville*, *Richmond*, and *Southern Advocates*, for many specimens of this sort, during the months of August, September, October, and November.

11. We have seen already that division or separation had been determined on, both before, at, and after General conference, unless the Episcopacy were free to be connected with slavery. This purpose was fully sustained by the south, through the months of July, August, September, and October. Under date of July 12th,† the *Southern Advocate* declares: "Had not the southern delegates taken the stand they did at the close of the conference, made their declaration, recorded their Protest, and taken prompt measures for a separation of the Church, the days of Methodism would have been numbered, at least in Carolina and Georgia." Mr. Wightman complains that they were held up as schismatics and seceders. And as to the Church property, he contends that "no *civil* tribunal will justify" the act of the conference in the case of the Bishop, as it was contrary to the law of the Church, and more than intimates that the civil power of the south would sustain them in the face of ecclesiastical law.‡ The editor of the *Richmond Advocate* affirmed that "no earthly power can arrest the progress of division. The south will never yield her principles, nor recede from the position taken by her delegates, and set forth in the declaration and Protest;§" and adds: "The General conference in May, 1845, will consummate the plan of division;" and that the defeat of the property measure "will not weigh a feather with southern Methodists. Money all apart, they are resolved to be separate from, and independent of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as heretofore constituted." Next week Mr. Lee utters many things to the same amount, denounces the General conference and Dr. Bond, and reiterates the necessity of secession, which he calls separation or division, to correspond to the changed phraseology of the south. For at first it was acknowledged to be secession, though called separation; but now its name is to be division.¶ Others in the south contended that division was inevitable.‡ Mr. Stringfield thought it was inevitable.\*\* An Alabamian declares that as the south has been so reviled by abolitionists of the north, and called pirates, and all such hard names, that union with them is no longer desirable.††

The General conference has been charged with innovation on the laws of Methodism. But this

\* W., November 2d. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 654.

† S., July 12th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 126.

‡ *Scraps*, Vol. I, pp. 128, 129.

§ R., July 18th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, pp. 131-134.

¶ R., July 25th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, pp. 855-858.

\*\* S., September 20th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 360.

†† C., September 25th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 372.

‡‡ S., September 25th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 276.

\* In W., of August 23d. *Scraps*, Vol. I, pp. 22, 222.

† N., November 15th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, pp. 626-630, and in many other places.

is often contradicted by the south themselves. Dr. Wightman heads an article, "The Church has avowed a policy long opposed by the south," and then proceeds here, as he and others do elsewhere, to show that the Church had all along been wrong in touching the subject of slavery.\* So that the true ground for separation was, that the Church would not depart from her usual course on the subject of slavery. In the same article he declares, "The south must cease to exist, or else dissolve its connection with the General conference as now established." "The dilemma now before us is division, either peaceable or schismatic, or else entire destruction."

Many, both at the north and south, greatly deprecated the separation. From New England, Rev. L. D. Barrows opposed it strenuously.† Others expressed themselves in similar language. A solemn protest against it was entered into—against division—at Fincastle, Virginia.‡ A Virginian deprecated the separation as a sad catastrophe.¶ A North Carolinian calculated the loss and gain of the separation as follows:§ The assumed gain of the south would be, 1. Freedom from abolition influence. 2. Less restraint in teaching the negroes; 3. And electing slaveholding bishops. He considers these advantages, both as trifling and not worthy to be contended for. The loss to the south he sums up as follows: 1. Increase of the abolition excite-

ment every-where. 2. It will be a cause and precedent for political division in all its evils. 3. Loss of the favor of all the rest of Christendom. 4. Division among ourselves. 5. Loss of our Church property. These he argues at some length; and remarks respecting a slaveholding bishop, "that those who seek honor of God and not of man, can not see or feel any dishonor in this thing."

When the separation was under discussion at New York, it was viewed by all, both north and south, as a mere secession, except the name separation was bestowed on it. After a while a different language began to be used by the south, so as to construe separation to mean division. Dr. Bangs's reply to A. C., September 18th,\* declared that, in pursuing their course, "the south would separate themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church." Indeed the General conference neither advised nor sanctioned the division of the Church; and there was no warrant from this body for secession, should it come. But if it must come, as probably it would, the conference, in such a disastrous case, declared its judgment on the best plan of treating those who believed there was a necessity for them to renounce the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But the act of secession must be solely the act of those who undertook to effect it.†

## CHAPTER XXVI.

### EVENTS SUCCEEDING THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1844, CONTINUED.

I. IN continuing the narrative of 1844, in the events immediately succeeding the General conference, we may notice the discussions of Elihu, entitled, "The Present Crisis," in the Southern Advocate of July 19th, August 28th, and October 4th and 11th. Elihu is supposed to be Dr. Longstreet. Cleophas, perhaps the same as Elihu, under date of September 27th, and October 4th, 18th, wrote three numbers, entitled, "Thoughts for the Times," in the same paper. As these articles were generally indorsed by the south, their views may be considered as those generally received in the far south.

Elihu, in July,‡ affirms that, "Whether there has been any express provision in the constitution of a Church for exigencies which may arise, or not, there is inherent in every true Church of Christ a power to reform, remodel, or even totally change its government, whenever that may become necessary to obtain the end proposed by its institution." By government he means its police regulations, its economical agencies, the system by which it operates in effecting the purposes of its creation, etc. He adds, "There is not the vestige of a reason why a Church which hinders the progress of the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, and promotes sin, should exist for a moment; no, not although it could

trace its ministry by lineal, hereditary descent to the apostles themselves." He further says, "The division of Church organizations, the separation of their members into distinct bodies, when made to increase their efficiency in promoting vital godliness, is not the *sin of schism*; and it is an essential Protestant doctrine, that no sin is incurred when that is the *true object* of those who establish new religious associations, or who separate from existing Church organizations." He then remarks that the south have conceded too much already; that they can not safely remain connected with the north, and that the south should, without fear or favor, "stand forth in the strength of truth and righteousness, and sever the connection." He then charges what is not true, in regard to the General conference, that "they have declared, by their vote, and their reasonings in vindication of that vote, that it is a sin to hold slaves, under the circumstances in which they are held among us."

Elihu proceeds, in his second letter,‡ to state that the Church in the south is providentially called to place itself in a state of antagonism to one of the fanatical delusions of the age—the spirit of abolitionism—that the world is carrying on a crusade against slaveholders; that the spirit of the age is opposed to slavery, but it is the fundamental spirit; that the abolitionists teach that the slaves may justly emancipate themselves by cutting the throats of their mas-

\* S., September 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 278.

† Z., October 16th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 111-113.

‡ C., September 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 314.

§ C., September 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 350.

¶ C., October 30th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 539.

‡ S., July 19th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 138.

\* Scraps, Vol. I, p. 349.

† W., October 25th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 529.

‡ S., August 24. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 141.

ters, if necessary, and seize on the property of others to facilitate their escape; that the Methodist Episcopal Church in the south is bound to be untrammelled in reference to the civil relations of slavery, and continue their labors till, "in the providence of God, a way may be open for the abolition of slavery, as a political institution, when it shall be hailed as an unmixed blessing to both master and slave."

In his third letter\* Elihu laments that the Methodist Episcopal Church introduced a rule into the Discipline on the subject of slavery; and passes very severe strictures on the Church for having any rules on this subject.

The articles of Cleophas, whoever he was, are violent, and are justly called "Thoughts for the Times," as they are in keeping with the spirit that then prevailed in the south. He speaks of the "hybrid action of the majority." He says, "All the proceedings of the General conference, from first to last, in Bishop Andrew's case evinced malice aforethought—a stern, unrelaxing determination to execute the will of the majority in defiance of all consequences."† Again: "The foul spirit of abolitionism, which had made havoc of some few New England societies, was howling for another victim, and he found a host to forage for him."‡

Cleophas, in his second number,|| complains that the majority, and their adherents, have shown no relenting; that division is inevitable; that he would as soon expect to bind an elephant with cobwebs as abolitionism with laws, covenants, and promises; a separate jurisdiction is demanded by self-respect. He speaks thus of the terms of compromise: "The Rubicon is passed. SHE [the south] WILL ACCEPT NO COMPROMISE. If the great men of the north desire union, let them call a conference, rescind the resolution in Bishop Andrew's case, confess they did Harding injustice, expunge the chapter on slavery from the Discipline, declare solemnly and conscientiously, before God and the country, that slavery is a civil institution with which they have nothing to do, denounce abolitionism as a spirit of evil, and then, and *not till then*, will we listen to terms of union."

In his third number¶ he pleads for secession, under the name of separation, and complains that the word unity has been invested with a sort of superstitious sanctity; that the case is settled, and concludes by saying, "To your tents, O Israel!"

2. A communication of A. C., an intelligent Methodist lawyer of Baltimore, gave great offense to the south. It was dated August 26th, and published in the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal* of September 4th.¶ In three letters, addressed to Drs. Bangs and Capers.

In his first letter A. C. affirms that bishops, elders, and presbyters are convertible terms, and that bishops are accountable to the elders or presbyters, and hold their place by the tenure of the elders' will. If from any cause bishops forfeit confidence, whether by acts of positive impropriety, or peculiarities of manner, or the like, they become offensive to the people, it is the duty of the elders to supersede them by appointing others. The General con-

ference did right in expressing their judgment that, as Bishop Andrew had impaired his usefulness, he should cease to exercise his office till the embarrassment should be removed; that this act of the General conference was the only reason assigned for the disruption of the Church; that this reason is not sufficient; that separation was no remedy for the evil; that it was reasonable the bishops should not be partakers in a matter condemned by so many states; that the moral influence of this should be duly weighed; that it is unjust for the south to impose on the free states a slaveholding bishop with the feelings they possess; that, though there is agitation in the north, there was ten times as much in the south; that it is not the enlightened piety of the south which sanctions the course of Bishop Andrew; no good man in the south maintains, on principle, slavery to be right, or denies it is an evil. He concludes his first letter by advising the General conference to leave the subject of slavery with the annual conferences.

Dr. Capers replied, with great spirit, under date of August 1st.\* He contends that separation must take place; for what has made Bishop Andrew unacceptable is a universal involvement of the south, and every proper consideration requires the south to interfere against his supersedure; that the public mind of the northern citizen people was right, but the mind of the Methodist preachers and people was wrong; that no assurance for safety of our ministry and membership, under the jurisdiction of the General conference as now constituted, could be secured; that the appeal of A. C. for union was little else than persecution; and that the south could never again belong to the jurisdiction of the same General conference.

A. C., in his second and third letters,† proceeded to maintain that the separation would prove disastrous to all concerned; that no act of the General conference imposed on the south the necessity of separation; that if the division took place it would be because the Methodist Episcopal Church refused to give formal sanction to negro slavery; that the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States can not be divided; that the southern Church would be a secession from the Church to which they once belonged; that this new Church would be a slavery Church, and the first slavery Church which was ever organized. Christian fellowship will be destroyed between these two Churches; for there is a principle which will surely cause it. The south will forfeit God's favor, and ruin will be the consequence. The ultra-abolitionists of the north, and the ultraslaveites of the south, take the same views, occupy the same ground in respect to the division of the Church and the dissolution of the Union. In his second letter A. C. affirms that the minority avow their determination to withdraw because the majority are tyrants, oppressors, covenant-breakers, false accusers, and their great error consists in the expression of their judgment that bishops, during the continuance of their office, should not own slaves; that the leading men in the south, by their acts, resolutions, addresses, and declarations, used in achieving secession, have erected an impassable barrier between their new Church

\* S., August 30th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 144.

† S., September 27th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 381.

‡ *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 385.

§ S., October 4th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 428.

¶ S., October 18th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 482.

¶ C., September 4th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 263.

\* C., October 16th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 455.

† C., September 4th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 268.

and the Methodist Episcopal Church. They have said that slavery, as it now exists in the southern states, is an institution sanctioned by the religion of Christ. The two bodies must stand cut off from all fellowship with each other. The calamity is not in the mere act of separation of the south, but in the injustice of their attack on the Church. For what purpose is the secession urged if it be not to escape the judgment of the Church that slavery is an evil?

Dr. Capers\* responds to the second and third letters of A. C. with very keen retort, and argues his cause in warm declamation, the declamatory frequently interfering with sound principles, facts, and sound reasoning. He says, "The true question is, whether the Church may do that which the state may not do in a matter involving civil rights and the public good; or whether, in aversion from slavery, prevailing in the northern states, the Methodist people of those states might do what the citizen people of those states might do, and dare not do, by means of their legislatures and Congress." This totally misrepresents the case, because the Methodist people in the north never deemed themselves competent to emancipate the slaves of the south, though they have always believed it was the duty of the south to emancipate their slaves. Dr. Capers then utters the following sentiments: "We can not serve Jesus Christ in the ministry of his Gospel under your supremacy, as established by the late General conference. If you call us seceders, it is for Christ's sake we have to secede. If you call us slavery men, and a slavery Church, then Christ can not be served without our becoming slavery men and a slavery Church, nor the Gospel be preached; and, for Christ's sake, and the Gospel, we endure even these your revilings. Is this better for your side than for you to allow what the General conference allowed, and let us not be accused, to Christ's dishonor, for the sake of gratifying your antislavery principles? Yes, as to this matter of our forming a separate ecclesiastical organization, if my Lord and Master were once on earth as once he was on earth, I would carry it to him as simply and directly as ever Peter did the question of the tribute-money; and even now I go to him, and hear his answer and obey it. I say you shall not, by any possible or impossible means, make us members of a *slavery Church*; and I must add, with equal emphasis, that you shall not make us members of an antislavery Church. No more the one than the other. . . . I say again we are not slavery men, or a slavery Church; nor are we antislavery men, or an antislavery Church. Our sole and simple reason of action is that of unqualified devotion to Christ, whom we serve in the Gospel of his grace, leaving your philosophy to those who like it better, but choosing for ourselves Christ crucified."

Other writers in the south attacked A. C. with unsparing severity. Dr. Lee† calls A. C.'s letters an eloquent calumny—elaborate and deliberate calumny. A southern Methodist, in the *Richmond Advocate*,‡ descends to the lowest language in an angry reply. Another southern Methodist, in the columns of the *Christian Advocate*, replied to A. C., the

contents of which we need not notice, as it would not be edifying.\*

As Dr. Bangs was addressed by A. C., he made a brief reply.† He said that, at the General conference, the facts forced it on his mind, with irresistible conviction, that union, under the circumstances, was impracticable. He rejoiced that the committee of nine, of which he was a member, adjusted the matter so that, should the south find it necessary to separate themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church, it would be done in a peaceable manner. He regretted the controversy in the papers, especially personal matters, and more particularly that so much warmth has been manifested by the south in their primary assemblies. He proposes, if our southern brethren judge they can not remain any longer connected with the Church, they should go in peace, and not irritate those from whom they separate, by criminations, by impeaching their motives, and denouncing them as reckless of the rights of others. He saw no hope of adjustment; that division was inevitable; that the General conference took the wisest way, and much better than any of the modes proposed since its adjournment.

3. At an early day subsequent to General conference, Dr. Bond and Dr. Capers became enlisted in the controversy of the times. The discussion between them commenced, in form, August 19th, and continued till December 13th. Dr. Capers and Dr. Lee had, during the session of the General conference, as we have already seen, greatly misrepresented its doings in the case of Harding. Dr. Bond corrected their misstatements, and thus incurred their displeasure, especially for saying there was no just cause for secession, and for advising Bishop Andrew to resign.

As an argument against secession, the cause of missions, it was argued, would suffer. Dr. Wightman maintained that the southern conferences could easily support their missions, and even greatly extend them. Dr. Capers urged that they could support their missions with ease, and presses the matter thus: "It only remains for us to establish an efficient missionary organization when we meet at Louisville, to double the contributions hitherto made for missions in the south generally."‡ In this Dr. Capers was right.

Dr. Capers, under date of August 23d,§ censures severely the articles of Dr. Bond, of June 26th, July 10th, August 7th, and complains of their severity in saying the south had no reason to complain; their meetings were conducted with a proud spirit of independence even of the blessings and protection of almighty God. After these quotations he speaks very contemptuously of Dr. Bond and Dr. Booth.

Dr. Bond¶ replies with great effect to Dr. Capers. He charges him for having taken entirely new and different ground from his former course. He refers to his formerly-known and avowed antislavery sentiments. He then quotes Dr. Capers's letter of September 30, 1843, from which we make the following extract: "I am fully persuaded that as the Episcopacy is, it is of great importance to have

\* C., October 23d. *Scraps*, Vol. I, pp. 506, 563.

† H., September 19th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 932.

‡ H., September 19th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 937.

\* C., October 23d. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 517.

† C., September 18th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 349.

‡ S., August 23d. *Scraps*, pp. 225-227.

§ C., August 23d. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 227.

¶ C., October 9th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 407.

their family residences distant from each other, and one or more beside Bishop Andrew in the south and south-west; but I can not see that it is necessary for this that we should elect a bishop with reference to his former residence. North or south ought not to be the question, but who is the worthiest man? The question of residence ought to follow and be determined by the fact of election, and ought not to precede or determine it. If we are to elect a bishop, let it be understood that his family must reside in one of the southern or south-western conferences. I would even say, let it be so ordered by the General conference, and then let us elect out of the whole Church the most worthy minister. If he will not remove his family when it is required by his election, we have mistaken the man, and will elect another. But I must confess I should doubt the heart of the southern man who would be willing to go to the north in the office of a bishop, he owning slaves.\*

Dr. Bond comments with great plainness on this letter, and shows how much Dr. Capers, at this time, had varied from his former sentiments. In 1843 Dr. Capers wrote that a bishop could be deprived of his office by refusing to remove his family, and another could be elected in his place.

Dr. Capers† replied to Dr. Bond of October 9th, in a style which he had not been accustomed to use in former times; but, as its contents present nothing specially important, we will save space by barely mentioning its existence.

Dr. Bond publishes Dr. Capers's letter of November 1st on his first page of November 13th, and replies at large to its contents, and shows that he did not misrepresent in his former articles.‡ Dr. Capers had said in his letter to Dr. Bond, "YOU WILL NOT ALLOW THE LAWS OF THE LAND TO BE SOVEREIGN WITH RESPECT TO CIVIL RIGHTS AND DUTIES. This is not rendering unto Cæsar his due; nor do we believe it is consistent with duty to God." Dr. Bond replies that this is the charge brought against the General conference. But this decision did not contravene any laws of the slaveholding states, because these states do not require their citizens to hold slaves; nor do their laws require Methodists within their jurisdiction to have a slaveholding bishop. These states make it the legal right of all citizens to hold slaves, and so they make it the legal right of every citizen to attend theaters, horse-races, and, in some of them, to keep billiard-tables by paying for a license; but the laws do not oblige people, ordinarily, to do any of these things any more than to hold slaves. The exercise of Church discipline with respect to slaveholding would no more conflict with the laws than in respect to theatrical amusements, horse-racing, or billiard-playing. The state no where interferes with the Churches with respect to what they would determine to make a condition of Church fellowship. He argued that the south carry this point to an excess, and argues as follows to show that Christians are not bound, in all cases, to render obedience to the powers that be: "Wherever the civil law is in contradiction of, or in any wise contravenes the para-

mount law of God, we are bound, by our supreme allegiance to our only Lord and Law-giver, to obey God rather than man; and to do this, though we incur persecution, bonds, imprisonment, and death, for we are not to fear them who can kill the body. Idolatry was a civil institution in the apostles' days; and, although they commanded obedience to Nero, the cruel, tyrannical Roman emperor, they are to be understood as extending this command only to matters which did not conflict with conscience enlightened by the Gospel; for they themselves were disobedient subjects in reference to the idolatrous worship imposed by law, and taught even the Gentile converts to turn away from these vanities. It was for this they suffered persecution willingly and patiently; and we can not do better than to follow both their counsel and example. The question, therefore, for every Christian to decide in reference to slaveholding members is not, What says the law of the land? but, What says the Bible? The Methodist Episcopal Church has done so, as her Discipline still attests; and the decision of the late General conference, so much complained of, was not in opposition to this principle of action. We have, therefore, given the south no just cause for separation.\*\*

To the foregoing Dr. Capers, under date of November 30th,† furnished, in the Southern Advocate, a "Rejoinder." He complains of the editorials of Dr. Bond respecting the Church meetings of the south; that Dr. Bond began a bitter persecution of them; said all manner of evil of them without stint as to measure, or exception as to meetings; that he treated the south as heretics, and resolved to reduce them right or wrong. He charges on Dr. Bond unsparing persecution, and in this style continues through nearly six columns of the Southern Advocate. The "Rejoinder" was manifestly intended only for southern ears; and, of course, the violent men who held the Norfolk, Prince Ann, and such other southern meetings, and those of a similar mind, found themselves sustained in their course and unchristian measures by the countenance of Dr. Capers.

Dr. Bond, on December 25th,‡ took up Dr. Capers's Rejoinder. Dr. Bond had proposed to submit all matters of complaint between himself and Dr. Capers to the decision of disinterested persons, to be mutually chosen and agreed upon. This was declined. Dr. Bond was excluded from a hearing in the southern papers, and the New York paper had only a limited circulation in the south—because the southern papers required and received the principal support of the south. Southern men, and Dr. Capers among them, occupied much space in the New York and Cincinnati Advocates, though the matter was disparaging generally to the General conference and in favor of southern views; while no northern men were allowed to say a word in the southern papers, not even to defend themselves, though assailed, much less to defend the Church through the columns of her own papers. Dr. Bond, therefore, complains justly that injustice was done him by Dr. Capers and the southern press. His letter to Dr. Capers was written in self-defense. He had been assailed in the Southern Advocate with

\* S., October 13, 1843. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 408.

† S., November 1st. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 552.

‡ C., November 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 691.

\* C., November 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 594.

† S., December 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 719-724.

‡ C., December 25th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1115-1122.

bitterness, was called a pragmatic intriguer, an enemy to the southern Church; at first assailing it openly, then hypocritically soothing it in order to stab it to the heart like an assassin. Dr. Bond long forebore to notice these cruel and unjust imputations; but he was, at length, compelled to show "that the Dr. Capers of the present time was not the Dr. Capers of former times. A great change had passed over his feelings; he had been thrown into a false position to which he was unequal, and had succumbed to circumstances which he could not control, and which to withstand must require great sacrifices. We were aware of the danger of exposing this weakness. Many who could not justify the conduct would, nevertheless, pity the man; and he who pities is half inclined to excuse." Those who will examine the various articles of Dr. Bond and Dr. Capers with impartiality, will see that the foregoing statement is strictly true.

Dr. Bond then proceeds to refer to the different steps of the controversy between himself and Dr. Capers, and refers to the point of Dr. Capers accommodating Church matters to suit southern politicians. He states that Dr. Capers was so full of submitting the project of division to Mr. Calhoun, and his political friends, that he spoke upon it freely and openly. He said he had received a letter from the secretary on the subject which then agitated the conference. Dr. Capers also named other political gentlemen of distinction whom he purposed to confer with as to the necessity of severing our ecclesiastical union, in order to have access to the colored population of the south. Dr. Bond next quotes an extract from the message of the Governor of South Carolina to the Legislature then in session, which praised "the patriotic Methodists of the south for dissolving all connection with their brethren of the north; and for this they are entitled to lasting honor and gratitude from us."\*

Dr. Bond concludes his article thus: "If our brethren from the south can not forego their purpose of division, can they not pause a little while? Can they not content themselves, at their ensuing convention, with a declaration of rights, and an appeal to all the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to instruct their delegates to the next General conference in reference to the direct action on the whole subject in dispute? Their grievances will not prove mortal in four years' time; and who can tell how near we may come together after four years' time to cool?" This was wise counsel to those who could take it; but the south had become so wedded to slavery, and, therefore, to a slaveholding bishop, that what they threatened in 1836 and 1840, and resolved on in 1843, they were determined to carry out; that was to secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church, unless the Church sanctioned slavery. All their steps from 1843 to this point of time were so many stages in the one work of secession, which was now become a determination, and the details were only necessary, with a little time, to carry it into effect. So the keen, observing Governor of South Carolina saw the matter, and expressed himself accordingly. "With becoming spirit the patriotic Methodists of the south dissolved all connection with their brethren of the north."

4. The denunciations of Dr. Bond by the editors and correspondents of the southern papers, whether editors or correspondents, were unsparing, and as unfounded as they were lavish. There is this explanation, however, of the matter: Genuine pro-slavery men can find no argument in reason, or no authority in Scripture for slavery: hence, they impose silence on all tongues, a muzzle on all presses; and when these expedients fail, wholesale denunciation without respect to persons, places, or principles; and if this fail, then comes Lynch law and mobs; and finally ecclesiastical or civil revolution is resorted to accomplish what the other means failed to do.

Dr. Bond, immediately after General conference, became the subject of misrepresentation, denunciation, and accusations, without number or stint. Our limits would not allow us to give the tittle of what was said. We will, however, give a stinted outline, referring in the margin to the details, if any one will ever take pains to examine the unfounded allegations.

One of the resolutions of the Prince Ann circuit, Virginia conference, declared:

"That it is our conviction that the New York Christian Advocate has at its head an abolitionist; one who counseled the resignation of Bishop Andrew, and thus proved himself recreant to the south and unworthy of her support; we, therefore, pledge ourselves to use all honorable means to destroy the circulation of said paper in this region."\* This is a mere specimen of the general denunciation of Dr. Bond, in almost every set of resolutions published, and their name is legion.

Dr. Smith wrote a long communication, under date of July 3d,† entitled, "The Christian Advocate and Journal not a proper paper to circulate in the southern and south-western states, while edited by Dr. Thomas E. Bond. He should resign, or otherwise his paper should not be allowed to circulate in those states." Dr. Smith, in 1836, as we have seen, urged the south to have an independent press. Hence, whenever Dr. Bond maintained the cause of the General conference, the south immediately became his opponents, and refused to vote for him. The reasons that Dr. Smith gives for this are, that he considered Dr. Bond as an abolitionist. Dr. Bond, in his discussions with the radical-abolitionists, showed himself to be an abolitionist. He urged the resignation of Bishop Andrew, etc. The mandamus of Dr. Smith was indorsed by the editor of the Southern Advocate.‡ Dr. Wightman,§ in an article headed rather contemptuously, "*Bondiana*," says that as the Christian Advocate had been neutral in reference to slavery, Dr. Bond broke the compromise when he entered the lists against the south. Dr. Capers¶ says, "The Christian Advocate and Journal is now a northern paper; and so let it be. We have no quarrel with it, however much its new abolition affinities may be against both our judgment and taste." The Nashville Advocate¶ heads an article, "Dr. Bond's Disingenuousness," and charges him with "trick," and various other sins. Dr. Bond, in reply to the allegation of neutrality,\*\* responds, and

\* C., July 10th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1069.

† R., July 11th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 114-121.

‡ C., July 31st. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1071-1075.

§ S., August 9th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 185.

¶ C., August 21st. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 211.

¶ N., August 23d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 235.

\*\* C., August 28th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 226.

\* Document, No. 63. C., December 25th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1121.

confutes his accuser. He says, to separate from the Church is either a *sin* or a *duty*. It is a *duty* if we are required to believe as a condition of membership what is contrary to the word of God, or to do what is contrary to our conscience. It is a *sin* to leave the Church for a less cause. Upon these principles the south are not justified in leaving the Church. The Doctor concludes his article with this true piece of history: "The north is to quietly acquiesce in whatever the south pleases to say of it, and admit, before the whole world, that it has been guilty of all that is alleged. To even deny it is to give such offense as will wholly alienate our southern friends in affection as well as in Church fellowship."

The Rev. Jesse Boring, under date of August 13th,\* exceeds most others in censure—indeed, some would call it slander. Among other things he charges him with "concocting a plan by which he hoped to drive a part or the whole of the south to secession, and leave the Book Concern, the Church property, and the right of the whole territory so far as occupancy is concerned, in the hands of the north [abolitionists]."

Dr. Smith violently attacked, in the Richmond Advocate, Dr. Bond. The latter published his letter, and responded in the same paper; but the answer could find no place in the southern papers,† although Dr. Bond had proposed the publication of both sides in the papers north and south.‡ During the month of October the southern press groaned with invectives against Dr. Bond. In pity to poor human nature we omit these and barely refer to them in the margin.¶ It is but just to say, that Dr. Bond, in the whole course of this misrepresentation, preserved the dignity of sober discussion. And though he has been complained of for undue severity, his severity was the force of truth, and the full exposure of error, and the sophistries which were brought to maintain it.

5. The Methodists of Kentucky were exceedingly averse to the secession from the Church, and to the proceedings of the extreme south in regard to it. At a meeting of the members of the Church, in Shelbyville, Kentucky, August 31, 1844, a preamble and resolutions opposed to division were adopted, and published in the Western Advocate.§

The Eighth-Street Church, in Louisville, Kentucky, September 2d, passed strong preamble and resolutions against the severance of the Church. They maintain that the General conference can not divide the Church. In an address to the Methodists at large, they declare, "We believe if the Methodists of the slaveholding states will force themselves into a separate Church organization on the slave question, and assume the name in the resolutions given, 'Southern Church,' or any other, they will, like the Rev. Mr. Scott and his abolition brethren of the north, only be seceders from the Methodist Episcopal Church, leaving all the Church property behind, according to every principle of law and our deeds of settlement."¶

The Church at Harrodsburg, August 12th, passed resolutions against division.\* Yelvington circuit passed similar resolutions.† Mr. T. M. Smith, of Louisville, argued strongly to show that the new organization would be a secession; and, therefore, he opposed it.‡ Indeed, the secession movement in Kentucky was very unsavory to the Kentucky Methodists in general. But Dr. Bascom succeeded in forming strong affinities with the extreme south. He gained also the most influential preachers of Kentucky to his side; and through these influences the Kentucky Methodists were thrown, unnaturally enough, apart from their proper confederates of Ohio, Indiana, and Illinois.¶

6. In reference to the proper import of what is called the plan, whether it supposes a secession on the part of the south, and how it would affect Church property, Dr. Tomlinson addressed, in the Western Advocate, of November 1st, a letter to the commissioners, Rev. Messrs. Bangs, Peck, and Finley.§ He called the attention to a part of the fourth resolution of the Kentucky conference, which reads thus:

"Resolved, That, should a division be found to be indispensable, the delegates of this conference are hereby required to act under the following instructions: to wit, that the southern and south-western conferences shall not be regarded as a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but that they shall be recognized in law, and to all intents and purposes, as a coordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America."

Dr. Tomlinson thought the plan of the General conference placed the south, in the event of separation, in the position of a *secession* from the Methodist Episcopal Church; and if the south, in dividing, should still claim to be of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and not a secession or separation from it, that in this case the commissioners would not feel themselves at liberty to proceed to divide the property. In order to decide these points, Dr. Tomlinson proposes two questions for the solution of the commissioners, and asks their answer.

Messrs. Bangs and Peck, under date of New York, November 8th, gave their answer, which appeared, with Dr. Tomlinson's inquiries, in the New York Advocate, of November 20th. Dr. Tomlinson's first question is as follows:

"Does this plan of division, as authorized by the General conference, place the southern conferences, in your estimation, in the attitude of *secession*, or *separation* from the Methodist Episcopal Church, should the division therein contemplated actually take place?"

We give the leading principles of the reply of Dr. Bangs and Dr. Peck, and refer their entire article to the number of documents.¶ The two commissioners answer:

That the General conference did not authorize any plan of division, but provided for a probable contingency that a separate organization would take place by the action of the southern conferences; and should such separate organization actually occur, the General conference fixed the terms on which it should be finally settled.

This was all the General conference could

\* N., August 30th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 258-262.

† C., September 18th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 341-348.

‡ C., September 11th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 311.

§ S., October 4th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 416. S., October

4th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 425, by Elibu. N., October 11th.

Scraps, Vol. I, p. 432. S., October 11th. Scraps, Vol. I, p.

434. S., October 18th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 481.

¶ W., September 20th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 352-354.

¶ W., September 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 336-338.

\* W., September 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 338

† W., November 15th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 605.

‡ W., December 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 760.

§ Z., November 6th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 135, 136.

¶ W., November 1st. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 556.

¶ Document, No. 64.

constitutionally do, for after a free interchange of thoughts in the committee of nine, who drafted the report, it was agreed that the General conference had no right, or constitutional power, either to divide or authorize the dividing of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

As to *secession*, we do not like the term in this connection, because it seems to convey an idea of violent disruption of a portion of the Church, because it is dissatisfied with some doctrine of the Church, or item of Church government, and that the seceding party withdraws itself from all fellowship with the party from which it secedes. In this sense, we do not think the southern conferences will place themselves in the attitude of a *secession* from the Methodist Episcopal Church, provided they separate according to the plan laid down by the General conference. If they pursue any other plan in separating, they must secede, in the sense of the term above defined.

If they form a separate organization, they will "*separate* from the Methodist Episcopal Church" to all intents and purposes. They—not the General conference—must declare *themselves* independent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by forming a separate organization.

The report of the committee fully sustains this view of the subject. According to the preamble, the separation, should it take place, must be made by the south, and on their own responsibility.

And that such separation will form a distinct organization, and entirely sever those who belong to it from the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as government and property are concerned, and was so designed by the General conference, is further manifest from the language of the first resolution. This speaks of a "distinct ecclesiastical connection;" an entire separate organization; a full separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The phraseology in the subsequent resolutions of the report, sustains these views, and shows that there can not be two, the Methodist Episcopal Churches possessing coordinate powers, rights, and privileges. The phrase "southern Church," "Church south," shows that that organization would not only be separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but must take another name, in order to be recognized in law, equity, or ecclesiastical history. The separatists may assume what name they please, except that of the Methodist Episcopal Church. For they can not suppose the majority will relinquish their name, and thus jeopard their property and forfeit their birthright.

The next question of Dr. Tomlinson is in these words:

"If such is your opinion of the import of that plan, would you feel yourselves authorized to cooperate in dividing the property of the Book Concern, should the southern and south-western conferences, in separating, avow, either in form or substantially, that they are *not* a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church in these United States?"

To this the commissioners reply: "In this question you have a little changed the terms, or not used the same as in the former. In the former you said, '*secession*, or *separation from*;' and in the latter, you have confined yourself to the single word, '*seces ion*.' For the reasons already assigned, we think they may deny that they have *seceded*; that is, they have not violently made a rupture in the Church, because they

could not believe in some particular doctrine, or in some item of Church government; and, therefore, have withdrawn Christian fellowship from those from whom they have seceded; but they have only formed a separate organization, for reasons satisfactory to themselves. Understanding *secession* in this sense, we think they might deny that they are seceders; but yet, if they separate, we judge that they could not rightly claim to be a coordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and hence, if they did so, or should do so, we should not feel authorized to cooperate in dividing the property of the Book Concern for their benefit, because we fully believe that, in so doing, they would contravene the rule, and defeat the pacific and equitable object of the General conference, in proposing the conditions on which the division should be made."

The commissioners then proceeded to say, that it remained entirely with the slaveholding conferences, either to form a separate organization, or remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church. If they separate according to the plan of the General conference, peaceably, and if three-fourths of the voters of the annual conferences authorize the division of the property, they will be entitled to their share of it. But, if they adopt another plan, and make a violent disruption of the Church, they will become seceders in the sense before defined; they will both deprive themselves of the property and of the fellowship of those from whom they secede.

The commissioners were manifestly perplexed in making up their decision. They define *secession* as a "violent disruption of a portion of the Church;" whereas, *secession* is a *separation from*, or *withdrawal from* the Church, for any reason. And their distinction between *separation*, *separation from*, and *secession*, will not hold, as, wherever there is a separation of a part of the Church, it must be *from* the Church. So that their arguing is rather evasive; and it is manifest that nothing more nor less than *secession* is the proper ecclesiastical term by which to express it. A secession for just reasons may be a Scriptural and proper thing; and the *renunciation* by the south of the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and their adoption of another, is a *secession*, or *separation*, or *withdrawal* in itself; and in reference to the Methodist Episcopal Church, it is a *secession from*, a *separation from*, a *withdrawal from* the Methodist Episcopal Church. The presence or absence of the word *from*, does not alter the sense, as it may be used elliptically or explicity, according to the connection.

Rev. J. B. Finley, one of the commissioners, under date of November 12th, in the Western Christian Advocate of November 22d,\* gave an unvarnished and direct reply to the inquiries of Dr. Tomlinson. He says: "I only speak for myself, as I have no opportunity of consulting the other brethren. My understanding was that the division of the Book Concern and the Chartered Fund was to be made, if the south should secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church. On June 3d Dr. Capers presented resolutions for an amicable division of the Church, which were not carried; and it was stated that the south would have to secede; and the resolutions of the committee of nine were passed in direct reference to such a result; or why should it be necessary to alter the Restrictive Article, unless it was to



enable those who might secede to obtain their proportion of the stock? If they would remain one and the same Methodist Episcopal Church, there would be no reason for this alteration. It would be divided as it is now, among the members of the same family; and unless the south secede, and leave the Methodist Episcopal Church, I shall not feel myself at liberty to act; nor will I, except this should be the case, which I hope never will."

Indeed, Dr. Tomlinson in his address to the commissioners, presents exactly the true position of the south, in the following words: "The plan of the General conference places the south and south-west, in the event of separation, in the position of a *secession* from the Methodist Episcopal Church; and if they, in dividing, should still claim to be of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and not a secession, or separation therefrom, you would feel that you had no power to proceed to divide the property."

A multitude of writers in the south pounced on Dr. Tomlinson, and without attempting argument, said as many severe and unfair things about him as they well could. The editor of the Nashville Advocate, Messrs. M'Cown and E. Stevenson arrayed themselves against him in the same number of the Nashville paper.\* Rev. E. Stevenson renewed the attack.† The Southern Advocate followed suit.‡ Mr. M'Cown replied in form to the commissioners, abusing most heartily Dr. Tomlinson, and attempting to show a discrepancy between the reply of Drs. Bangs and Peck, and the reply of Mr. Finley.‡

7. In a letter dated Lebanon, Ohio, September 26, 1844, and published in the Southern Advocate of November 14th,§ and addressed "to the Rev. James O. Andrew, D. D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church," Bishop Soule invites Bishop Andrew formally, officially, and authoritatively, to assume the exercise of his episcopal functions. He says he labored day and night to prevent the passage of the resolution in the case of Bishop Andrew. From that hour he became discouraged, and the last hope for unity well nigh fled from earth to heaven. His last effort was to unite in the joint recommendation of all the bishops to suspend all action in the case till the ensuing General conference. This having failed, he thought the proposition, not to have a slaveholder or an abolitionist in the Episcopacy, would only create a caste in the ministry, and would answer no valuable end. The time had not fully arrived for him to define his position in regard to the causes and remedies of the evils which now agitate the Church; yet his course did not render *doubtful* his position. He praises the Pastoral Address of 1836, for *advising* to abstain from agitation on the subject of slavery. He also eulogizes the report of 1840, on the Westmoreland case. He then says: "It devolves on the majority of my colleagues in the Episcopacy—if indeed we have any Episcopacy—rather than on me to answer this question," why work was not assigned to Bishop Andrew? He next says: "Let me now most cordially invite you to meet me at the Virginia conference, at Lynchburg, November 13, 1844, and I earnestly desire that you would, if practicable, make ar-

rangements to be with me at all the southern conferences in my division of the work for the present year; where I am sure your services will not be unacceptable."

Bishop Andrew publishes, in the Southern Advocate of November 14th, Bishop Soule's letter to him. He dates his response to it at Charleston, South Carolina, November 4, 1844, and addresses it "to the editor of the Southern Christian Advocate." He expresses his thankfulness for the sympathy in his favor in the south, as expressed by public meetings and individual correspondents. He states that when the resolution in his case was passed, he left New York for Newark, New Jersey, and wrote to Bishop Soule, informing him that should the bishops assign him work he would attend to it. He considered the action of the General conference in his case as *mandatory*. He learned that the southern delegates notified the bishops in due form, that if they would give him his portion of work, he would attend to it. No work, however, was assigned to him. He then purposed to spend his time in preaching, and not to attend the conferences. But since he received the invitation of Bishop Soule, he changed his arrangements, and resolved to attend with him in presiding over the conferences in the distribution of episcopal labor.

We transfer the letters of Bishops Soule and Andrew to our list of documents.\*

The letters became the cause of much comment, and even censure; as well as of praise and excessive eulogy from other quarters. Mr. Lee states that Bishop Andrew will attend the Virginia conference "at the special instance of Bishop Soule;" that his reception will justify the confidence of Bishop Soule; and that it was gratifying to notice "the additional evidence furnished by this letter, of the frank and dignified opposition of Bishop Soule to the extrajudicial proceedings of the majority of the General conference."†

The editor of the Western Christian Advocate, in publishing the letters, remarks as follows:‡ "Bishop Soule has seen fit to do singly what the General conference and college of bishops decided should not be done. The acts of the General conference are treated by Bishop Soule in a manner of which we have no example in any former period of our history. We must say taking all together, the course and manner of doing it are altogether extraordinary; and we can not, with our present light, view it in any other aspect, than as at issue with the proper and legitimate exercise of Methodist superintendency, and most certainly calculated to undermine our excellent and useful Episcopacy, in the true and legitimate exercise of its functions."

Dr. Bond expresses himself as follows, on Bishop Soule's course: "He claims for the Episcopacy—nay, for any one of the bishops, a right to decide on the legality of any one act of the General conference, and to veto it, if, in his judgment, it is not in accordance with the Discipline of the Church. Thus a new issue is added to the one which has agitated the Church so fearfully, and one on which it is not possible to come to any compromise, without changing the cardinal principles of our ecclesiastical economy. Episcopal claims of this nature are more to be feared in the Methodist Episcopal Church,

\* N., November 20th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 626.

† W., December 1st. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 695.

‡ S., December 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 702.

§ N., December 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 737-739.

¶ S., November 14th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1041. See same

in N., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 646-648; and in W., November 22d; in C., December 4th, Vol. XIX, p. 67.

\* Document, No. 65.

† R., November 14th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1036.

‡ W., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 660.

than high prelatical pretensions in the Protestant Episcopal Church, because the discretionary powers confided to our bishops are much greater than those conferred upon the Episcopacy in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Heretofore we had supposed the bishops strictly amenable to the General conference, not only for their moral conduct, but for their administration; but with the power of the veto, their responsibility is a nullity. Every act of the General conference, in reference to the bishops, may be nullified, not only by the bishops acting together, but an individual general superintendent, and even by one who has been the subject of General conference action.\*

Dr. Bangs, in an article in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*,† censures freely the Bishop's course, from which we make the following extracts:

"I have read the letter of Bishop Soule to Bishop Andrew with no little astonishment, and particularly that part of it in which he invites Bishop Andrew to meet him in Lynchburg, and participate with him in the transactions of the Virginia and other southern conferences.

"Now, what makes this most cordial invitation appear so extraordinary, is, that it is in direct hostility to the action of the General conference, who declared it as their sense, that Bishop Andrew should desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions while he remains connected with slavery. And although in a subsequent resolution they voted that he was still a bishop, and accordingly retained his name on the Minutes, Discipline, and Hymn-Book, and also provided for his support, yet they left the responsibility of his taking his share of the episcopal work on himself alone. If, therefore, he had asked for work, the high probability is, that the other bishops would have given it to him.

"But did he *ask* for work? I have good authority for saying that he did not. Did the bishops give him work? It is well known to all who have read the episcopal plan of visitation, that they did not. The reasons why they did not, I am enabled, from a reliable source, to give as follows:

"The day after the close of the General conference, the bishops met to make arrangements, and to fix a plan of their work for the ensuing four years. A question was raised whether they should assign to Bishop Andrew his portion of the work in presiding at annual conferences? A majority of the bishops decided that they could not, because the General conference had said he ought not to act as a bishop while he continued to own slaves. This opinion was repeatedly expressed, and it was declared by several of them, that they—the bishops—had no authority to act in this matter contrary to the judgment of the General conference. It was said, that the General conference has said, if Bishop Andrew chooses to act as a bishop, he may, in view of the resolutions passed by that body in his case. But, it was replied, he has not signified to the bishops his desire to take a portion of the work, and by leaving the conference—which he did immediately after the passage of the resolutions in his case—and absenting himself from the meeting of the bishops at that important time, when the episcopal plan of work for four years was to be arranged, he

thereby signified that he does not wish to take any portion of the work.

"That this is, in substance, a correct statement of the facts in the case, I have the most unquestionable authority, and it is corroborated by Bishop Andrew's own account of the matter; for he does not pretend that he asked for work, and greatly to his credit, if he only had had resolution enough to carry it out, he had concluded not to perform any episcopal labors for the present, nor would he, had not Bishop Soule's letter of invitation induced him to alter his determination.

"It appears, therefore, that Bishop Soule has acted in the premises, not only in hostility to the resolution of the General conference, but also in opposition to the decree of at least a majority of his colleagues, and, indeed, if report may be relied on as correct, in opposition to the judgment of all the bishops except himself. Verily, if this be episcopal prerogative, I think we need no longer doubt whether we have any Episcopacy!" When a single bishop takes upon himself to nullify the doings of the General conference, to raise himself above the majority of his colleagues, it is time for us to pause, and seriously inquire to what all this will amount?

"I greatly honor the courage of the respectable editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* for resisting this unwarrantable stretch of episcopal prerogative, and I am greatly deceived if it will be quietly submitted to by a great portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"I can not accuse myself of any personal hostility to Bishop Soule; but trust I have been actuated by a high sense of duty to him, to myself, to the Church, and her adorable Head. I think I have given sufficient evidence of my love for the episcopal office, in the manner in which I have endeavored to defend it from assaults; but I can not consistently remain silent when I see it [the Episcopacy] thus towering above law and order, in defiance of the General conference, and the solemn action of a majority of the bishops themselves.

"N. BANGS."

Rev. Peter Cartwright writes thus respecting Bishop Soule's course:

"I can not sufficiently express my gratitude to God, that the Methodist Episcopal Church has such men in her ministry, as Doctors Bangs, Bond, and the editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*, who will, if need be, rebuke *even a bishop, yea, a senior bishop*, in mild and Christian terms, for his high-handed disregard of the advice of the General conference and his colleagues in office. It is the deliberate opinion of many aged ministers and members in the Methodist Episcopal Church, that Bishop Soule has no right to throw himself into the ARENA of controversy now agitating our beloved Zion. Hear what a dreadful thrust he gives the General conference, in his letter addressed to Bishop Andrew. He there, in no very measured terms, takes it upon himself to condemn the action of that body, and says: 'If, indeed, we have any Episcopacy.' And for fear, as I suppose, that the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States should not know that we have an Episcopacy, he rises in the majesty of his assumed powers, and vetoes the acts and doings of the General conference, thus showing that we have an Episcopacy higher than the highest, his holiness, the —, excepted. If this is Methodist Episcopacy, I am prepared to depose every one of the bishops, henceforth and forever. But I am glad to know that it is no part of Methodist

\* C., December 18th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 783.

† C., December 11th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 803.

Episcopacy. In regard to the private opinions, or judgment of the Bishop, I have nothing to say; but his public addresses and acts are public property, held in common by the whole Church, and therefore I must speak out. Did not Bishops Soule, Andrew, and all others concerned, know, that the advice of the General conference to Bishop Andrew was intended to have a restraining influence with the Bishop? How then can they act in direct opposition to the deliberate sense or judgment of that body? If they, or any others think, that the majority of General conference have any thing to retract, or any 'reparation to make,' in the language of the south, it is a great mistake. No, sir; we stand on the old platform of Methodist opposition to slavery; and in a determination to advocate a gradual and peaceful emancipation, till every yoke is broken and the oppressed go free. And we never can willingly submit to a slaveholding Episcopacy.\*

The plain state of the matter, in historical verity, appears to be as follows:

(1.) The General conference decided in Bishop Andrew's case that "he desist from the exercise of his office so long as the impediment remains;" and this was their *sense* or *judgment* in his case.

(2.) Bishop Andrew gave the bishops no official notice that he would exercise his office; for his letter to Bishop Soule furnished no proper document to file away with the proceedings of the bishops as the testimonial for them to act on, and the voucher to the next General conference that they had not transcended the limits of their authority. The same may be said of the voluntary, unofficial notice or expression of the southern delegates.

(3.) Hence a majority of the bishops, in official session of the board of bishops, decided not to assign Bishop Andrew any work; and they did this because they had no assurance that he would, or had, rid himself of slavery; nor any official proposal from him that he would labor and would answer at the bar of the next General conference for his course.

(4.) Bishop Soule, in direct opposition to the official decision of the board of bishops, called Bishop Andrew to perform official services. By this means he singly counteracted, and rendered null, the acts of his equals officially established.

(5.) He vetoed the decision of the General conference in inviting, or rather urging, Bishop Andrew to treat with contempt their judgment, mandate, or opinion, no matter which. This is more than prelatial. Indeed, it borders closely on the pontifical, as no prelate, according to the laws of prelacy, would presume to annul the acts of his equals officially given.

Bishop Soule, we are aware, at a future day, denied that he *intended* any such thing; but the intention has nothing to do with this matter as far as the interests of the Church are concerned. The facts in the case, as stated above, show that Bishop Soule acted in direct opposition to the official decisions of the General conference and of the bishops. Such are the manifest facts in the case; and here we leave them in the position in which we found them, having set down nothing in malice, but in sincerity and truth.

8. It will be worth while to notice here the views entertained on the subject of separation

in the months of November and December. The topic is considered by Dr. Bangs on the one side, and by Dr. Capers on the other.

Dr. Bangs, in an article\* on division, presents the following views: By division he means the severing of the Church into two or more parts, each part to possess supreme and independent powers and privileges; a right to make rules and regulations for itself; and this is the only legitimate meaning of the word division, as it is now used by those who write about it.

He states that there is no power constitutionally or legally, either in the General conference, the annual conferences, the quarterly conferences, or in the membership, to divide the Church.

Such a division bears no analogy to dividing a class, a circuit, or an annual conference; for these acknowledged their dependence upon one supreme judicatory, which forms rules for them all, and exercises a general jurisdiction over all the classes, circuits, and annual conferences, forming thereby a general bond of union. But the division of the Church now so much talked of, contemplates an entire severance of the body, so that each part, when the division is effected, will be entirely independent of the others, possessing separate and independent jurisdiction over its respective bounds, and the right of making any rules and regulations it may see fit. This is the division contemplated. Where is the power lodged to make or to authorize *such* a division?

In answer to the question, "By what authority did the last General conference authorize the division of the Church?" Dr. Bangs replies, that the General conference never authorized any such thing. They knew very well that they possessed no right or power either to divide or to authorize the division of the Church. The southern delegates declared that they would no longer remain under the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They, of course, must either *secede* or *separate*. Did the General conference give them liberty to do either? No, by no means. They said to them, in substance, you must be your own judges in this matter. If a secession or separation takes place, it must be effected solely on your responsibility; *you* must declare *yourselves* separate and independent, and abide the consequences.

Such is the substance of Dr. Bangs's views on the division of the Church. Indeed, they were the general views entertained by the members of General conference. The opposite views were of a later date, and exemplify the proverb, "The wish is father to the thought."

Dr. Capers replies to the above. He thinks the right to divide the Church does exist, and it is *duty* to exercise this right. The first right and power of the Church is to preach the Gospel and administer the sacraments; therefore the same right exists to divide, or authorize the division of, the Church, if such division be necessary for the continuance and spread of the Gospel.†

Dr. Capers, in a second letter,‡ continues his reply to Dr. Bangs. He affirms that it is a sound principle that what is claimed to be *disciplinary* can not oust or invalidate what is

\* C., Vol. XIX, p. 63, November 27th.

† S., December 13th. Scrape, Vol. I, pp. 730-732.

‡ S., December 20th. Scrape, Vol. I, pp. 739-801.

*Scriptural*; while rights or obligations which are truly Scriptural, and concern us as Christians, have a positive preëminence over such as are disciplinary, and concern us as Methodists. Should it be admitted that we have no right to divide the Church, still such a right might inure, though the Discipline might not recognize it. In a case where no disciplinary right would occur, the imperfection of human wisdom failing to provide a perfect directory for every emergency, does not forfeit to us a right to act as the Scriptures warrant, and duty to Christ requires.

In the pending case, the disciplinary right may be denied only on the ground that no express provision has been made for the exercise of such a right, and not that it has been interdicted. Our fathers could not point to any part of the Discipline in 1784, which gave them a right to divide, and yet they exercised such a right. The General conference of 1828 could not fix on any part of the Discipline which guaranteed a right to divide, and yet it did divide the Church. It was division in both cases; and in both the right to divide was neither sought nor found in any express provisions of the book of Discipline, but in that high necessity which subordinates all Church matters to the one great end of the Gospel, the prevalence of grace and godliness. Cases may arise of a magnitude above the intentment of disciplinary rules, which may impose an indispensable necessity for action, and it is wisdom to dispose of them on their own merits, with the light they can not fail to bring with them, trusting in God.

He stated that slavery has been a bone of contention in our Church from the beginning, and the disciplinary rules respecting it have involved a portion of the Church in great trouble, discredit, and even persecution. While southern Methodists have been goaded by their northern brethren to the utmost, they have never felt that they have had evidence afforded them that the moral and spiritual wants of the negro, in his present condition, were appreciated in any tolerable proportion to his civil disabilities by those northern brethren. The disciplinary action of the General conference has produced no moral amelioration of the condition of the slaves as such.

The characteristic difference between the northern and southern portions of the Church, in all our controversies, has been, that the former would, *at all events*, cry against slavery as a great evil, even to the cutting off of the slave from the hopes of the Gospel; while the latter would insist on giving him the Gospel, *at all events*, whether slavery should be decried as a great evil or not. There stands the book of Discipline, the opposite of the inspired epistles in this respect. "Neither St. Paul nor St. Peter has recorded the date when they were 'as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery;' but they have told us how great their care was to have great both Christian masters and Christian slaves to fulfill their duties. Not so our northern majorities."

Dr. Capers goes on to say that the Church was constituted for the purpose of furnishing men with the preaching of the pure word of God, and with the sacraments. This is its divine, essential constitution, inalienable, irrefragable, and unalterable, which must be maintained whatever may be said of powers or rights. Nothing can be pleaded against that

original constitutional law of preaching, administering sacraments, and spreading Scriptural holiness.

But the continual agitation of the Church about slavery, emancipation, and abolition has interrupted the Church in this great work by cutting off access to the most needy, who, but for this cause, might have long since enjoyed the benefits of the divinely-instituted means of Scripture holiness.

As division supplies the only possible means of correction, we must divide; and this makes also the work of division clear. The Church, by extending one and the same jurisdiction over the north and south, can correct the evil only by division, or by some action of the majority; but it is the action of the majority which produces the evil, and it can never be corrected by the majority unless the majority shall materially alter or reverse its action. They will do neither of these, and there is, therefore, no remedy but division. The majority so approve of the action of the General conference as to make it impossible to reverse it, or materially alter it; but they do not approve of division, but forbid it. Their forbidding division, while they insist on General conference action, makes division the more necessary, because it adds tyranny to misrule.

A survey of the articles of Dr. Bangs and Dr. Capers leads us to conclude that there is no disciplinary power in the Methodist Episcopal Church either to divide the Church or to sanction the division of it; and if the south separate it must be a secession, and nothing else. Such is the position of Dr. Bangs. Dr. Capers allows there is no disciplinary power to divide, but that there is Scriptural authority for it, and, therefore, divide they must. But as he rejects disciplinary authority, and claims the Scriptural, he virtually, though he does not name it, slides in *meaning*, though not in terms, into a secession, and nothing else. The majority has no authority with him, while his omnipotent minority can do every thing—annul Discipline, renounce the jurisdiction of the Church, and organize, under the plea of Scriptural authority. This is what all seceders have done in all ages, whether their cause was right or wrong.

A very intelligent writer—probably Dr. Longstreet—under the signature of Elihu, acknowledges the General conference did not, and could not, legalize a division of the Church, because, "1. The General conference had no authority to legalize a division of the Church; and, 2. Because, if a new organization is adopted under that act, we shall acknowledge ourselves to be no longer a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and will have surrendered the title, and with it all the property held under it, to those conferences" which will alone constitute *the* Methodist Episcopal Church.\*

A writer in the Richmond Advocate† laments the evils of secession in the south. Parts of Virginia will belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church; hence a border war will be kept up, both among preachers and people. Respectable minorities will be opposed to it all over the country. We are to be the "Church south," in contradistinction to the "Methodist Episcopal Church." "Consequently, we are to be seceders

\* S., December 6, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 711.

† Quoted in Z., Nov. 13th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 137.

from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and not being the Methodist Episcopal Church, to which all our churches, building lots, and Church property, are deeded, we may have innumerable lawsuits against us for the recovery of property deeded to the Church, but forfeited by us by secession. And again: we shall be called the pro-slavery Church, and shall therefore receive the displeasure and distrust, and forfeit the goodwill and confidence of all other Churches, the Wesleys of Great Britain not excepted."

A writer in the Southern Advocate thought there were unanswerable difficulties in the way of union.\* Cleophas, alias Dr. Longstreet, in the same paper, writes in a similar strain.† Dr. Olin, in an article entitled "The Crisis,"‡ considers every hope of union as hopeless. The editor of the Southern Advocate thinks it is useless to use such mournful complaints as Charles Wesley did, when his brother ordained Dr. Coke, and provided for the independence of the Methodist Episcopal Church.¶

9. The views and position of the editor of the Western Christian Advocate, in reference to the controversy of the times, may require some notice. At General conference, he thought the plan of separation the best that could be adopted to meet the emergency. He had strong hopes, too, that either there would be no separation, or, should there be, that the south would effect it in a peaceable manner; and though there could be no constitutional division of the Church by the General conference, that the separation or secession of the south would in the end settle down to become, though a secession, such an organized Church as the Canada or Irish conferences, or that the southern Church would stand ultimately in the same relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church that many ancient and modern Churches stood in to each other. Such, then, were his honest views.

Accordingly, on his return to his former post, as editor, he declared, in his salutatory,§ that he had no hope of deciding such questions as were then in dispute by newspaper discussions. His reasons, then freely expressed, were, that editors in general were no better qualified to decide such matters than many others who attempted it in vain; nor had editors any special official authority to decide such questions. The same may be said of correspondents with more reason, as many of these are often more instrumental in raising or continuing disputes than in peaceably disposing of them. Beside, he thought that more strife, contention, and schism, within the previous twenty years, could be traced to the misguided religious press than to all, or most of, the other causes put together. With these deep convictions, he was not very willing to enter into the controversy; but, on the other hand, he avoided it as long as he could, and entered on it only when compelled by a sense of duty; and, indeed, all the other editors were fairly in the field before him.

A week after,¶ he expressed himself thus— that he hoped good results would follow the doings of General conference; that, should there be a separation, he trusted the whole would be overruled to the glory of God.

In publishing the proceedings of southern meetings, he considered them as the first outbursts of hasty passion, which would soon settle down into calm sobriety.\* He thought, too, as early as August, that, considering the present views of north and south, there was little hope of any thing else than that the south would form an independent Methodist Episcopal Church; yet that no injury would accrue to religion from the new organization, as such existed in the early days of Christianity, and even Methodism furnished examples. The Church, in consequence of its size, was becoming unwieldy. He said: "We are persuaded that distinct organizations *must exist, in the nature of things*, in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and that *necessity and Scriptural principles* will inevitably enforce them. We believe that the *unity, purity, power, and extending influence* of Methodism may be promoted by these means."‡ These views were published extensively in the southern papers, and a use was made of them similar to that made of the proceedings of the General conference; namely, to promote the cause of secession without just reason.‡

In the Western Christian Advocate of August 30th,|| the editor expresses his sorrow on account of the high tone of denunciation from the southern press. This was uttered, without stint, respecting the General conference, and all who agreed with them. This was especially severe and unjust against Dr. Bond, who defended the General conference against the paper war commenced against it by the editors and correspondents of the Southern and Richmond Advocates, both while the conference was in session, and after its adjournment. Dr. Bond's sin was, that in a calm, dignified, and masterly manner, he defended the Church against unfounded accusations, and retorted the mistaken and evil course of its assailants on themselves.

As the southern preachers and people to a considerable extent were denouncing the Church on account of its principles and rules on slavery, and were inculcating unmethodistic, unscriptural, and dangerous views on this subject, the editor of the Western Christian Advocate deemed it his duty, under dates of September 6th and 13th, to exhibit the doctrines of the Church, to explain, and to maintain them.¶ This exhibition of Methodist doctrine afterward gave huge offense to the south. On this account, the editor was pronounced an abolitionist; that is, an incendiary, murderer, or any thing worse.

As the General conference was assailed so unjustly, the editor felt it to be his duty to defend them. In October, it was manifest that the south was assuming high pro-slavery ground, and to carry it out, secession, in some form, would be resorted to; but to justify it, the General conference must be set down as abolition, in the bad sense of that term. It became the settled purpose of the south, that they must have a slaveholding bishop, and that nothing concerning slavery could be censured, however atrocious. If it could not be justified, it must at least be passed over by the Church in silence, and without rebuke. On this account, the editor, October 4th,¶ felt himself compelled to maintain that

\* S., November 15th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 613.

† S., November 27th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 672; and December 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 709.

‡ C., November 22d. Vol. XIX, pp. 61, 62.

§ S., November 1st. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 551.

¶ W., July 5, 1844. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 107.

¶ W., July 12th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 126.

\* W., August 9th.

† W., August 16th. Vol. XI, p. 70. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 286.

‡ S., September 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 282, in which W. of August 16th is quoted.

¶ Scraps, Vol. I, p. 248.

¶ W., Vol. XI, pp. 82, 86. ¶ Id., pp. 98, 142.

the destructive innovation of the south on Methodism must be resisted; that the north was not led to their course under the fear of Scottism, but they had much to fear in renouncing their antislavery principles and action on them; that the south attempted a serious innovation—that of introducing a slaveholding ministry into the free states—an innovation that could not be admitted. Had the case of Harding been decided differently, slaveholding preachers must be admitted into all the middle and northern conferences. Then it would follow that the official influence of the Church would be demanded to sustain slavery. The General conference, annual conferences, quarterly meeting conferences, bishops, presiding elders, preachers in charge, and all other officials, must aid in either justifying, approving, or passing in silence every thing

concerning slavery; and then the press must be muzzled, and our books expurgated to support a system of wrong, oppression, injustice, and sin.

The editor, too, thought that heretofore Bishop Andrew had, from both sides, received rather a surplus of the whitewash, and plainer dealing would be better.\* He felt it his duty, on November 22d, to protest against the course of Bishops Soule and Andrew, as declared in their extraordinary letters.† He could not give his assent to the compromises that were proposed from various quarters.‡ He thought, too, that the General conference plan was better than any one presented,|| and he gave his reasons why the General conference should be defended, and expressed his purpose to do so.§ Such was his position at the close of the year 1844.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

### ACTION OF THE NORTHERN CONFERENCES.

1. IT was proposed by brother Durbin, at General conference, that the proposition to alter the sixth Restriction should commence with the southern conferences. This was firmly opposed by the south, who seemed unwilling to brook delay; and, as we suppose, they were additionally desirous of enlisting the influence of the north particularly in their interests, holding out, at that time, the olive branch of peace; and, in rather a beseeching tone, they asked for a liberal response from the north. Their wishes, or rather entreaties, were listened to, and it was resolved to commence with the conferences at their first sessions. Some of the northern conferences took special action on the whole subject, others of them took none, except to vote on the change of the Restriction in reference to the Book Concern, or to postpone it for future action. We will notice such acts of the conferences as pertain to this matter.

The New York conference commenced its session on Wednesday, June 12th, the second day after the adjournment of the General conference. The third resolution of the committee of nine, recommending a change in the sixth Restriction, was taken up, and discussed freely two days, and then the question was taken by yeas and nays, 143 voting in the affirmative, and 38 in the negative. We have no other information on the special views of the New York conference other than the above.\*

2. The Providence conference, at its session of July 3d, passed unanimously the third article of the plan, altering the Restrictive Rule, on condition that the conference should issue a statement disapproving the objectionable parts of the plan, and preventing its action from being interpreted into a sanction of that measure. The report of the committee presented the following objections to the plan.

The General conference, in the case of Canada, has expressly declared that it has no power to divide the Church. Such a power would be incompatible with the designs of its organization, and would be an interference with the rights of the laity. This inability to divide was

acknowledged by all at the General conference, and the present act provides for the separation as a contingency, to be brought about by the south alone, and not by the Methodist Episcopal Church. Yet, according to the report, the General conference abets, and virtually enacts, the division, while it acknowledges that it has no right to make it.

By the first article, minorities, however large, in societies on the line of separation are deprived of all right of determining to what Church they shall choose to unite. Such minorities are, therefore, compelled to sacrifice their conscientious convictions, or withdraw to other denominations, or form a new Church, to be disowned by both parties. The act, therefore, transcends the legislative powers of the General conference, and therefore ought not to be approved.¶ This article is oppressive in itself; it is, as a precedent of law, fraught with danger, and it furnishes our opponents a palpable objection to our excellent polity. It furthermore contravenes the ministerial commission, and prevents from organizing Churches in certain districts of country.

Beside, the other articles of the plan contemplate a division of the capital as well as of the produce of the Book Concern; but this third article provides only for the appropriation of the produce.\*\*

There is much sound reasoning in the above, had it not been that the General conference took measures, not to divide, but to provide against a prospective revolution in the Church, the revolutionists comprising a very large minority, and pursuing a course at variance with the ordinary cause of ecclesiastical proceedings. The truth is, that none of the ordinary laws of Church polity would apply in meeting a seces-

\* W., October 26th, Vol. XI, p. 110.

† W., November 22d, Vol. XI, p. 126.

‡ W., November 29th, Vol. XI, p. 130.

§ W., December 6th, Vol. XI, p. 134.

¶ W., December 20th, Vol. XI, p. 142.

¶ See reply by General conference of 1825, to a memorial on lay delegation. See Bangs's History, Vol. III, pp. 380-392.

\*\* Z., July 17th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 81-85. C., of August 7th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1077.

sion or revolt; and this is true, as well in civil as in Church matters; and the events of social life could furnish examples enough of similar anomalies, to which no laws will apply other than such prudential and practical measures as the wisdom and goodness of the actors will dictate. The occasion was an exigency, to which established laws could not apply. It was such an exigency as an earthquake, a plague, a famine, a civil revolution involves, to meet which the best wisdom and means are to be employed. And because it is an exigency, or sudden violent evil, no human wisdom can meet such at the time, with complete foresight, or effectual prevention. It was a convulsion, and to restrain it, needed more than human wisdom. And the remarks of Rev. Abel Stevens, author of the foregoing report, and uttered in reference to it, present an example of this view of the subject. He says, "Were there a hope of effectually checking that plan by our refusal of the alteration of the sixth Article, we should do so by all the regard for the integrity of our polity and the rights of the people; but the plan is enacted—our action will not deter the south; let us not incur the charge of parsimony and meanness by a pecuniary consideration. Still we may qualify our consent—we may prevent its being interpreted into a sanction of the general plan, by accompanying it with suitable resolutions or statements, as the Providence conference has done."\* The Providence conference acted on the plan, disapproved of it most heartily, and then proceeded unanimously to sanction that portion of it which involved its legality and justice more than any other part of it. Accordingly, the editor of the Southern Advocate exults, that the "predictions of Zion's Herald have been falsified in the very conference of which its editor is a member." He also hopes this example will prevail throughout New England, so that an equitable division of Church property may follow.

3. The New Hampshire conference convened July 10th, and adopted a report on slavery, which contains the following resolutions in reference to the proceedings of General conference:

"Resolved, That we acknowledge, with heartfelt gratitude, the hand of Providence in the manner in which the subject of slavery was brought before the late General conference, and although the action had thereon was not all we desired, yet we thank God for as much as was then accomplished."†

In the preamble of the report, the Church is congratulated in consequence of its proper antislavery character, and of the entire absence of grounds for seceding from her communion on account of any pro-slavery characteristics.

4. The Rock River conference, held July 24th, passed two resolutions in reference to the circular of the General conference. In the first they concur in authorizing the change in the sixth Restrictive Rule, forty-five voting in favor, and ten against it. In the second resolution they "most heartily deprecate and oppose any sectional division or separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as contemplated in the

other resolutions in the circular of the General conference."‡

5. The Maine conference was held August 14th. This conference postponed the consideration of altering the sixth Restrictive Article, and passed the following resolutions, which were almost unanimously adopted.†

"(1.) Resolved, That we are, in the language of our most excellent Discipline, 'as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery,' and are determined to use all Christian and constitutional measures to get rid of the same.

"(2.) Resolved, That we concur in the doings of the late General conference in the case of F. A. Harding, of the Baltimore conference, in the virtual suspension of Bishop Andrew from the exercise of his episcopal functions, and in rescinding the resolutions against the testimony of colored persons in Church trials, and rejoice to know that the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the acts of the said conference in these cases, stands out before the Christian world, worthy of her Christian and antislavery ancestry.

"(3.) Resolved, That we consider it a cause of most fervent gratitude to almighty God, that by the interposition of his providence, whatever may have been our former differences of feeling and sentiment, that we are now united in our opposition to slavery, and pray that that union may be one and inseparable till slavery in our Church and nation shall be numbered with the things which were, but are not.

"(4.) Resolved, That whatever may be said by the south to the contrary notwithstanding, in their conventional assemblies, we consider the doings of the majority of the General conference, in the cases referred to, righteous, not tyrannical, and the proscription of Bishops Hedding, Waugh, and Morris, in said assemblies, highly reprehensible.

"(5.) Resolved, That whatever may be the unhallowed spirit manifested by some of our southern brethren against the doings of the northern portion of the Church, we still hope and ardently pray that, under serious consideration of this great evil, they will join with us in efforts for its extirpation."

6. The North Ohio conference, which was held August 14th, considered the subject presented to them with great care. In making up their judgment, in refusing to concur in altering the Restriction, they express themselves as follows:‡

"In arriving at this conclusion, your committee have been influenced principally by the following considerations:

"(1.) The Methodist Episcopal Church in these United States, having always been considered a unit, can not, it is believed, be divided into separate and distinct organizations, unless it be by a secession of one party, in which case the portion seceding would thereby disfranchise itself of the rights and privileges of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"(2.) If a division of the Church was constitutional, your committee do not believe that there exists at present any real necessity for the same. We differ in opinion from many worthy brethren of the south, who affirm that the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry can not be successfully accomplished by

\* C., October 3d, Vol. XIX, p. 47, col. 2.

† Z., September 20th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 101. W.,

September 20th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 351.

‡ W., September 20th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 351, 352.

\* Z., July 17th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 86.

† S., August 2d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 182.

‡ Z., September 4th. Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 99, 100.

them under the jurisdiction of the General conference as now constituted: we believe they may still be useful and honored ministers of our beloved Zion. And while no real necessity for division exists, we can not contemplate, without the most painful emotions, the separation of those venerable and honored warriors of our Israel, who have stood together on the walls of Zion—who have fought side by side the battles of the Lord. To our brethren of the south, we have no other than the kindest feelings; and could our voice be heard, we would still say to them, We love you too well to let you go. We venerate your age and talents—we appreciate your zeal and sacrifices, your ardent toils in the city and in the wilderness—we rejoice at the abundant success which has crowned your efforts in carrying the Gospel to the mansions of the rich, the poor man's home, the wigwam of the Indian, and to the humble abodes of thousands of the colored race residing in your midst; and we are still desirous that our union may be unbroken—that our united forces may still go forth in glorious war, forming one unbroken line from the bleak boundaries of New England to the sunny banks of the Sabine, till the rich and poor, black and white, shall unite in swelling the triumphant strain, 'The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of God and his Christ.' Believing, therefore, division unnecessary, we can not think it the duty of this conference to pass any resolutions that would seem to sanction or encourage so deplorable an event.

"(3.) If a division be necessary and inevitable, your committee must say, though with respectful deference to the General conference, that the plan adopted for the regulation of the contemplated separation, appears to us to be, in some of its provisions, highly objectionable, particularly that which restricts the ministry and labors of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the northern states of the Union. This we think is contrary to the command of the great Head of the Church, 'Go ye into all the world,' etc.

"(4.) Should a separation of the southern conferences take place on principles sanctioned by the Church, your committee believe that no disposition would prevail in this conference to deny them a share of the property; but when such division shall have fully taken place, and the principles and measures thereof shall be clearly understood, it will then be time enough to determine what just claims the separated body may have on the funds of the Church.

"(5.) Apart from all other considerations, your committee would observe, in regard to the change of the sixth Restrictive Rule, that as far as we are advised of the design of the originators of the Book Concern and Chartered Fund, it was for the specific purpose set forth in the Restrictive Article itself. The annual conferences are the guardians of that property, and executors of the will of the founders of those institutions; and the liberty, and consequently the power asked by the General conference, are of too extended and undefined a character to be conformed to the purposes of the original projectors of those institutions. Moreover, your committee have not been able to perceive that the power sought by the General conference over those funds is essential to the interests of either the Church, whose servants we are, or to the Book Establishment itself; and till some exigency shall arise im-

periously demanding the transfer of such power into the hands of the General conference, it had better remain where it has been placed by the wisdom of our fathers."

From the above it appears that this conference maintained that the Church can not be divided unless it be by a secession of one party, and the seceding portion deprives itself of all the rights and privileges of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And were a division of the Church constitutional, there is at present no necessity for it. Some of the provisions of the present mode are exceptionable, especially that which restricts the ministry to the northern states of the Union. When the separation is made it will then be time enough to consider their claims. And the change asked in the Restriction has too great a latitude to agree to it with safety to the Church.

7. The Illinois conference, which was held September 4th, took strong, decided, and conservative ground on the subject. The following is the action of this conference:\*

"Resolved, by the Illinois annual conference, in conference assembled,

"(1.) That we do not concur in the resolution of the late General conference to alter the sixth Restrictive Rule in section third of first chapter in book of Discipline.

"(2.) That we do not concur in, but strongly deprecate and oppose, any sectional division of, or separation from, the Methodist Episcopal Church, as contemplated in the series of resolutions of the late General conference.

"(3.) That we advise the general superintendents—the other annual conferences concurring—to call a General conference, to meet in —, on the first Monday in May, 1846, to take into consideration the present state of the Church, to review the acts of the late General conference, and, if possible, to provide for the continued unity and tranquillity of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"(4.) That a copy of these resolutions be forwarded to the Western Christian Advocate, by the secretary, for publication, with a request that all the General conference papers copy.

"(5.) That each of the bishops be furnished with a copy of the foregoing resolutions, and be requested to lay them before the several annual conferences at their next sessions.

"The first resolution in the series was adopted, thirty-eight voting in the affirmative and twenty-two in the negative.

"The other resolutions in the series were read one by one and adopted.

"A true extract from the journal of September 10, 1844. JOHN VAN CLEVE, Secretary.

"The following resolution was adopted:

"Resolved, That should the Louisville convention, to be held in May next, by the southern portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, determine to divide, the south have their full share of the funds, provided they do not alter the Discipline in any material point.

"JOHN VAN CLEVE, Secretary I. A. C.

"Mt. Vernon, Ill., Sept. 20, 1844."

The editor of the Southern Advocate remarks,† that as the Church in the south will be organized in 1845, "the extra General conference, should it be disposed to make reparation for past injury, and to offer security for time to come, would be all too late." The

\* W., October 4th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 462.

† S., October 18th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 482.



editor of the Richmond is of the opinion that the call of a General conference would be too late to accomplish any thing, and rather satirizes the proposition.\* On this subject the editor of Zion's Herald says,† "In a special session of the General conference in 1846, to adjust our difficulties, there could be no hope; the south will never yield, and we can not." Indeed the call of a General conference received but little favor, as most believed that matters had proceeded beyond the bounds of any correction short of a new independent Church in the south.

8. The Ohio conference sat in Marietta, September 4th.

The doings of the last General conference, and the present state of the Church occupied the attention of the conference. This topic was first introduced, at an early hour of the conference, in a preamble and set of resolutions, by motion and second. The preamble and resolutions were then referred to a committee of nine, with instructions to consider and report. Their report was made the order of the day for Thursday morning, the 11th. Their report embraced the original paper with very little alteration. After a few hours of good-tempered discussion, the report of the committee of nine was adopted without amendment, and is as follows:

"The committee to whom was referred the preamble and resolutions in relation to the case of Bishop Andrew, and the course pursued by our southern brethren at the late General conference and subsequently thereto, beg leave, most respectfully, to recommend to the conference their adoption as amended.

"Signed, JACOB YOUNG, *Chairman.*

"PREAMBLE AND RESOLUTIONS AS AMENDED.

"Whereas, the action of a large majority of the members of the late General conference, in regard to the case of Bishop Andrew, has been denounced in the most severe manner by our southern brethren; and whereas, such a course of bitter denunciation is calculated to foster animosity and strife, and create a disorganizing spirit throughout the whole body of the Methodist Episcopal Church; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved*, That this conference view with pain the politico-religious aspect which the question of division has assumed at the south, and that we earnestly entreat the ministers and members of the Church in the non-slaveholding states and territories to preserve a patient and conciliatory spirit toward their brethren of the south, however much they may be denounced.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That those delegates who supported the resolution, offered by brothers Finley and Trimble in relation to Bishop Andrew's case, are entitled to our warmest approbation, sympathy, and support.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That we regard the contemplated separation of our southern brethren as a consequence for which *they alone are responsible.*"

In the sentiments contained in the preamble and resolutions, the Ohio conference was nearly unanimous. But to avoid the appearance of provocation or retort, many thought that no action would have been better, as this might seem to give less cause of offense, even in appearance. Hence, the first two resolutions

were passed with no overwhelming majority; although nearly all concurred in the truth and justness of the sentiments. The last resolution was passed with nearly a unanimous vote, as the settled opinion of the conference.

And as the conference believed that the southern brethren have no just cause for separation, they voted 132 yeas and 1 nay against concurring with the General conference in altering the sixth Restrictive Regulation. The prevalent sentiment was that concurrence at present would encourage or seem to encourage schism, or uncalled-for division in the Church, and they, therefore, voted against it. Nevertheless, the purpose was generally entertained, that should the south take the responsibility of separation under the circumstances, and finally decide so, the Ohio conference would be forward, in due time, to award to them their proportion of the funds alluded to. Yet as they judged from the present tone and feeling of the south, they feared that they might forget the right of cordial, Christian reciprocity.

As far as we could gather from the state of opinion, the plan of meeting the south on the principles laid down by the committee of nine of the General conference, and voted for by the majority of that body, was very generally disapproved of. The reasons, as far as we gathered them were, 1. That the south, by their course, so far, had forfeited the right to such an overture. 2. Most considered this plan as wrong in itself, and that the General conference exceeded its proper bounds by ever entertaining such a proposition. The part of the plan which forbids to cross a certain line of division, was deemed peculiarly obnoxious. Indeed, judging from the present views of the Ohio conference, this is a measure into which they could never be induced to enter on any consideration whatever.

As the conference seemed fully bent on opposing division, on any pretense now alleged, they were equally averse to doing any thing that would look that way. They considered the south had no cause for separation by any act of the last General conference; even were it true, that the conference was mistaken in their decisions in the cases of Bishop Andrew and Mr. Harding.

9. The Indiana conference at its session, commencing September 25th, passed the following resolutions:

"The following preamble and resolutions were adopted in the Indiana annual conference, at its recent session in Bloomington, Indiana. Those referring to the editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal were carried by nearly a unanimous vote, only one dissenting; and that referring to the vote of the Indiana delegation in the case of Bishop Andrew, by a large majority, only three voting against it.

"L. W. BERRY, *Secretary.*

"Indianapolis, October, 1844.

"Whereas, several inflammatory resolutions have appeared in both political and religious journals, condemning the editorial course of Dr. Bond; and whereas, though we are for peace, we can not reconcile it with Christian duty or character, to calmly look on and hear a faithful servant of the Church unjustly censured; his virtues construed into vices; his uncompromising fidelity and unwavering adherence to the principles of the Church, as taught by Asbury and M'Kendree, and his able advocacy of those principles, into a wanton and

\* R., October 17th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 990.

† Z., October 16th. *Scraps*, Vol. VIII, p. 111.

unprovoked attack upon southern men and southern institutions; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved, by the Indiana annual conference, in conference assembled,* That we cordially approve of the calm, temperate, and dignified manner in which the editorial department of the Christian Advocate and Journal has been conducted.

"(2.) *Resolved,* That the thanks of this conference, and of the Church, are due to Dr. Bond for his able and fearless advocacy of the antislavery views of the Church, as held by the Church from the time of its formation, and for his opposition to the plans and efforts of disorganizers, who would break up the fair fabric of our unity, and bring upon us all the sad and disastrous consequences of dissevered feelings, and of independent and conflicting interests.

"(3.) *Resolved,* That this conference highly approve of the course of their delegates in the late General conference, in voting with the majority in the case of Bishop Andrew.

"(4.) *Resolved,* That the secretary be instructed to furnish a copy of the above preamble and resolutions to the editors of the Christian Advocate and Journal and the Western Christian Advocate for publication."

10. The Michigan conference, at its session which commenced October 2d, passed resolutions on the subject presented to them by the General conference. They approved of altering the Restrictive Rule. They disapproved of the "manner of running the line of separation between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the 'Church, south,' in case of a future separation, as agreed upon by the members of the General conference." They also passed the following preamble and resolutions:

"Whereas, the action of our late General conference on the subject of slavery has resulted in the deep affliction of our beloved Zion through all her borders; and whereas, we are earnestly solicitous, as far as possible, to promote unity and peace of the Church; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved,* That whatever our brethren of the south have said, or may be influenced to say, in their conventional assemblies, in opposition to the doings of the late General conference upon the subject of slavery, in the case of Bishop Andrew and Francis A. Harding, as the wisest and best course which could have been adopted under all the circumstances; and that the spirit manifested in various parts of the south in the proscription of our esteemed Bishops Hedding, Waugh, Morris, and Hamline, is a matter deeply to be regretted, to say the least.

"(2.) *Resolved,* That whatever be the feeling manifested by some of our southern brethren against the northern portion of the Church, we still hope and most earnestly pray that the God of peace may show those brethren the error of their way, and graciously avert the evils which now threaten our Church.

"(3.) *Resolved,* That we most deeply sympathize with our brethren of the south who are opposed to a division of the Church, and that we will pray for them that they may be plentifully endued with the spirit of love and forbearance toward those who are of a different opinion, and that their influence may be a leaven which may leaven the whole lump, and thus prevent the separation of the Church."\*

11. The North Indiana conference, at its session commencing October 16th, passed the following preamble and resolutions:\*

"Whereas, since the late General conference, the peace and unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church have been greatly disturbed and endangered by certain movements in many parts of the United States, and we can not, as ministers of Christ, and guardians of the interests and unity of the Church, look upon the present unhappy state of affairs without mingled feelings of sorrow and hope—sorrow that these causes of reproach and embarrassment exist among us, and hope that the threatened calamity may yet be averted, that both parties may yet be brought together in the unity of the Spirit and bonds of peace, and that we may, thus united, move forward in our appropriate calling, to spread Scriptural holiness throughout all these lands, and rear up a holy people for God; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved, by the North Indiana conference, in conference assembled,* That we do, in the fear of God, protest against all efforts, from whatever source proceeding, to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church; and hereby pledge ourselves, to the best of our ability, to heal the wounds of Zion, and promote the peace of the Church thus threatened and endangered.

"(2.) *Resolved,* That we do not concur in the resolutions of the late General conference to alter the sixth Restrictive Rule in section third of first chapter of book of Discipline.

"(3.) *Resolved,* That we have no desire to withhold from our southern brethren any portion of the property of the Church that may justly belong to them, but are influenced in our non-concurrence with the above resolution of the General conference by motives wholly apart and above pecuniary considerations."

The vote on non-concurrence was ayes 65, nays none.

12. The Baltimore conference sat March 12, 1845. It has always stood on the old Methodist platform, decidedly antislavery in feeling and doctrine. When Mr. Harding's case came before them he appeared in person, and stated his purpose to send his slaves to Liberia, and that his wife consented; but he would give no guarantee for the fulfillment of his promise. All he was desired to do was to execute a deed of manumission, to take effect as the slaves severally arrived to a certain age, upon their consenting to go to Africa. This he refused to do. On the vote to continue his suspension while the embarrassment remained, there were 150 yeas and only 15 nays. As Mr. Harding afterward desired a location the suspension was removed, and he was located. The Baltimore conference refused to send delegates to the Louisville convention.

In voting on the alteration of the sixth Restrictive Rule, the vote stood 42 for it and 151 against it. The objections urged against it were, 1. That, being opposed to a division of the Church, they would do nothing to favor it, whatever they would do afterward, if, in spite of their opposition to it, the separation should take place. 2. That the resolution of the General conference contemplates a dangerous innovation, which will remain in the constitution after the temporary purpose designed by it be accomplished. 3. The amendment would

\* C., November 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 579.

\* W., November 1st, Vol. XI, p. 115.

authorize the appropriation of the *proceeds*, while the resolution of the General conference refers to the division of the capital.

A general attachment to the unity of the Church, with few exceptions, prevailed among the preachers and members of the Baltimore conference. Slaveholding members in Maryland and Virginia do not desire a slaveholding ministry, much less a slaveholding Episcopacy. The city of Baltimore was very much averse to separation.\*

Bishop Soule addressed the conference, defining his position in reference to Bishop Andrew; but it was generally believed that he mystified the matter in the place of clearing it up.† Dr. Lee, in several editorial notices on the doings of this conference, gave them over to their own chosen course of inconsistency;‡ and the editor of the Southern Advocate considered them as incorrigible.§

13. The Philadelphia conference, at its session commencing April 2, 1845, considered the recommendation of the General conference. The votes on this stood thus: For the alteration 12, and against it 104. It is believed that nearly all the absent members, being twenty-one in number, would have voted against it. The objections against the change of the Restriction were about the same with those of the Baltimore conference. The conference adopted, nearly unanimously, the following resolution, reported by a committee to whom the subject had been referred:

“Resolved, That we have unabated confidence in the ability and devotion of the senior editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal to the doctrine and polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and that the preachers be requested to recommend to our people that ably-edited and excellent paper, and to use their best exertions to extend its circulation among them.”¶

The editor of the Richmond Advocate thus comments on the vote of the Philadelphia conference: “We rejoice that there were twelve men in the Philadelphia conference ready to extend even-handed justice to their southern brethren. Ten righteous Lots would have saved Sodom; twelve generous and honest men shall protect the Philadelphia conference from any censure of ours.”‡

14. The New Jersey conference met April 23d. Their vote on the alteration of the sixth Restriction stood 2 for it, and 103 against it. There was great unanimity of sentiment in this conference, together with a strong aversion to disunion in any form. The conference approved, by resolution, of Dr. Bond’s course.

This was a just tribute of praise. While the veteran defender of Methodism is denounced so unsparingly by some, it is gratifying that he is cordially approved by the true friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The excellent spirit and Christian temper of his discussions present a striking contrast with those in the south who have so violently assailed him.\*

15. The recommendation of the General conference to alter the sixth Restriction fell to the ground. We have considered the action of most of the northern conferences on the subject. The others barely voted without taking special action. It may be proper now to consider the causes and effects of its failure.

Dr. Bond accounts thus for the failure of this measure: “The violent denunciatory resolutions of certain districts in the south have had great influence in producing this result, as is evident from the fact that the annual conferences which took action in the premises before the resolutions were published, or, at least, before they had reached the north and east, concurred, by large majorities, in the General conference resolution; while those which have met subsequently have as generally dissented. It was proposed by the southern delegates, and accepted by those of the north, as a peace measure. The north was assured that if this resolution, together with those dependent upon it, were passed by the General conference, it would greatly conciliate the brethren of the south, and would, in all probability, prevent a division of the Church. It has, nevertheless, been used only as an inducement to division, and, together with the charge of abolitionism against the whole north, made even before the southern delegates left New York, has been chiefly instrumental in reconciling the southern membership to a separation from their northern brethren. Under these circumstances, many who would have consented to the alteration of the sixth Restrictive Article, as proposed by the General conference, can no longer favor the measure now, whatever they may be disposed to do in future.”†

As the alteration of the Rule was lost, as a matter of course the plan, of which it is a part, falls to the ground in the estimation of many. On this point Dr. Bond says: “On the other arrangements contained in the report of the committee of nine, adopted by the General conference, the annual conferences were not called upon to act; but as they are necessarily dependent on the amendment of the Discipline, which has been rejected, they fall with it; and even if the General conference had acted with its constitutional powers, in respect to these arrangements, they would now be unavailing to the disunionists.”

\* C., March 26th and April 9th. Scraps, Vol. II, p. 406.

† R., April 17th. Scraps, Vol. II, pp. 453, 540. C., April 9th, Vol. XIX, p. 138.

‡ R., March 20th. Scraps, Vol. II, pp. 369, 402, 454, 536.

§ S., March 28th. Scraps, Vol. II, p. 442.

¶ C., Vol. XIX, p. 142.

‡ R., April 24, 1845. Scraps, Vol. II, p. 397.

\* C., May 7th, Vol. XIX, p. 154. Scraps, Vol. II, p. 462.

† C., April 16, 1845. Scraps, Vol. II, p. 362.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

## ACTION OF THE SOUTHERN CONFERENCES.

1. THE Kentucky conference was the first of the southern conferences that met after the adjournment of the General conference. It convened September 11, 1844.

On Monday of the conference the following preamble and resolution were adopted:

"Whereas, our delegates to the late General conference, held in New York, united with that body in the adoption of measures contemplating a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so as to place the same under two separate jurisdictions, and united with the southern delegates in recommending a convention to meet in Louisville on the 1st of May next, in reference to said subject of division; therefore,

"Resolved, That we respectfully request our late delegates, as soon as convenient, to report to this conference their reasons and grounds of action in the entire premises."

After the passage of the resolution, Dr. Bascom addressed the conference in a speech of nearly five hours long. The leading points treated were the following: The history of slavery in connection with this country—in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church; the character of the rule adopted in 1816; the unconstitutionality of the proceedings of the majority in the case of Bishop Andrew, and a review of the Reply of the majority to the Protest of the minority.

After this long address, delivered to school the uninstructed members, the following report of the Committee on Division was adopted with but one dissenting vote:

"The Committee to whom was referred the subject of the division of the Church into two separate General conference jurisdictions and kindred subjects, have had the same under serious consideration, and beg leave to report:

"That enlightened as the conference is presumed to be on the merits of the very important subject upon which your Committee have been called to act, it was not deemed expedient to delay this report by an elaborate and argumentative investigation of the matters committed to them, in their various relations, principles, and bearings; they, therefore, present the result of their deliberations to the conference by offering for adoption the following resolutions:

"(1.) Resolved, That it is the deliberate judgment of this conference that the action of the late General conference, virtually deposing Bishop Andrew, and also their action in confirming the decision of the Baltimore conference in the case of the Rev. F. A. Harding, are not sustained by the Discipline of our Church, and that we consider those proceedings as constituting a highly-dangerous precedent.

"(2.) Resolved, That we deeply regret the prospect of division growing out of these proceedings, and that we do most sincerely hope and pray that some effectual means, not inconsistent with the interests and honor of all concerned, may be suggested and devised by which so great a calamity may be averted, and

to this end we recommend that our societies be freely consulted on the subject.

"(3.) Resolved, That we approve the holding of a convention of delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding states, in the city of Louisville, on the 1st day of May next, agreeably to the recommendation of the southern and south-western delegates in the late General conference; and that the ratio of representation proposed by said delegates, to wit, one delegate for every eleven members of conference, be and the same is hereby adopted; and that this conference will elect delegates to the proposed convention upon said basis.

"(4.) Resolved, That should a division be found to be indispensable, the delegates of this conference are hereby required to act under the following instructions; to wit, that the southern and south-western conferences shall not be regarded as a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but that they shall be recognized in law, and to all intents and purposes, as a co-ordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, simply acting under a separate jurisdiction; and, further, that being well satisfied with the Discipline of the Church as it is, this conference instruct its delegates not to support or favor any change in said Discipline by said convention.

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

"(6.) Resolved, That we approve the course of our delegates in the late General conference, in the premises, and that we tender them our thanks for their faithful and independent discharge of duty in a trying crisis.

"(7.) Resolved, That the secretary of this conference be directed to have these resolutions published in such of our Church papers as may be willing to insert them.

"All of which is respectfully submitted.

"M. M. HENKLE, *Chairman.*"

The following resolutions were also passed:

"Resolved, by the Kentucky annual conference, That, should the proposed convention, representing the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states, appointed to assemble in the city of Louisville the first of May, 1845, proceed to a separate organization, as contingently provided for in the resolutions of this body on yesterday, then, and in that event, the convention shall be regarded as the regular General conference, authorized and appointed by the several annual conferences of the southern division of the Church, and as possessing all the rights, powers, and privileges of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and subject to the same restrictions, limitations, and restraints.

"Resolved, That, in order to secure the constitutional character and action of the conven-

tion as a General conference proper, should a separate organization take place, the ratio of representation as now found in the second Restrictive Rule—one for every twenty-one—shall prevail, and determine the number of constitutional delegates, taking and accrediting as such the proper number from each annual conference first elected in order, and that the supernumerary delegates be regarded as members of the convention to deliberate, etc., but not members of the General conference proper, should the convention proceed to a separate organization in the south; provided, nevertheless, that should any delegate, or delegates, who would not be excluded from the General conference proper, by the operation of the above regulation, be absent, then any delegate, or delegates, present, not admitted by said regulation as member, or members, of the constitutional General conference, may lawfully take the seat or seats of such absent delegates upon the principle of selection named above.

*Resolved, by the Kentucky annual conference,* That we respectfully invite the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who may feel themselves disposed to do so, to be in attendance at the contemplated convention, to be held in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, in May, 1845 :

*Resolved, by the Kentucky annual conference,* That we appoint the Friday immediately preceding the day fixed for the meeting of the proposed general convention of the delegates of the conferences, as a day of fasting and prayer for the blessing of almighty God on the said convention.\*

2. On the above report we remark as follows:

*First.* The conference, in its lesson of instruction to the committee, misrepresent the General conference by assuming that the General conference adopted measures contemplating a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so as to place the same under two separate jurisdictions, just as if the General conference had either agreed or authorized the south to *reorganize the Methodist Episcopal Church.* The committee, in their report, take as the subject referred to them, "the division of the Church into two General conference jurisdictions;" when the real subject was whether the south would or ought to secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and what sort of a Church they would form did they secede. This was the subject before them, and not the one assumed.

*Secondly.* They require that their new Church "shall not be regarded as a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church," and, hence, "that they shall be recognized in law, and to all intents and purposes, as a co-ordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." Here are several strange anomalies, or rather absurdities. They lay it down that they shall not be regarded as a secession, and yet at General conference it was considered as nothing else, either by northern or southern men, and was pronounced a *separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church.* A *co-ordinate branch,* or a *co-ordinate Church,* is a perversion or an abuse of language. As order means *rank,* and the different orders of a Church refer to the different *ranks* that the officers or ministers of the Church sus-

tain in reference to each other, a *co-ordinate Church* would suppose there might be several Churches of *different ranks,* or *orders,* as well as *two* "co-ordinate branches of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." Beside, if there are two branches of the Church, where shall we find *that Church* of which these are the two branches? Beside, they are to be recognized in law, to all intents and purposes, as if law must hereafter adapt, or rather change, all its principles and practice so as to fix the title of property for *two branches,* both *co-ordinate,* too, as well as for the "Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America," of which these two are branches. At this time the absurdity was not discovered—afterward it was—that the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was dissolved, and two new ones were formed out of its ruins.

*Thirdly.* The conference lay down principles or conditions manifestly ending in secession, though they would seem to deprecate it. They lay down as conditions that security should be given against future aggression, and reparation be made for past injuries. The reparation for the past would be to remove the embarrassment from Bishop Andrew and from Mr. Harding. The future guarantee would demand that all traveling preachers might have as many slaves as they please, even where emancipation is practicable.

*Fourthly.* They deprecate secession, yet they pursue every measure to secure it. It is a great evil, they say, but a blessing rather than that the Church would not take a new course to favor the system of slavery by having slaveholding bishops, and by increasing the number of slaveholding preachers.

*Fifthly.* They propose that the "societies be freely consulted on the subject." But it seems too late to consult about the unity of the Church, when all the steps were taken to disrupt it.

*Sixthly.* They misrepresent the General conference, in acting contrary to Discipline in the cases of Bishop Andrew and Harding.

*Seventhly.* In their "further action," the Kentucky conference enter into the work of revolution with a thorough good-will. 1. They take it for granted the southern conferences will "proceed to a separate organization." At this time, they wanted no *authority* from General conference to do so. This, however, could be resorted to in future, as it really was, to make the measure pass. 2. "The convention shall be regarded as the regular General conference, and as possessing all the rights, powers, and privileges of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States." Here they transform the convention into a General conference; and they then make it equal in *rights, powers, and privileges,* with those of the Church from which they separate. This is ill-disguised revolution—to change an unauthorized convention of a minority into an authoritative General conference of the whole Church, and this new, conventional, unauthorized General conference can nullify the acts of the true General conference, and do what it disavowed to do for want of power. 3. To secure "the constitutional character and action of the convention, as a General conference proper," the ratio of the old Discipline must be observed; that is, of one for every twenty-one preachers, in the place of one for every eleven. Why this caution here? It was unnecessary. As they could change the

\* W., October 11th, Vol. XI, p. 102, and Scraps, Vol. I, p. 293. History Methodist Episcopal Church, South, p. 102.

fundamental law of the Church, by converting a convention into a General conference, they should not scruple to change the ratio of representation without law, and contrary to law; although in the Methodist Episcopal Church, whose powers they usurped, this could not be done without a three-fourths vote of all the annual conferences.

*Eighthly.* They call upon the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church present to preside at their convention. This seems to be the consummation of their wishes. One bishop had already come into their measures of revolt. Another was confidently expected in due time to do the same. But to enlist all, or a majority, on the side of revolution, would be a triumph indeed. It is nothing else than an invitation to all the bishops to either become seceders or to sanction, or even authorize the new secession. In short, it was a very impertinent request.

3. The Kentucky conference appointed a committee to address the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the bounds of their conference.\*

In this long address, of fourteen pages octavo, we have a new edition of the declaration of the south, and their Protest, with some items additional, showing the progress of the principles and acts of secession. After a historical reference to the introduction of slavery into the United States, and the Church regulations on it, they refer to the malign usage of the Church, which excluded slaveholders from the Episcopacy, and conclude that the south must be "a proscribed division of the connection." They speak of the "proscriptive usage of the north, to put no man into high office, especially the Episcopacy, who was in any manner connected with slavery, no matter how involuntarily." "A decree of ecclesiastical *oulaury* is attempted to be justified." "Inflicting punishment *without law* is one of the distinguishing attributes of despotism." "To defend this position became a prominent link in the strong chain of power forged by the dominant party in the last General conference." "The episcopal office is degraded, and the powers of the General conference magnified in equal ratio." "The General conference is exalted into an enormous irresponsible aristocracy." "The southern conferences declared for a peaceable separation, and an organization under a southern conference jurisdiction." This last declaration is correct; but then it is metamorphosed from its original purpose of a separation from, or a secession, and they now make it "a peaceable organization of two General conferences." They both are to be the same, "save whenever the north may depart from our present system." These are to be the "northern and southern divisions of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Then the customary parenthetical charge against the General conference comes in, about "degrading a bishop without law and against law." The case of Canada conference is then misrepresented. They next seem to shoulder the responsibility of their own work, when they say, "To save the Church in the south from utter extermination, we shall be obliged, though reluctantly, to place ourselves under a General conference jurisdiction, distinct from that of the north, but strictly on the Discipline, and within the constitution in all things." Yet "this fearful crisis," they say, "has been brought upon us, not by ourselves, but by the

unbridled ultraism of our northern brethren." Then they declare that, after the General conference "had violated, not only the settled usage of the Church, but the unambiguous letter of the Discipline, in the case of Harding, and had refused to Bishop Andrew the protection of Church law, and assumed and exercised the power of inflicting punishment without law," the south were compelled to act. They affirm their course is necessary to save the Church in the south. After the foregoing accusations, they seem to forget every thing all at once, and say of the members of General conference, "Yet we accord to them honesty and sincerity—ask of them the same liberality, or rather justice. We wish to live with them under a common jurisdiction; but if they will not permit this but on terms involving the ruin of the Church in the south, then we ask to remain as brethren still, but under separate jurisdictions."

As was said above, this address embodies the sentiments of the declaration and Protest, with such additional matter as was found convenient, by which it became the outline of Dr. Bascom's future book, published just before the convention. After the Protest, immediately followed the revolutionary call for a convention. The Report and Address of the Kentucky conference continue and extend the misrepresentations against the General conference, and in favor of secession, although the name is omitted, and even deprecated. Properly speaking, the Address is the work of Dr. Bascom, and it is likely he wrote it, Mr. Henkle acting only as his amanuensis. At any rate, it is his in sentiment. Messrs. Bascom and Henkle were old acquaintances in this sort of work. Dr. Bascom had been a prominent writer, though anonymously, in the radical controversy. He drew up, too, the famous "Declaration of Rights," which became the basis on which was formed the Methodist Protestant Church, and the "Wesleyan Church of America," called by some the "Scottie Church." Mr. Henkle had all along acted with him, and had become an adept in secessional discussions. Under the leadership of Dr. Bascom, assisted by his old aid Henkle, the Kentucky Methodist preachers first were enlisted, and they prepared the way for misleading the people; and, as is the case very often, when men enlist warmly in measures, the very doctrines and measures which Mr. Bascom had ascribed to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in reference to the Episcopacy and the General conference, but which were always denied, he and his aid adopted these as the landmarks of Methodism proper! Let any one read the articles of Dr. Bascom, in the Wesleyan Repository, the Mutual Rights, and the Declaration of Rights, and then let him read the Protest, the Report of the Kentucky conference, its Address, and Bascom's Methodism and Slavery, and he will see the same hand in all, as well as a complete revolution from one extreme to another. Well did Cassius M. Clay say, in editorially remarking on the latter production of Mr. Bascom, "Dr. Bascom got into a false position."

Dr. Bascom formed the groundwork for all the other southern conferences. They followed, as a model, the Report of the Kentucky conference; and they might as well have adopted it without amendment, except that, by issuing constantly their reports in secession, they promoted greatly the spirit of secession. Kentucky, by the phraseology in the Report, were led to think there would be *no secession*, while in connection with

\* W., Vol. XI. p. 116. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 468. History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, pp. 111-124.

this, all the elements of it were comprised in the same document that had disavowed it.

As the proceedings of the other southern conferences were of the same stamp with those of Kentucky, we need not quote them in full. We will, however, transfer some of them to our list of documents.\*

4. The Missouri conference sat September 25th. It passed a report similar to that of Kentucky.† This conference was aware of the fierce spirit manifest in the south, and declare, in one of their resolutions, "that we have read with deep regret the violent proceedings of some of our southern brethren, in their primary meetings, against some of our bishops and others; and that we do most cordially invite to our pulpits and firesides all our bishops and northern brethren." In Missouri there was much opposition to separation. A correspondent of the Western Christian Advocate‡ asks these two questions, in reference to the convention: "1. From whence do these ministers derive their authority to divide the Church? 2. Suppose the different societies are consulted, and two-thirds agree to the division, and one-third do not, and the convention act on the decision of the majority, what becomes of the one-third that are opposed to division? Are they thrown from the pale of the Church? Will they have no right to the churches they have aided in building? and lastly, will they have no pastors?"

5. The Holston conference held its session October 9th. It seems to have been more averse to separation than any other southern conference. It has always, too, been imbued with strong anti-slavery sentiments. It passed a very modified report, and that with considerable regret, though leaving themselves, in case of not succeeding in the cause of union, in the hands of the south. They passed, in their report, a resolution, inviting a delegate from each of the northern conferences to meet in Louisville, with similar delegates from the south, in order to devise some plan of compromise. Should this fail, they wish the two General conferences to appoint each ten delegates to settle all difficulties between the two General conferences. If both these fail, their delegates are instructed to support the General conference plan. They add, "And in so doing, we positively disavow secession, but declare ourselves, by the act of the General conference, a coordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church."|| The south were suspicious of Holston, but after seeing their report, it was concluded they were available for the new southern confederacy.§

6. The Indian Mission conference, which sat October 23d, being principally manned with southern preachers, and connected with slavery, passed a feeble report, on the whole going for the convention.¶

7. The Tennessee conference, which met October 3d, followed closely the Kentucky conference. It takes up for consideration "the proposed division of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two separate and distinct General conference jurisdictions, as if their only work was to make a new Church for the north, and another for the south out of the fragments of the old, in the

place of arranging their preconceived work of secession. On the resolution of the Holston conference, suggesting a plan of compromise, they express their dissent, and give, as their reason: "Inasmuch as any proposition for a compromise of existing difficulties, which might be proposed with any probability of success, should come in an authoritative manner from the northern section of the Church, and believing the plan proposed by the Holston conference would, if generally adopted by the south, utterly fail to meet the object contemplated; therefore we can not agree to the proposition."\*

8. The Virginia conference met November 13th. They take up the subject as if there was not much to do except to complete a work nearly matured. They affirm that the laity, with few exceptions, approve of the separation. They express, in the fourth resolution, that "we do not propose to dissolve our connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but only with the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Just as if they could retain their connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but, at the same time, renounce its government. Or just as if a man could retain his citizenship, and yet renounce the authority of Congress and all laws of the country. The convention, in their organization, did the same, following this strange aberration of the Virginia conference.†

Bishop Soule, as we have seen, invited Bishop Andrew to preside with him at this and other southern conferences, though contrary to the decision of the bench of bishops, and to the judgment of the General conference. The Richmond Advocate‡ on this says: "The conference, by a unanimous vote, invited Bishop Andrew to participate with Bishop Soule in the exercise of episcopal powers and prerogatives; and having settled it as his *sense* that he ought to *desist* from the exercise of his episcopal functions, he took the chair, presided over the conference, and, on Sunday afternoon, after preaching a truly apostolical sermon in the morning, he ordained those who had been elected, to the order of deacons in the Church of God; thus fulfilling the highest calling of his office among us: thereby showing his and our *sense* of the anomalous, and never-to-be-reverenced proceedings of the late, and last General conference of the united Methodist Episcopal Church." Such is the levity with which this solemn subject is treated by the Richmond Advocate, with approbation of the Southern Advocate, as noted in the marginal reference.

Dr. Wightman uses similar language. He says:|| "Bishop Soule stated to the conference that he had invited Bishop Andrew to meet him here to assist him in the discharge of his duties, and that he had invited him, *not as a friend, but as a colleague, clothed with full power and authority of the episcopal office*; and that he had done so in full view of his own personal responsibility; which he was fully prepared to meet."

Dr. Bond views the matter thus:§ "In his address to the conference, Bishop Soule stated, in amount, that he had invited Bishop Andrew to a participation with him in the exercise of episcopal functions, in full view of his responsibilities. He stood, he said, on the broad plat-

\* Document, No. 66. History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, pp. 109-157. Methodist Church Case, pp. 92-120. W., Vol. XI, p. 102, 115, 118, 125, 127, 143, 157.

† W., Vol. XI, pp. 115, 118, 122.

‡ W., November 15th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 604.

§ W., Vol. XI, p. 118. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 548.

¶ S., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 640.

|| W., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 659.

\* N., November 8th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 570-623.

† W., Vol. XI, p. 143. History Methodist Episcopal Church, South, p. 139.

‡ S., December 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 727.

§ S., November 29th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 668.

|| C., December 18th. Scraps, p. 783.

form of the Discipline, and wished to bear alone the consequences of his course. He, therefore, claims for episcopacy, nay, for any one of the bishops, a right to decide on the legality of any act of the General conference, and to veto it, if, in his judgment, it is not in accordance with the Discipline of the Church. Thus, a new issue is added to the one which has agitated the Church so fearfully, and one in which it is not possible to come to any compromise, without changing the cardinal principles of our ecclesiastical economy. Episcopal claims, of this nature, are more to be feared in the Methodist Episcopal Church, than high Church prelatical pretensions in the Protestant Episcopal Church, because the discretionary powers confided to our bishops are much greater than those conferred upon the Episcopacy in the Protestant Episcopal Church. Heretofore, we had supposed the bishops strictly amenable to the General conference, not only for their moral conduct, but for their administration: but with the power of the veto, their responsibility is a nullity. Every act of the General conference in reference to the bishops, may be nullified, not only by the bishops acting together, but an individual superintendent, and even by the one who has been the subject of General conference action."

On the proceedings of the Virginia conference, we remark:

*First.* Bishop Soule could not then consider the decision of the late General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew, either as a suspension or a deposition. For he would not invite one to assist him who had been suspended by the body to which he owes his authority, and to which he is still amenable.

*Secondly.* We may here learn what view Bishop Andrew must have taken of the proceedings of the General conference; for as our bishops are responsible to that body, he could not have consented to exercise his episcopal functions, if he had regarded the act in the light of a suspension or deposition.

*Thirdly.* By this procedure, we see clearly defined the position of the Virginia conference, adopting the course they did. How could they regard the act of the General conference as a suspension or deposition? They knew that his acts would not be valid, unless that he was clothed with full authority. But if, in their estimation, the General conference did suspend or depose him, then his acts among them must have been without authority. They could not, therefore, believe that he was either suspended or deposed. Hence, it follows, that they rejected the doctrines of the Protest, which was based on the notion of deposition; and they must have admitted the doctrine of the Reply. That is, they agree, by their act, with the majority, that they neither designed nor achieved a deposition.

*Fourthly.* But if the Virginia conference regarded the decision of the General conference a suspension, and that, as such, it is still in force, what will be their attitude? A large portion of its proceedings were without authority—without law or precedent, seeing the duties of president were performed by one who was neither a bishop nor presiding elder.

*Fifthly.* There is yet another consequence. It is this: That the Virginia conference, by this act, becomes *independent* of the General conference, and, henceforth, does not intend to abide by its jurisdiction. Hence, it follows, that the position taken by that conference, is beyond the

pale of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Its ecclesiastical nullification must be apparent to all.

*Sixthly.* In conclusion, either the Virginia conference rejects the notion of Bishop Andrew's deposition, or that it has already seceded, separated, broken off from the Methodist Episcopal Church. If the conference rejects the deposition of the Bishop, then our southern excitement is altogether unjustifiable, and a division is not necessary.

9. The Arkansas conference, which sat November 20th, passed a report similar to that of the preceding conferences. There is nothing in it that needs notice, except that it is much less denunciatory than the most of the other reports.

10. The Memphis conference, at its session, held November 20th, passed a report like the other conferences, and substantially the same. It speaks of the "division of the Church into two separate General conference jurisdictions;" and of the "virtual deposition of Bishop Andrew." They say also, "We have witnessed with sorrow and disapprobation, alike, the violence manifested by some at the south, and the ultraism displayed by others at the north; and that we regret exceedingly that any annual conference should have deemed it necessary to refuse to concur in the recommendation of the late General conference, to alter the sixth Restrictive Article. Nevertheless, we shall entertain for our brethren of the north the feelings of Christian kindness and brotherly love."

11. The North Carolina conference, which sat December 4th, express, in their report, deep regret that separation was inevitable, in consequence of the proceedings of General conference; and that the time has come to refuse to act in unison with the north.

12. The Mississippi conference, which was held December 11th, proceed, without falter, to determine on secession, and passed resolutions to that purpose.

13. The South Carolina conference met December 25th, and passed a long report, which went unequivocally for secession. They say the people, at quarterly meeting conferences, and other meetings, uttered but one opinion as to the unconstitutionality and injurious character of the action of the General conference, and the necessity which that action imposes for a separation of the southern from the northern conferences; and that this unanimity was not produced by popular harangues or any schismatic efforts. Yet the action of the General conference did not proceed from ill-will, but from causes which had their origin in fanatical abolitionism. They consider the adoption of the report of the General conference as involving a solemn pledge for the full and faithful execution of all the parts of it.

14. The Texas conference, which sat January 8, 1845, commences its report by noticing "certain acts of the General conference, causing and providing for a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or the General conference thereof." Here is ascribed to the General conference the double and conflicting acts of causing first, and then providing for, the division of the Church. They deplore the fearful controversy on the subject of slavery; and heartily denounce the Rev. John Clarke, one of their delegates, for voting wrong in the cases of Harding and Andrew.

15. The Georgia conference, whose session commenced January 18, 1845, adopted a long report. They consider it *indispensable* that the conferences, within whose limits slavery exists,



should cease to be under the jurisdiction of the General conference; that a distinct organization is required by a *necessity*, strict and *absolute*. They then proceed to argue on the illegality in the cases of Mr. Harding and Bishop Andrew. They affirm that their people are unanimous in this. The usual resolutions are then passed.

16. The Florida conference passed nine resolutions, preceded by a brief preamble, comprising all the necessary elements in favor of secession. This conference sat February 8, 1845.

17. The Alabama conference, which sat March 1, 1845, passed its report in due form, adjusting it to agree with the model which Kentucky gave. They consider separation as necessary. They say "their sentiments can be expressed in one sentence—they indorse the unanswerable Protest. They believe the doctrines of that imperishable document can not be successfully assailed." They say "the General conference has no more power over a bishop, except in the specified cases of maladministration, ceasing to travel, and immorality, than over the Episcopacy, as an integral part of our ecclesiastical polity." They also say that they "fully recog-

nize the right of Bishop Soule to invite Bishop Andrew to share with him the responsibilities of the episcopal office."

18. The principal leading points in the allegations against the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the southern conferences, are the following:

*First.* The acts of the General conference of 1844, by which the suspension of Mr. Harding was sustained, and by which Bishop Andrew was admonished to suspend his episcopal functions till freed from slaveholding, or till arrangements to that amount should be made.

*Second.* That these acts were contrary to the Discipline.

*Third.* That, therefore, the south were laid under the necessity of dissolving their connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church; or, as they improperly express it, with the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as now constituted.

We need not go through the various other allegations of the southern conferences; and our exceptions to their course have been given in sufficient detail in remarks on the action of the Kentucky conference.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### MATTERS CONNECTED WITH 1844.

1. VARIOUS opinions and discussions on constitutional questions, were presented and treated of in the latter part of the year. Rev. Robert Emory, D. D., in a very able article,\* maintained the unconstitutionality of the plan. He argues that, as the General conference has no authority but such as has been conferred on it, it has none to divide the Church, or to set off any portion of it. In 1828 any such authority was disclaimed. And though the conference neither attempted nor sanctioned a division of the Church, the adoption of the plan was an unconstitutional invasion of the rights, both of the ministry and the membership. His reasons are,

(1.) That members are cut off from the Church without the forms of trial. This will apply to interior charges and to minorities on the line.

(2.) That a barrier on one side is raised, so that the extension of the Church is prevented.

(3.) The plan contemplates the division of the capital of the Book Concern, whereas the alteration of the sixth Restriction would only justify the appropriation of the produce.

(4.) The plan contemplates the transfer before the next General conference. But this can not be legally effected, because, first, it can not be officially known till then whether the Restriction is altered. Secondly, if it were known, the proposed alteration could not take place till approved, and till then the present Restriction is the law.

Dr. Emory places entire confidence in the integrity and ability of those who formed the plan; and if the measure were practicable, no men could have adopted a better plan for carrying it out. He deprecates secession, and thinks that it would be

much better that extreme men should withdraw, than to rend the Church. By these he means either those who think all slaveholders are necessarily sinners, or those who believe that slavery is not a great evil, whose extirpation we should seek by all Scriptural means.

Dr. Bangs, in an article entitled, "Constitutional difficulties removed," allows that the General conference could not divide the Church, yet he thinks the plan constitutional. He meets the pleas of Dr. Emory with great earnestness, and thinks the regulation to prevent crossing the line to be one of great importance.\* After all, the one seems to overstate the unconstitutionality of the plan; while the other labors to free it entirely from that charge. After testing its operation, the General conference of 1848 were compelled to allow that practically it operated unconstitutionally. Thus a new point of controversy was opened which elicited much discussion in the following year.

2. The right and title to Church property became a topic of a good deal of discussion. The plan placed the Book Concern and Chartered Fund at the disposal of the annual conferences; and when this was negatived the south adopted a theory to dispense with this, though they had previously agreed, by their acts, to submit to the decision, whatever it might be. Zion's Herald in July† said that the south had no *legal* claims to the property; for if they separate they become seceders, and so the provisional articles of the General conference contemplate it. Yet he said that may allow a *moral claim*, which would depend on the circumstances of the secession—such as the spirit of it, the character

\* W., December 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 677.

\* C., December 11th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1108.

† Z., July 3d. Scraps, Vol. VIII, pp. 79, 80.

of the new Church, its attitude to the old Church, etc.

Rev. R. Paine—now Bishop Paine—said in July, in an article in which he explained the action of the General conference to his southern brethren: "And should the change be effected by the annual conferences, in the sixth Restrictive Rule, as recommended by the General conference, the south will receive her proportion of the property and funds of the Church, amounting to about \$300,000.\* At this period, no one, neither north nor south, thought that any division of the Book Concern could be made, unless the Restriction were changed.

In regard to the property in general, apart from the Book Concern and Chartered Fund, a Baltimore lawyer presented its proper position early in September.† He showed,

(1.) That the legal title of the property of the Church was vested in trustees, on the express condition, that they are, and shall continue to be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and

(2.) That whenever they shall withdraw from the Church, or in any way cease to be members, their authority as trustees will cease.

(3.) And when any member, or body of members, shall withdraw, or in any way cease to be members, all their interest and right in the property shall cease; also the rights of Church members are to be determined by the question, whether or not a person is now a member of that Church, under its authority, and subject to its laws.

(4.) That when the southern ministers shall have renounced the jurisdiction of our General conference, they shall be as entirely separated from our Church as if they had united with any other Church, and all their rights and responsibilities to the Methodist Episcopal Church will be dissolved.

(5.) The ministers and members who remain will constitute the Methodist Episcopal Church, enjoying all its rights and privileges.

(6.) And, from the nature of the case, the act of the General conference can have no legal effect upon the legal title to property, for the simple reason that it is a matter over which they have no more jurisdiction than they have over the farms, or stores, or saw-mills, or workshops, or law-books of our members.

An intelligent layman, and a slaveholder in the south, argues this point—October 30th—and comes to the same conclusion that the Baltimore lawyer did.‡ Dr. Tomlinson showed, by unanswerable arguments, in December, the very same thing.¶ Indeed, a distinguished southern lawyer and judge, Dr. Longstreet, as we suppose, under the name of Elihu, concedes the point.§ In short, he confirms the sentiments of the Baltimore lawyer.

Indeed, at General conference it was allowed by all, that nothing could be done in reference to the title of Church property, and nothing was done. Yet, should the south withdraw, there would be no claimants, and of course the seceders could then occupy them. This was the position of the matter at General conference. The southern brethren thought, however, their legislatures would protect them in the use of the property. Hence, when the subject began to be

discussed, they expressed themselves unequivocally, that whatever the legal rights were, the legislatures would sustain their claims to the property against the claims of those whom they saw fit to call northern abolitionists.

We will here give specimens of these declarations of southern men. Rev. F. G. Ferguson, of Athens, South Alabama, September 26, 1844, declares: "But who is to dispossess us, even supposing our right doubtful? Yes, who? None from the other side of the line would attempt it, if every church lot were a *golden mine!!!* And really, if danger did exist of forfeiting our legal claim, I venture to say there is not a state legislature south of Mason's and Dixon's Line, but would, by special law, give us an unequivocal title to every inch of our possessions. Then, who is afraid?"\*

The editor of the Southern Advocate declared, in November, "The day of compromise is gone by forever. If our northern brethren refuse to divide with us according to our fair proportion of the Book Concern, which *our* money contributed to establish, we can not help it. We hope they will pause before they consent to such a deed. For our Church property at home, we can have no uneasiness. *Who* will come from the north to claim it? And if any did, the courts and legislatures of the southern states would, beyond the possibility of doubt, secure it to us fast enough."†

To the same purpose is the declaration of Judge Longstreet, as we suppose, under the signature of Elihu, in the Southern Advocate of December 6th. He declares, that should the Methodist Episcopal Church go to law for the Church property in the south, "such an attempt would excite universal indignation in the south; that our fellow-citizens of all religious denominations, and those not belonging to any, would be exasperated beyond endurance; it would be considered as an abolition movement in our midst; an attempt to rob us of our property for the benefit of abolitionists. I do not believe that the people would permit any party to represent the northern Church in our courts of law, or take possession of the property, if it was awarded to them."‡

Judge Longstreet, otherwise Elihu, allowing, with all others, that the "General conference had no authority to legalize a division of the Church," wrote on the subject in the Southern Advocate, of October 25, 1844, a plan of legalizing the property. On the 25th of November following he published an article, headed, "Explanation," in which he accurately defines his views and explains the matter in accordance with the positions allowed by all, at the General conference of 1844, and which has been maintained by the Methodist Episcopal Church all along, and sustained by all the courts and legislatures of the United States, and must be sustained, otherwise the voluntary system of supporting religion must be broken down, the principles of law abandoned, and a new system of securing charitable and religious trusts must be established, not founded on the principles of justice, unity, and intent of donors, but on the ever-varying changes of all sorts of seceders, anarchists, and schismatics. Judge Longstreet says:

"It will be seen by referring to my article, [of October 25th,] that I suggest a called General

\* N., August 2d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 180.

† C., September 11th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 306.

‡ C., October 30th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 540.

¶ W., December 27th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 837.

§ S., December 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 711, 712.

\* N., October 11th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 456.

† S., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 640.

‡ S., December 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 712.

conference, the delegates to which shall be instructed by the several annual conferences which they represent—they having previously taken the sense of the membership within their bounds severally—to determine on the mode and fact of division; or that, in the event a special session should not be held, the subject be acted upon by the next General conference at its regular session under such instructions. It was also present in my mind, though, for the sake of brevity, not stated, that the southern conferences should adopt a resolution, requesting the superintendents to call a special meeting of the General conference, and another requesting the several annual conferences to send their delegates to it, instructed as before mentioned, and specially—if they were willing—to agree to an amicable division, upon terms therein to be stated. It will also be seen, that there is an alternative stated; namely, a suit at law, if the parties could not agree upon amicable division. I should certainly not have mentioned this as an alternative, if I had not believed that, if compelled, or willing, to resort to it, we could sustain our title to the property; and I now avow it as my opinion, that should the conferences within the slaveholding states and territories choose to resort to this expedient, they may hold the property belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church within their bounds, provided they do no act which shall amount in the intendment of law to a secession; but could they hold it, under a *new organization*, based upon the act of the last General conference which provides for a division, and which recognizes only those conferences represented by the majority as the Methodist Episcopal Church? I believe not; and because, 1. That General conference had no authority to legalize a division of the Church; and, 2. Because, if a new organization is adopted under that act, we shall acknowledge ourselves to be no longer a part of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and will have surrendered the title, and with it all the property held under it, to those conferences. If it be asked, what shall we do? I confess myself unable to answer that question satisfactorily, and am glad that the responsibility of deciding on the course to be pursued is not thrown upon my shoulders. I see, I think, very plainly, what we must *not do*." "The reference of the whole to a General conference is the only course, it seems to me, which leaves any ground to believe that we may be received and recognized as Methodists by the other branches of the Wesleyan family throughout the world."\*

From the foregoing it will be seen that properly the division of the Church was not entertained at General conference by any one; that the south must be a secession; that the property of the Book Concern could not be divided without the constitutional vote of the annual conferences; that the property in churches and parsonages could not legally be retained by the new Church, etc. To remedy this, recourse is to be had to overawe and lead courts and legislatures to do illegal acts, and this under the false cry of abolition! Indeed, the way was prepared for it. Dr. Capers, and Dr. Lee, and Dr. Wightman began this in the southern papers while the General conference was in session. The denunciations of the southern meetings were only the echoes of the pastors. And

now, at the close of the year, Elihu, or Dr. Longstreet, Dr. Wightman, and others, seem willing to have mob law make decisions to overturn all former principles of law and the judicial acts based upon them. It is useless for them to say that they deprecate this. It is too late to do so when they have let loose the ungovernable mob, or, what is much worse, invoke judges and legislatures to aid them in disrupting and harassing the Church of the living God.

3. The powers and source of our Episcopacy became a subject of controversy immediately after the General conference. It has always been a settled maxim in the Methodist Episcopal Church, that efficient general superintendents are essential to the perpetuation of our itinerant system. Hence, it is guarded by a constitutional bar which the General conference can not remove. Yet the General conference can expel them, or remove them from office not only for immoral, but also for imprudent conduct. Yet the General conference has prescribed no form of trial for itself in this matter; for the provision for *suspending* a bishop for immorality, in the interval between General conferences, is not a rule to the conference itself. And as the General conference has power to expel, it has also power to try, depose, suspend, admonish, and restrain. This is allowed by all ecclesiastical jurists and writers; for the exercise of the greater power, which expels, will always comprise the less, which deposes, suspends, admonishes, or restrains. Such power in the General conference to check the power vested in the bishops is indispensable for the safety of the Church. And the right of the General conference to depose bishops at the discretion of the General conference, has been always maintained in our controversies with our adversaries. And as a precedent for this the case of Dr. Coke is relevant.

When the case of Bishop Andrew came up before the General conference it was pleaded that he could not be deposed; and as there was no statute law how to proceed, and, therefore, the General conference had none to follow, Bishop Soule contended that he could not be tried without law, and thus virtually pleaded in sober consequence that he could not be tried at all. Hence, it was now taught in the Protest that the *forms* of law were not followed, though there was no *form* in the Discipline, although there were *precedents*, as in the cases of Bishops Hedding and Soule in 1828—and there was the quadrennial precedent of having the entire character, moral and administrative, of the previous four years examined before the Episcopal Committee, appointed expressly for this purpose, and whose report was always amended, adopted, or rejected by the conference as they saw fit.

The south now fell upon a new mode of arguing. They taught that ordination, not election, gave authority to the bishop; that he derived his authority, through ordination, from Mr. Wesley; that the Episcopacy was a co-ordinate branch of the Church; and hence, not accountable, or so little accountable that he became absolute and beyond the reach of reproof, censure, instruction, suspension, or deposition. In September, *Unus Multorum*, perhaps Dr. Smith, taught to this amount, and much more.\*

\* S., December 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 711.

\* R., September 19th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 926-930. Also Vol. I, pp. 379, 382.

Nevertheless, there were some in the south who could not receive these new doctrines, as they were truly prelatial, not episcopal, and particularly not methodistically episcopal, as this latter is a presbyterial episcopacy. The Episcopacy, in Methodism, derives its authority from the body of presbyters, and is accountable to them.

The prelatial doctrines of the south seem to have really alarmed some southern men. The Rev. G. M. Keesee, of the Virginia conference, in the Richmond Advocate, of November 7th, took up the subject, and maintained unanswerably the true doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But as every one in the south who uttered any important opinion contrary to the three editors, their two bishops, and their committed delegates, were denounced unsparingly, and often even coarsely, it required much independence to plead for the old paths in the south. Nevertheless, Mr. Keesee did it in three able articles, that remain unanswered to this day.

Mr. Keesee, in the introduction to his first article,\* says, "There are those in the ministry and out of it who coincide with me upon the various points that now agitate and distract our Zion. We are disinclined to force our doctrines on any one, or to censure such as may honestly differ from us. Yet we are greatly afflicted at the almost unmeasured denunciations of the purest and brightest luminaries of the Church—men whom we have delighted to honor, and who occupy an unchanged position in our estimation, by any action of theirs in the General conference, or by any hard sentences that have been spoken or written against them. We are more than pained by the fact that, after denouncing the majority as *abolitionists*, every southerner is included in the same category who is bound in conscience and judgment to differ with the minority. Such a course is fraught with evil effects to the south herself, and, if persisted in, will, inevitably, produce sub-division."

Mr. Keesee declares that "he is opposed to a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or a separation of the south from the north." He does not use the word *secession* in an offensive sense, but as a *separation from*. "And such he understands to be the contemplated division; a consent on the part of the General conference for the southern conferences to withdraw therefrom." He argued that Mr. Harding's case was misrepresented by the south. He thinks the same of the Bishop's case, and that he ought to have resigned his office, or submitted to the decision of the conference. That body had the right to depose him on his failure to resign; and he proves this from unquestionable sources. Such is the purport of his first article.

In his second and third letters,† he shows that our Episcopacy does not owe its office and authority to Mr. Wesley; but our Episcopacy derives its office and authority from the General conference, as the representative body of the whole Church. He charges on the south that what convulses the Church now is, that "*the minority claim the power, in behalf of the General conference and for themselves, independently or apart from the conference, to destroy the general*

*superintendency.*" He further shows the absurdity of considering the Episcopacy as a "co-ordinate branch of the General conference," and that his authority is derived from his ordination.

Dr. Lee left Mr. Keesee unanswered, and seems glad to be rid of his opponent, by making some general remarks, flourishing a little, and treating the whole as insignificant.\*

On the subject of *deposing* bishops, the editor of the Western Advocate, in December, published Coke's circular, dated June 1, 1805, Bishop M'Kendree's reply to it, dated September 17, 1806, and Rev. Jacob Young's testimony, dated November 9, 1844, who was present at the Western conference when the reply was read, approved, and sent to Dr. Coke. Bishop Coke had proposed to divide the conferences between him and Bishop Asbury. When Mr. M'Kendree read the words in the reply, "as to our dividing the conferences, as highly as we esteem you and Bishop Asbury, we would much sooner depose you both," Mr. Young moved that these words be stricken out. M'Kendree replied, "If you get the word depose stricken out you must labor hard, as it is worth all the rest." Bishop Asbury was in the chair, and decided it as a law question, "that the General conference had the power to depose a bishop when they thought the good of the Church required it, though there might be no charge for improper conduct."† The editor of the Western Advocate maintained this ground in his defense of Bishop Hanline's speech, against the new theory as supported by Dr. Latta.‡

The Rev. Granville Moody maintained the doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in three articles, published in the Western Advocate, of December 20, 1844, and January 3 and 10, 1845.¶ Mr. Moody, in his first article on the Episcopacy, shows, with Watson, that "ordination is the act of conferring holy orders, with or without laying on of hands," and that the laying on of hands is a circumstance of ordination, not an essential. In his second letter he prosecutes the same topic, and also shows that Bishop Andrew had a full and fair examination of his case. In his third letter Mr. Moody finishes with great clearness and force what he undertook.

4. The powers of the General conference came in for their share of the general controversy. It was always, till now, a conceded point, as is manifest from the foregoing paragraphs, and the authorities cited, that the General conference had power not only to expel a bishop for immorality, but to expel or depose him for imprudent conduct, or to suspend, or dismiss him for such cause as they saw fit. But now, to protect Bishop Andrew, the General conference, it is argued, can not *depose* a bishop or suspend him—he could only be expelled. And as he must be expelled according to statute laws found in the Discipline, and there were none such in it, a bishop becomes independent of all control. Especially is this so, seeing he is "a co-ordinate branch of the General conference," as the new theory teaches.§ The error is made a little plausible by con-

\* R., November 7th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1019–1021. Also W., of November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 651.

† R., November 14th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 1030–1034. Also in W., December 6th and 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 692, 763.

\* R., November 7th and 14th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1024.

† W., December 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 747–750.

‡ W., December 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 754–758.

¶ W., December 20th, and January 3 and 10, 1845.

§ Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 810, 815.

‡ W., August 14th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 213, 214.

founding the office of bishop with the tenure of a single incumbent of that office. The office of bishop and the plan of a general superintendency, are fundamental ecclesiastical principles of Episcopal Methodism, which the General conference can not do away or infringe upon. But this body, according to Discipline, has complete authority to approve, censure, suspend, depose, or expel any bishop; and this power has always been recognized and exercised as far as there was room for it, since the organization of the first delegated conference in 1808. The supreme absurdity was now contended for, that the General conference could expel but not depose, than which nothing is more absurd. Bishop M'Kendree, in 1808, said in his address to General conference, Bishop Asbury being present, "I consider myself justly accountable, not for the system of government, but for my administration; and ought, therefore, to be ready to answer in General conference for past conduct, and be willing to receive information and advice to perfect future operations."\* But now "all legislation to depose a bishop is above law and without law."† The pamphlet of Dr. Latta containing these high assumptions, was reviewed in the Western Advocate, and its errors exposed;‡

Indeed, the General conference was charged by the editor of the Southern Advocate with depriving the Bishop of his civil rights, and the charge is italicized thus: "*The General conference has declared its authority to deprive a slaveholder of his ecclesiastical rights, unless he yields his civil rights, and has shown its readiness to exercise that authority for expediency's sake.*"|| Were we to say that slaveholding and rumselling, and rum-drinking, horse-racing, and card-playing were civil rights, we would say truly; and yet a gambling bishop would pass as well in the scale of morals as many slaveholders would. But now the General conference is denounced without stint for executing its proper functions. Its acts were lauded to the skies for some things, but condemned unmeasurably for not sustaining those measures which would countenance or sanction slavery.

5. The Methodist Episcopal Church, as is well known, had all along pronounced slavery to be a great moral evil. But since the decisions of 1844 the Church is represented by the southern leaders as being greatly in error on this point. A leading writer, Dr. Smith, we suppose, under the title of *Unus Multarum*,§ lays down the following proposition as a thesis for nearly five columns of an argument, which he elaborates to his utmost:

"*That ecclesiastical bodies have no right, directly or indirectly, to legislate on the subject of slavery in this country.*"

This became the common doctrine of the south, and we need not quote cases here to show its correctness, as it meets us at every step of the discussion. The Church is now entirely wrong, as slavery is a civil institution, with which the Church has nothing to do.

Now, as slavery is a system of wrong, and injustice, by which man is deprived of his rights, and endless wrongs inflicted on him, it seems

strange that the Christian Church is to be deprived of its power to execute the laws of Christ over Church members, in regard to Christian morals. In support of the course pursued by the Methodist Episcopal Church, we mention the following reasons and considerations, which amply justify her past course, and lay her under new obligations to pursue it for the future.

(1.) The system of slavery is expressly forbidden in holy Scripture, as a sin of the first magnitude: "He that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." Ex. xxi, 16. Here slavery, in its very root, is condemned as a capital offense in an individual. It was condemned to nations in the case of Egypt, as well as in the Mosaic code. In the law of Moses, it was not allowed to be a part of their civil institutions; for the servitude, or service which the Almighty regulated was not slavery, but a temporary servitude, which was to terminate, in all cases, with life, by contract of the parties, and under such restrictions as to cut up slavery proper by the roots. The Mosaic code abounds with regulations, not to regulate slavery, but to regulate service, or servitude, so that it could never degenerate into slavery.

(2.) The New Testament abounds with moral principles, which are destructive to slavery. The man-stealer is classed among the worst of men. And every one is a man-stealer, in the New Testament sense of the term, who deals in slaves in any manner other than to set them free, or to exercise humanity and mercy toward them, if he can not free them.

(3.) The Christian world, in condemning the African slave-trade, have condemned slavery itself; for slavery is the principal wrong, seeing the slave-trade is no other than one of the means of supporting slavery. The other great source of support is the American domestic slave-trade, in many respects not less atrocious than the African. There are 100,000 free-born children in the United States annually enslaved; for all men are created free and equal. For though their injured mothers are now slaves, they and their children, enslaved as soon as they breathe, were all born free. No one was ever born a slave. The cruel heathen maxim of the cruel law, "*Partus sequitur ventrem*"—"The child follows the condition of the mother," is not of God, but is condemned in these words: "The son shall not bear the iniquity of his father." If, however, persons will say that slavery is right, they must say that theft, robbery, licentiousness, wrong, oppression, etc., are also right. We must not argue with such. It would be useless.

(4.) But the Church has not labored in vain in this matter. Much good has resulted from her labors, and much more is to follow. The early legislation of the Methodist Episcopal Church on slavery, has had a profound effect on the public mind of the south against the evil; and much of the real antislavery sentiment now in the south and in the north, is attributable to the protest against it in the Discipline, and the efforts of our fathers against it. Much opposition, of course, and sometimes tumults, arose in our early history in reference to this; but not more than to our other efforts which proved so salutary. Individual instances of emancipation became numerous; a deep religious sentiment against slavery was produced, when no other ecclesiastical agency operated against it. Many thousands were emancipated through the agency

\* Bangs's History, Vol. II, p. 311.

† See Dr. Latta's Pamphlet, Cincinnati, 1844, pp. 43, octavo, on "Constitutional Claims of Methodist Episcopacy" Pamphlets, XLVII, p. 489.

‡ W., August 14th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 213, 214.

§ S., September 13th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 326.

‡ R., October 10th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 963-967.

of our Church, till more stringent laws were made to prevent freedom. And slavery, in the Union, will never recover from the stroke inflicted on it through the means of the Methodist Episcopal Church, till slavery is no more.\*

(5.) Our legislation has preserved the traveling ministers from slaveholding throughout all Delaware and Maryland, the greater part of Virginia, and in all Kentucky and Missouri. This is a perfect moral prodigy, the like of which, for moral grandeur and noble effect, was never, perhaps, excelled. It is the sublime achievement of the fathers of Methodism against slavery, continued by sons worthy of their parentage. And the work of freedom and of right, through this means, will be much advanced in the future.

(6.) Our legislation has kept the Episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church pure from slavery. No slaveholder was ever elected to the Episcopacy; and no slaveholder can be continued in it if he become a slaveholder. The influence of this is vast. And this we need not expound, as the demonstration of it is before the eyes of all.

(7.) It was the antislavery principles and practice of the Church that preserved the middle and northern conferences from disaffection during the excitements of the past ten or fifteen years.

(8.) The abandonment of our antislavery principles and practice in the south, has led to disruption—to the countenance and support of great moral wrongs. Had they adhered to our well-tryed system, the Gospel could be preached to the slaves and to their masters, as formerly, with the addition of continuing our well-directed and Scriptural testimony against slavery, which would operate safely, and peaceably, till the whole of it would be done away, and that, too, for the mutual benefit of all concerned. Now the case is very different, and the result must be injurious. The compromise of the south is an enormous concession to the demands of slavery.

6. As to the views of the south on slavery; they appear to have made a sudden advance in favor of slavery in connection with the acts of General conference, and pursuant of them. At an early day, the south were equally as antislavery as the north. But gradually the southern Methodists relaxed from their original principles, and adopted the lax views on slavery entertained by the Churches around them, and by the recent statesmen. It may be proper here to quote a few out of the many expressions that could be adduced.

Rev. Benjamin Watson, of Trenton, Tennessee, who may, in this, represent the south-west, writes three elaborate articles in June and August, in the Nashville Advocate, which are truly pro-slavery. He says, June 21st: "It is as agreeable to the order of God's providence that some men should be the bond slaves of others, as it is that there should be various grades and conditions in society, and that among these there should be hewers of wood and drawers of water."† "But suppose they [slaves] were maltreated? That is no argument against the validity of the institution. Matrimony is an institution recognized and sanctioned by the law of God as such. But sometimes men treat their wives with cruelty. Is it, therefore, just

to pronounce the institution as invalid, and denounce it as wicked? So of slavery." Again he says: "The institution of slavery is not sinful."‡

Elihu, or Dr. Longstreet, in November and December, discourses on slavery in three elaborate articles in the Southern Advocate. He says: "It is not proper to say of slavery it is a sin, for no one believes that a man is a sinner because he is a slave, although he may believe his master is a sinner, because he holds him in slavery. Neither is it proper to say slavery is an evil, if it is used as synonymous with sin; but if it is used to express *wretchedness, misery, calamity*, etc., it would be equivocal, because no one intends to say that it is so to the master. The framers of our Discipline did not mean to say that slavery was a great sin, or a sin in any degree. The Georgia conference, in 1837, declared that slavery was not a moral evil. They meant to affirm that slaveholding was not sinful—that slaveholders were not sinners because they held slaves. By sin, I mean an act by which one knowingly and willfully transgresses the law of God, as it is recorded in the holy Scriptures. Slavery is a less evil than the servitude of children in the cotton factories of England. My proposition, then, is, that it is not a sin to hold slaves, using the word sin in the sense before given."† He then attempts to show that "slaveholding was not a sin, in any degree, under the Christian dispensation, nor, either by express declaration, proper inference, a disqualifying circumstance, debarring the slaveholder from any office in the Christian Church."‡ He then endeavors to maintain the same from the Old Testament, and concludes thus in his next number: "Abolition, where it is not connected with political ends, is a mania; it is a fanatical monster; an insatiable polyphemus; which will tear to pieces and devour every thing sacred, and all political and religious institutions, if it is not arrested. Dr. Bond and his supporters, who are the true schismatics on this subject, will be disappointed."§

The Southern Advocate, of November 29th, publishes an elaborate article, of over five columns, from the pen of G. W. W. Stone, professor in Emory College, Georgia, which Dr. Capers commends as "calculated to do much good."¶ Mr. Stone says, that slavery, in its origin, was a blessing to the slave, as it preserved him from death. He considers, in brief, that slavery is a civil institution, with which the Church has nothing to do, and leaves the subject with this general view, without defining very closely his positions.

7. The politicians generally, but especially of the south, took a lively interest in the proceedings of the General conference, and in its results; but the southern Methodists seem to have become very complaisant to the statesmen of the times. In Georgia and South Carolina they generally declared that slavery was wholly a civil institution, with which they had nothing to do. Dr. Capers, during General conference, in our hearing, declared at one time that the south might possibly remain in connection with the north, after the decision of the Bishop's case, were the leading statesmen in the south to approve of it. The Charleston Mer-

\* N., September 20th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 323.

† S., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 641, 642.

‡ S., November 27th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 669.

§ S., December 6th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 705-709.

¶ S., November 29th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 661-666.

\* Z., October 23d. Scraps, Vol. VIII, p. 113, on "Our Legislation on Slavery."

† N., July 26th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 150, 152.

cury, in June, hailed the issue of the Protest as possessing high rank; "for it marks an epoch—the first dissolution of the Union."\* Governor Hammond, in his message to the state Legislature of South Carolina, in December, 1844, says: "With becoming spirit the patriotic Methodists of the south dissolved all connection with their brethren of the north, and for this they are entitled to lasting honor and gratitude from us."†

Dr. Wightman thinks that the abolitionists would "stir up the elements of servile war, and would gloat over the spectacle of fields ensanguined with the blood of brothers." He thinks the "prospect for peace and amicable relations is infinitely better with a separation than under a forced and nominal union. . . . The division of the Methodist Episcopal Church will demonstrate this fact to the country, that southern forbearance has its limits, and that a vigorous and united resistance will be made, at all costs, to the spread of the pseudo-religious frenzy called abolitionism. Thus, a check will be put upon a movement which, more than all other causes of discord put together, threatens the political union. All thinking men in the south will unhesitatingly agree as to the soundness and sagacity of this view of the subject."‡ The editor then gives an extract from a private letter of a distinguished statesman, who discourses thus:

"A dissolution of the Union will throw the south, with Texas affiliated, into a new republic, with Great Britain to guarantee its independence. Abolition, with England is a mere stalking horse, to disguise its real purposes. It has neither sympathies nor community interests with the eastern, northern, or western states. They are her rivals, and their rivalry will become every year more detrimental to her interests. The southern states are her customers; they furnish her with an inexhaustible supply of materials to be worked up by her surplus population, and they take back the products of her labor in a ratio of consumption more than equal to all the agricultural products which they export to pay for them. She would rejoice at any day to sign a free trade convention with the southern states, and leave the slaves and abolitionists to take care of themselves as best they might. Much as we might deplore a breaking up of our confederation—and from my inmost soul I would deplore it—there is yet an event more to be dreaded, and that is the triumph of fanatical abolitionism. Hundreds of abolitionists, now living, would give our throats to the knife, and our wives and daughters to violation, sooner than retreat one step from the position they have assumed; and can there be any safety in yielding to such men one inch of ground? It is a mania, and, like others founded on delusions of the devil, it can not, and will not set a reasonable limit to its aggressions. Let it gather a little more force, and it will sweep all the landmarks of religion and law, like an Alpine torrent, before it. Men of sober temperament and gray heads are taking this view of the subject, and every man will be required to do his duty; and the duty of the Methodist Church is too obvious to justify any hesitancy in resisting the claims of northern abolition-

ists. The great mass of the antislavery men in the Church north do not like to be called abolitionists; but, whatever their opinions may be on the subject of our holding slaves, as connected with our religion, they are abolitionists, or worse than abolitionists to us, so long as they strive to put our necks under the yoke of abolitionism."\*

8. The southern papers put forth all their power, both editorially and by correspondents and selections, to widen the breach, and to complete the secession. They sedulously collected every scrap of ultra-abolition character that got its way into the public prints; and sometimes a northern man with southern principles was to be found who presented to them, in correspondence, mere caricatures of the north. One of these anonymous writers, who styles himself "A member of the New York conference," went back to the time previous to General conference, and culled up long articles made up of the most extravagant ultra-abolition sentiments that appeared in the papers.† The editor of the Southern Advocate, in publishing this, sounds editorially the trumpet of secession. Of some that was too rank for publication, he says that he could not pollute his columns with such incendiary stuff, and yet he inveighs most violently against the abolitionists.‡ Dr. Bond is especially assaulted and denounced by the southern papers.§ The three southern papers contend most earnestly, by correspondents, selections, and editorially, for the separation of the south from the Church. The temper, in some cases, was violent and denunciatory, such as angry masters employ toward their slaves; in other instances it was mild, yet very decided. A "New England man" gave caricatures in the southern papers of abolitionism and antislaveryism, in which he misrepresents both, but does justice to neither.¶

9. A brief survey of the missions among the slaves may be furnished here. The following are the statistics taken from the Annual Report of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church:

South Carolina conference.....	7,929
Georgia conference.....	3,000
Tennessee conference.....	368
Alabama conference.....	1,267
Memphis conference.....	1,940
Mississippi conference.....	1,695
North Carolina conference.....	25
Total.....	16,224

In reply to the objection that, should the south secede, the missions would not be sustained among the colored people, Dr. Capers says that the south can readily support the missions, and makes calculations that go to show that this could readily be done by the south.‡ In September he wrote a general address on the subject well calculated to accomplish its object.\*\* The access to the slaves was never much interrupted, notwithstanding the constant cry that these would be ruined by the interference of abolitionists.

As to the argument for secession, drawn from the consideration that our ministers, if con-

\* S., June 28th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 98.

† C., December 25th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 1121.

‡ S., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 638-640.

\* S., November 22d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 639.

† S., August 10th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 198-201.

‡ S., August 10th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 196.

§ C., October 23d. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 512, 513.

¶ W., October 25th. Scraps, Vol. I, pp. 532-536.

\*\* S., August 23d. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 225.

\*\* S., November 27th. Scraps, Vol. I, p. 378.

nected with the north, would not have access to the slaves or the southern community, Wm. H. Coffin, of Prince George, Maryland, answers it as follows: "Our southern ministers are undisturbed in their possession of slaves. They have the territory before them, with unrestrained access to all classes and color. The people are not in advance of them in opinion, and the General conference has left them undisturbed in their enjoyment; for no new rule of Discipline has been enacted to interfere with their operations. That a continued connection with the General conference would destroy the usefulness of any of the southern ministers, or endanger the existence of the Church in their territories, is an assertion unsupported by any fact. If the Church is endangered, or the ministry injured, by a connection with the General conference, it is because an attempt has been made, by some of our own ministers, to identify that conference with northern fanaticism, and opponents of all slaveholders."\*

10. In November and December it was manifest that, as far as the views and purposes of the south were concerned, they were fully determined on secession, or, as they called it, separation, and, in undefined, popular style, division; and the north, manifesting no general indication either of retraction for the past, or security for the future, there was no encouragement held out by them to the south that any compromise could be made so as to reconcile both together.

With a unity perhaps unparalleled in our history, the entire body of northern Methodists have approved of the action of the General conference in the principal cases of decision. The south, too, as a whole, came to the conclusion that without separation and assurance for the future they would separate. Both were fixed, and no considerations presented from any individuals could change them in the least: hence, we may conclude that the close of the year 1844 saw all the elements arranged in the south that would, in May, 1845, effect the great secession, or separation, from the Methodist Episcopal Church, eventuating in the organization of a new Church, under such name as its founders would choose to adopt. Dr. Olin wrote, in November, an elaborate article, in the *Christian Advocate*, entitled "The Crisis," in which he took this view of the subject, and entreated all to submit to a result which could not now be evaded, or controlled, by any wisdom of man. He thought the plan of the General conference as good, or better, than any that could now be devised.†

11. The following question now presents itself to our inquiry: *What will be the character of the new Church?*

*Will the Church south be a pro-slavery Church?* A. C., of Baltimore, maintained that it must be such in the nature of the case. The true reason for the secession was, that the Methodist Episcopal Church refused to give a formal sanction to slavery: hence, it will be a slavery Church, and the first slavery Church ever or-

ganized.\* And though our able southerner called this a "vile slander," it is, alas! but too true.‡

*Will the southern Church be a secession?* This must be its true character. The General conference never entertained, nor considered, the division of the Church. None at General conference took it to be division, properly so called. The wisest and best men north and south, when they expressed themselves definitely on the subject, generally called it secession. The refusal of the annual conferences to alter the Restriction gave full proof of this. All the endeavors of writers and speakers north and south, to avoid the use of the term secession, using the word separation sometimes, and the word division at other times, could not conceal the true nature of the case. After all, the event was a secession, and nothing else; or, in other words, a *separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church*.

*Was the separation necessary?* Whatever necessity existed in the case the south themselves created it. Their opposition to the constitutional and disciplinary course of the General conference, their agitations there and since, and their violent attempt to conciliate or corrupt public sentiment, have produced all the necessity that ever existed. Indeed, it may be called a *wrong commitment* of themselves in yielding to evil influences, consenting to false principles, and following bad examples to such an extent that there was no room to retreat. They passed the Rubicon and could not return.

*The south have placed their course on false issues.* The true issue was that the General conference were unwilling to have a slaveholding bishop. To evade this an incessant fire was kept up against the General conference, the Church in the north, and on all who opposed them. They were anxious, also, to draw into question the prerogatives of the Episcopacy, affirming that the north had encroached upon it. These, and such, were the issues made in the place of the true one. This strange issue was made that the plan contemplated "a separation of the protesting conferences, not from the fellowship or unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but from the jurisdiction of the General conference as then constituted.‡

12. The question began in December to be asked, "*Shall we have the Methodist Episcopal Church in the south?*" and shall we have preachers from that Church?" Dr. Bond responds to these questions, gravely put from southern correspondents, as follows:

That the General conference, in adopting the plan, did not exercise any constitutional right, and its act can be considered in no other light than as a recommendation. The conference did not claim the right to impose it on the Church. The minority have not accepted the arrangement according to its specific design. The Methodist Episcopal Church will, therefore, be bound to see to the spiritual provision of its members in every place.¶

\*C., September 4th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 269.

†S., October 18th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 485.

‡Dr. Wightman, in S., December 13th. *Scraps*, I, p. 726.

¶C., December 11th. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 1116.

\*C., September 2d. *Scraps*, Vol. I, p. 262.

†C., November 22d, Vol. XIX, pp. 61, 62.



## CHAPTER XXX.

## BISHOP SOULE—HIS OPPONENTS AND DEFENDERS.

1. OUR readers are aware that the editor of the Western Christian Advocate, when he published the letters of Bishops Soule and Andrew, expressed himself clearly as to the light in which he viewed them. He did not intentionally, or in fact, as he thinks, bring an accusation against the Bishop. He only stated the facts in the case, as he was persuaded every intelligent and unprejudiced mind viewed them. He thought then, and thinks now, that he neither overstated nor misrepresented the case. Others, of high reputation, such as Dr. Bangs, Dr. Bond, and Dr. Cartwright, expressed themselves to the same amount; and, indeed, the great body of our ministers and people to this day are of the same opinion.

Bishop Soule, as we expected, took great umbrage at the expression of sentiments uttered respecting his course. He sent an article to the Christian Advocate, of January 3d, complaining of the procedure.\* In a letter dated Fayetteville, December 17, 1844, he gives a fuller edition of his complaint. This was published in the Western Christian Advocate of January 3, 1845,† and also in the Southern Advocate of January 17th,‡ accompanied by another letter severely censuring Dr. Bangs. The short article in the Christian Advocate and Journal contains the following as a brief outline of the whole: "I had hoped that, after the labors of almost half a century, I should be permitted to finish my course, and sleep with my fathers in peace, without being held up before the Church and the American community, and probably before the Wesleyan body in Europe, in a character which, through my whole life, I have disclaimed and labored to prove, both by words and acts, did not belong to me. Such a publication, by whomsoever originated, or by whomsoever circulated, I consider as unjust, as well as very unkind, to me, and of unhappy tendency in its influence upon the unity and peace of the Church. I am charged before the Church, and the people of these states, first from our own press, and then by extensive copying into other journals, with having taken upon myself the authority to 'do singly what the General conference and college of bishops decided should not be done.' This charge, were it true, would certainly prove me unworthy of the trust committed to me; for he who will not be subject to law and constitutional authority, himself is not worthy to be placed in authority, or be intrusted with the administration of law in relation to others. At present I can only plead 'not guilty' to this heavy charge, and pray that the sentence of condemnation may not be pronounced upon me at the tribunal of public opinion, or in the official bodies of the Church, till my extensive labors and weight of care will afford me time to make my defense."§

In his article of December 17, 1844, in the Western Christian Advocate of January 3, 1845, the Bishop comprises the foregoing, and adds that he does not accuse the editor of the Advocate of intentional injury.\*

In publishing this letter, at the request of Bishop Soule, the editor of the Western Christian Advocate felt himself called on to declare that, from the published plan of the bishops, Bishop Andrew had no work assigned him, but Bishop Soule invited him to do work: hence the opposition by him to his colleagues. Beside, it was the sense or judgment of the General conference that Bishop Andrew would not exercise his episcopal functions till freed from slaveholding: hence, to assign him work was to act in opposition to the decision of the General conference. Such were the facts in the case. The editor knew, too, that Bishop Soule was absent, but he knew, also, that his letter was present, and spread before the Church at large, and the world, by the Bishop himself.

2. Bishop Soule and his southern friends viewed the matter in a very different light from those who were firmly attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Accordingly, at the session of the South Carolina conference, held December 25, 1844, he expressed himself thus, according to the report of Dr. Wightman: "Bishop Soule rose and remarked, in substance, that he had intended to make, at a proper time, a communication to the conference, in regard to his invitation by Bishop Andrew, to attend with him the southern conferences. That invitation had awakened controversy in the north and northwest. From present indications it was likely he should be called to share a considerable portion of the responsibility of his worthy colleague, to which he had not the least objection. [Applause.] His letter to Bishop Andrew was not a rash procedure—not a hasty step. In general, he could say in his measure, with John Wesley, 'I do nothing rashly.' However, he was not surprised that his letter had been made matter of animadversion. He should regret if his friends, either north or south, should hastily enter upon this new arena of controversy. He had addressed a note to the editor of the Western Christian Advocate, in reference to the heavy charge he had brought against him; and one also to Dr. Bond, of the New York Advocate, immediately upon seeing their articles against him, requesting that the public might be informed that he pleaded 'not guilty,' and hoped he should not be condemned without having been heard in his own defense. He took occasion to say that he had documents and authorities in his possession, of which, perhaps, certain editors and other brethren might not be aware. He felt himself in no difficulty whatever. He was perfectly at ease and quiet. [Applause.] He stood on a foundation immovable. His position was impregnable. He thanked his good friend, the editor of the Southern Christian Advocate, for offering to defend

\* C., January 1, 1845. Scraps, II, p. 11.

† W., January 3d. Scraps, II, pp. 44, 45.

‡ S., January 17th. Scraps, II, p. 100.

§ C., January 1, 1845. Scraps, II, p. 11.

\* See W., January 3d. Scraps, II, p. 44.

him hereafter. He, however, was fully prepared to DEFEND HIMSELF. This brief address of Bishop Soule was received with strong emotion, and elicited several involuntary bursts of applause.\*

The Haverhill District Association declares that the act of Bishop Soule in inviting Bishop Andrew to join him in episcopal services, was "directly in contravention of the decision of the late General conference had in the case of Bishop Andrew."† Such was the decision of every one not committed, or enlisted as a partisan on Bishop Soule's side. But the southern brethren were elated at the aid received from the senior Bishop, and therefore were blind to the real character of the acts which they eulogized. Furthermore, they never attempt to look at the Bishop's course, according to the nature of his acts. They are carried away beyond the bounds of sober reflection; and express themselves in applause and hurrahs, very much like those employed on no very grave occasions.

3. Dr. Bond, as we have already seen, in an editorial of December 18th, made some strictures on the Bishop's course. The Doctor had said in reference to Bishop Soule: "He, therefore, claims for the Episcopacy—nay, for any one of the bishops, a right to decide on the legality of an act of the General conference, and to veto it, if, in his judgment, it is not in accordance with the Discipline of the Church. Thus a new issue is added to the one which has agitated the Church so fearfully, and one on which it is not possible to come to any compromise without changing the cardinal principles of our economy." The Bishop, in a letter dated Augusta, Georgia, January 4, 1845, and published in the Southern Advocate of January 17th,‡ replies to Dr. Bond. He denies the truth of Dr. Bond's view of his course, and "asserts the *direct converse* of Dr. Bond's position." He adds: "I assert, without fear of contradiction, that I do not claim, and that I never have claimed, either for myself or any one of the bishops, or all of them conjointly, the right which Dr. Bond charges on me for claiming." He says, in reference to Bishop Andrew: "He did nothing but what is fully provided for and covered by the record." The Bishop seems to have lost his balance, and to have indulged in uncourteous language toward Dr. Bond, throughout this letter, altogether different from his usual course.

Dr. Bond, in an article of January 29th, replies to Bishop Soule in ironical style. He expresses his gratification that the Bishop disavows the inferences which he had drawn from the Bishop's letter to Bishop Andrew, and his address to the Virginia conference. He expresses his great respect for the Bishop from many considerations, and presents an apology for the mistake into which he had fallen. This apology, however, is nothing less than an argument in which he defends his inferences, of which the following is the summing up:

"We must not be understood as arguing with the senior Bishop, to prove the inferences we drew from his letter, and address to the Virginia conference, to be correct. What we have said must be taken only as an apology for having misinterpreted what he has written, said, and done. We *must* have been in error, for the Bishop says so; and withal, has documents

which certain editors know nothing about. The state of the case, then, for the present, is, that the General conference gave it as the 'sense' of the conference, that Bishop Andrew cease from the exercise of his episcopal functions while he continues to own slaves; the bishops accordingly leave him out of the plan of episcopal visitations; Bishop Andrew determines to abide the judgment, and suspend his official functions till the meeting of the convention in Louisville; Bishop Soule invites Bishop Andrew to change his determination, and join him in the work of a bishop, and says he does so in full view of his responsibilities—he stands on the broad platform of the Discipline. Yet we are not to understand him as acting in contravention of the decision of the General conference. He assures the Church, 'that whenever the General conference shall enact laws or rules, or the "College of Bishops," or a majority of them, shall make decisions, which in my deliberate judgment I can not comply with, or carry into execution consistently with the obligations to the Church which I have voluntarily taken upon me, I will not hold my office, and act either in contempt or contravention of such laws or decisions.' We own we can not understand this; but the Bishop promises to make it all plain, and requests that the subject shall not be agitated till he has had time and leisure to do so. We can wait, and hope our readers will manifest no impatience for the explanation.

"As to the complaints against us for not sustaining the report of the committee of nine, which the Bishop *might* charge against the senior editor as a 'disregarding official instructions relating to his office'—hesitates to make the charge—but finally makes it in the most unmistakable terms, we answer with all respect and submission: first, we never understood ourselves as instructed not to question the propriety of any act of the General conference itself, nor that we must not allow our correspondents to do so. All that the General conference requires is, 'the rules and regulations' made by the supreme council of the Church shall be *obeyed*, till they are constitutionally repealed or altered. Secondly, that report of the committee of nine contained provisions which the General conference might advise, but did not claim any constitutional right to enact or make binding on the Church. Thirdly, we have always sustained an 'equitable division of the funds,' if 'separation' should take place. Indeed, we have not found any who were opposed to it; though many members of annual conferences have declined to vote an alteration in the General Rule in advance, lest they might be understood to sanction a division of the Church.

"After all, the opinions of an editor, *pro* or *con*, are of little consequence. The *act* of a bishop in contravention of the decisions of the General conference arrests the wheels of government, and is a very serious matter. This we thought had been done. The Bishop says we have been mistaken, and—we have no more to say.\*

"The Bishop sneers with ineffable scorn and contempt at our pious, but, as he thinks, premature exclamation, 'Glory to God, there is still hope'—uttered when we learned from a correspondent that there were in the south some who desired a compromise. But, however ungracious such a sneer might be in others, we

\* S., January 31. Scraps, II, p. 20.

† N. from Z., January 10th. Scraps, II, p. 73.

‡ S., January 17th. Scraps, II, p. 98.

\* C., January 29th. The same in W., February 14th. Scraps, II, p. 226.

suppose it is included in episcopal prerogatives, and we endure it with all meekness. Detached from high station to inferiority, such contempt must wither, but must not offend. We are profiting very much by the doctrines of the 'Protest.'"

4. In consequence of Dr. Bangs's strictures on the course of Bishop Soule, in calling Bishop Andrew into service, the senior Bishop, on the 6th of January,\* published in the Southern Advocate a severe reproof of Dr. Bangs, accompanying his first letter to the editor of the Western Advocate. He "finds that very considerable excitement is produced, both in the north and south, by the Doctor's [Elliott's] publication;" he requested its publication in the Southern Advocate, with the addition of his strictures on Dr. Bangs. He thinks it unnecessary to make any replies to Dr. Bangs's positions, as they were in the same category with those of the two Advocates." He then proceeds to tantalize Dr. Bangs in no very courteous terms. Dr. Bangs writes the following notice of the Bishop, which appeared in the New York Advocate of January 29th:

"In a notice of Bishop Soule, published in the Southern Christian Advocate, not long since, in alluding to my communication in reference to his invitation to Bishop Andrew, to assist him in presiding at the annual conferences, he remarked, '*I have no contention with Dr. Bangs.*' It seems, however, that, notwithstanding at the General conference he told us that 'his principles were as changeless as the throne of God,' he has since altered his mind, as the above letter in reference to myself will show.

"Your readers doubtless will regret, equally with myself, that the senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church should descend so low as to treat any individual with such sneering contempt. When Bishop Soule shall condescend to give us the documents to which he alluded in his address to the South Carolina conference, in justification of his course, or shall attempt to fortify himself with arguments against the objections that have been brought against him, he will deserve serious notice, and which will undoubtedly be awarded him; but till he has something more substantial to present than contemptuous sarcasms, I, for one, shall have nothing more to say in reference to the truly awkward and embarrassing position in which he finds himself placed. N. BANGS.

"New York, January 22, 1845."†

5. In consequence of the light in which the entire north, almost without exception, viewed the course of Bishop Soule, in urging and inviting Bishop Andrew to resume his episcopal functions, Bishop Soule attempted to justify his course in a letter dated Eatonton, Georgia, January 21, 1845, and published in the Southern Advocate of January 31st. He attempts to show that his course was in accordance with the official action of the Episcopal Board, and with the action of the General conference.

The amount of his reasoning is that Bishop Andrew, having proceeded according to the instructions of Bishop Soule, his course was in accordance with the acts of the board of bishops, and of the General conference. His exposition, however, only darkens and confuses what without it was very plain.‡

The Bishop thinks it was a mere *circumstance*,

whether Bishop Andrew gave the information personally or by writing. This was a grand mistake, because an official, written voucher was necessary, that the bishops might have it to present to the General conference to justify themselves in deciding that Bishop Andrew should resume episcopal duties. The verbal statements of Bishop Soule, or those of the southern delegates, would form no proper voucher, as they were equally without the proper form necessary to give them any plea for consideration.

The editor of the Southern Advocate\* thinks the Bishop's letter "will create a sensation, certainly a very agreeable one, throughout the southern portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whatever may be its effects in certain other quarters." The editor of the Richmond Advocate now thinks there was nothing in the action of the General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew, to exclude him from the plan of episcopal visitation.† All this was known and declared at General conference; but these same editors, and the south with them, following Bishop Soule, declared the Bishop was deposed; and now all follow the same leader in declaring that Bishop Andrew could lawfully be called to work without the consent of the other bishops.

6. Bishop Soule, however, does his utmost to show that he was on the side of law. Accordingly, he wrote a second letter, dated Milledgeville, Georgia, January 27, 1845, to the editor of the Western Christian Advocate. He regrets that since the publication of his first letter in the Western Christian Advocate, new occasions of contention and strife had occurred, which would widen the breach between the north and the south. He had hoped that, though there would be a separation, there would still remain a broad ground of Scriptural truth on which they might meet, so as "not to provoke to wrath and strife about the civil and domestic institutions of the country." He then exhorts all to cultivate the spirit of love and charity. He thought no compromise presented would avail, as all contemplated a *caste* in the constitutional eldership of the Church.‡

The editor of the Western Advocate,|| in publishing Bishop Soule's second letter, remarked that this letter of the Bishop was no more than a *mere confession* that the editor of the Advocate was right all along, in his views of the case, and repeated what he had said on November 22d, and added that, having carefully considered the whole matter, he was compelled to adhere to his original declaration without the least variation or qualification.

7. To meet the grave and unfounded charges of Bishop Soule, the other bishops felt themselves called upon to explain and defend their course, which had been assailed so unceremoniously by the senior Bishop. Accordingly, they published, in the Christian Advocate and Journal of February 19th, a card of explanation. They say the time had come in which it was proper they should respond to the calls which have been made, both privately and publicly, for authentic information in regard to the action of the majority of the superintendents, by which the name of Bishop Andrew was omitted from the plan of episcopal visitation, arranged at the close of the late General conference. They then

\* S., January 17th. Scraps, II, p. 101.

† C., Jan. 29th. W., Feb. 14th. Scraps, II, p. 229.

‡ S., Jan. 31, 1845. C., Feb. 19th. Scraps, II, p. 173.

\* S., January 31st. Scraps, II, p. 182.

† R., February 13th. Scraps, II, p. 222.

‡ W., February 14th. Scraps, II, p. 240.

|| W., February 14th. Scraps, II, p. 241.

recite the action in the case of Bishop Andrew, and the questions of the bishops on the 6th of June, and the answer of the General conference to them. They then quote the episcopal decision had on June 11th, as follows: "It is our opinion, in regard to the action of the late General conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew, that it was designed by that body to devolve the responsibility of the exercise of the functions of his office exclusively on himself. In the absence of Bishop Andrew, at the time of arranging the plan of episcopal visitation, for the ensuing four years, and he not having notified us of his desire or purpose, with respect to it, we should regard ourselves as acting in contravention of the expressed will of the General conference, if we apportioned to Bishop Andrew any definite portion thereof. But if he shall hereafter make a written application for a portion of the general oversight, we should feel ourselves justified in assigning it to him." Thus far the action of the bishops, June 11, 1844.

The bishops then conclude by saying, "After this paper was signed, and before the parting of the superintendents, it was agreed to make out a reserved plan of episcopal visitation, including Bishop Andrew in the apportionment of the work thereof, which was done, and intrusted to the safe-keeping of Bishop Soule, with an explicit understanding that, if he should receive from Bishop Andrew a written application for his portion of the general superintendency, he was then, and in that event, to publish the second or reserved plan, in immediate connection with the said application, that the reason for the substitution of the second plan might accompany its publication." This official declaration was signed by Bishops Hedding, Waugh, Morris, and Hamline. Why the name of Bishop James was not attached to it, we are not informed. We publish the Address of the Bishops in our list of documents.\*

Dr. Bond, in the same paper in which he published the official explanation of the bishops, inserted also Bishop Soule's letter of January 21st, and comments on them with great plainness and ability, yet in a most respectful manner.† He canvasses the entire proceedings connected with the case, and after saying that he must suppose Bishop Soule has some mode of justifying his course, he sums up the matter thus:

"We confess we are entirely in the dark, but we shall wait patiently the denouement. In our view the case stands thus: The General conference passes a resolution, giving it as their sense, judgment, or opinion, that Bishop Andrew cease from the exercise of his official functions, till a certain impediment is removed, and subsequently that whether in any, and if any, in what work Bishop Andrew be employed, is to be determined by his own decision and action in relation to the previous action of this conference in his case. The bishops in council determine that the action of the conference does not impose a mandatory prohibition of Bishop Andrew's official action, but leaves him at liberty to disregard the expressed will of that body, under the responsibilities created by the action of the conference in that case. The bishops, however, decide that they can not, under their own responsibilities, anticipate his decision, and assign him a portion

of their work. He must decide for himself, and communicate his decision in writing. If he resolves to take the responsibility of disobeying the will of the supreme council of the Church, and shall signify his determination in writing, they can not go further than the conference went, and forbid him, but will assign him a portion of the common episcopal duties. The impediment remains, and Bishop Andrew does not make application for a portion of the general superintendency; on the contrary, determines to cease from the exercise of his episcopal functions till the meeting of the Louisville convention. Bishop Soule writes to him, invites him, and thereby advises him to take part in his episcopal visitations, and other episcopal duties. Bishop Andrew complies, and we find him engaged in the peculiar work of the Episcopacy. Bishop Soule tells us he has done this on his own responsibility—he stands upon the broad foundation of the Discipline. This is the state of the facts, as Bishop Soule and his colleagues have stated them. The documents which we were told were in Bishop Soule's possession, which certain editors knew nothing about, and which were to explain the whole matter, are now, we suppose, before the Church; but we do not perceive that they explain any thing which was not understood before. Yet the Bishop does not intend to raise the new issues in respect to episcopal prerogatives which we feared. We are inextricably mystified, but shall wait with patience for more light.\*"

The editor of the *Western Advocate*, in publishing the official explanation of the bishops, expressed himself thus:

"By this our readers will perceive, that our former views of Bishop Soule's position are confirmed. This official explanation of the bishops can leave no doubt in the minds of any, that our representation of the course of Bishop Soule is, in every material point, correct. We desire, honestly, to respect properly all men and all offices, according to their just claims. But God, and truth, and the Church, have demands on us which we must maintain, in opposition to all men. While reading over this explanation of the four bishops, we are extremely glad that the Methodist Episcopal Church 'has yet an Episcopacy,' but no prelacy. Bishops or superintendents we have, and will have of the stamp of Coke, Asbury, M'Kendree, and Roberts; but prelates and prelatial measures we never will have. We will sustain *bishops* to the last, but prelatial measures WE WILL NOT ENDURE."

Dr. Bangs, under date of February 24th, passes strictures on Bishop Soule's letter of January 21st. He thought the case of Bishop Soule a novel one, and that Dr. Bond had taken the right view of the subject. He quotes the Bishop's language, in reference to the decision in Bishop Andrew's case, in which he declared that the resolution *deposed* him, and that the proceeding was a *judicial one, suspending him*; but that now he declares that he may lawfully exercise his episcopal functions, notwithstanding this decision in his case. "And yet," says Dr. Bangs, "he invites the Bishop, who, according to his own *deliberate* opinion, had been *deposed*, to resume the exercise of the duties of his episcopal office, in the face of his own declarations, in defiance of the resolution of the General conference, and in opposition to

\* Document, No. 67. C., February 19th. W., February 28th, Vol. XI, p. 181. Scraps, 11, p. 277.  
† C., February 19th, Vol. XIX, p. 110.

\* C., February 19, 1845, Vol. XIX, p. 110, col. 5.

the decision of the majority of the bishops, and in contrariety to the convictions of Bishop Andrew himself, respecting the propriety of his own conduct." Yet he says the General conference, though they did not properly depose or suspend the Bishop, restrained him in the exercise of his functions, till the impediment should be removed.\*

A writer in the Christian Advocate and Journal, who signs himself O., laments that the bishops, at the close of the General conference, did not publish their views. This he thinks would have prevented the mischief in the south, occasioned by declaring that the Bishop was *suspended, deposed, and degraded*. He then asks: "On what ground is Bishop Andrew exercising the functions of his office? Has he signified, in writing, his desire to do so? If he has, why is not the plan published as soon as information is received? Is he acting on the reserved plan, as his sense of duty should dictate? Or is he acting on the invitation which Bishop Soule gave him? If the first, then let the reserved plan be published, and let the Church go on till the next General conference, in 1848; by which time we shall be able to form a better judgment in the case."†

But what is passing strange in this affair is, that the editor of the Richmond Advocate endeavors, elaborately, to show that there is a "perfect agreement between the document of the four bishops and the letter of their senior colleague."‡

On the whole, the writer of these pages is now, on the 20th of November, 1852, from the testimony before him, after the most careful examination, compelled to reaffirm what he said on the 22d of November, 1844, and in the very same words, namely: "Bishop Soule has seen fit to do singly what the General conference and the college of bishops decided should not be done." And this is now, and was then uttered, not as an accusation or an opinion, but as an incontrovertible historical fact.

8. Bishop Soule addressed a third letter to the editor of the Western Advocate, dated Tallahassee, February, 1845, and published in the Southern Advocate, of March 7th. In his second letter he expressed the opinion that the division of the Church would be the result of the action of the General conference; thus relieving the innovators in favor of slavery from the evil effects of their course, and charging the General conference of the mischief, although this body maintained nothing more than the established usage of the Church. In the third letter, the Bishop thinks that no compromise could take place on the basis of excluding from the Episcopacy slaveholders and abolitionists. He said the equal eligibility of all elders to the Episcopacy was never disputed till 1844. And the *legality* of such votes as were cast for slaveholders was never disputed. He then applies to the case of bishops the resolution of 1840, passed in regard to local preachers alone, and having no intended reference either to traveling preachers or bishops. From this he argues in favor of the eligibility of slaveholders to the Episcopacy. He then, by the following interrogatory sentences, mingles various elements in confused obscurity: "Is her Episcopacy a *mere agency* of a body of presbyters, liable to be re-

moved or changed at the pleasure of the body, without any charge or conviction of delinquency in duty, or improper conduct, of any kind; or is it a distinct and settled order in government—not in the ministry—and strictly amenable, *in law*, to that body, both for moral conduct and the administration of the laws of the Church?" He says next, that "two acts, election and ordination, were essentially necessary to the *constitution* of a bishop." He then complains of the new views developed in the late controversy, and gives, as a specimen, the following: "Ordination is discovered to be a *mere form of induction, or public acknowledgment of invested authority*. Indeed, almost any thing but what is *essential to the constitution of the episcopal office*." He seems to make ordination synonymous with imposition of hands, and writes confusedly on the entire subject; yet so as to show very plainly that a presbyterial episcopacy forms no part of his creed, and that a sovereign prelacy must be established, if his doctrines were reduced to practice.\* The editor of the Western Advocate made no reply to this letter, and, as far as it is now recollected, did not publish it in his paper, considering it to be of a revolutionary and contradictory character, yet entertaining a respectful deference to its author, in consequence of his former services and sentiments.

8. Bishop Soule writes a fourth letter to the editor of the Western Advocate, which was published April 25th.† He says: "I find that there is, from some cause, a pretty extensive opinion that Bishop Andrew had been laid under obligations, either by the acts of the General conference, or otherwise, to ask or demand work, before he could exercise the functions of the episcopal office, or before any of his colleagues could invite him to do so, without a contravention of the acts of the conference. Hence it is frequently asked, and with an apparent air of triumph, Did Bishop Andrew *ask* work? Did he demand it? Now, suppose it were admitted that he did neither; what then? Why, the questions are asked, who *required* that he should do either the one or the other? What *obligation* was he under to do so? By what authority was he required to *ask* or *demand* work of me, or any one of his colleagues? Who gave me, or any one of the bishops, any superiority or preëminence over Bishop Andrew, that he should come to us to *ask for work*, as if we had a right to withhold it from him? Was I not under as much obligation to ask work of him, as he was to ask it of me? I know no difference." He then proceeds to argue the case, in detail, and concludes his argument thus: "Such are my views of the official instructions given me by the General conference. My action, in relation to Bishop Andrew, has been in accordance with these views. I claim no infallibility of judgment. I may have misapprehended the meaning and design of my instructions. And if I have so misapprehended, my *action* has, consequently, been in error. But I claim honestly, and according to the dictates of my best judgment, to have acted strictly within the provisions of those instructions. But that I have acted in *contempt* or *defiance* of the General conference, is *absolutely false*."

While we ascribe to Bishop Soule the honesty he claims, his course, after all, can not be viewed, by the intelligent and impartial, in any other

\* C., March 5th. Scraps, II, pp. 800, 801.

† C., March 5th. Scraps, II, p. 801.

‡ R., February 27th. Scraps, II, pp. 277-280.

\* S., March 7th. Scraps, II, pp. 329-342.

† W., April 25th. Scraps, II, pp. 605, 606.

light than in opposition to the decisions of the college of bishops, and of the General conference. And this letter is manifestly at variance with his letter of January 21st, as well as other declarations of his sentiments.

The Rev. James B. Finley, in an article dated May 6, 1845, makes some strictures on Bishop Soule's course. He says the action of the General conference effected a "suspension of Bishop Andrew from the exercise of his office *so long as* the impediment to the general exercise of it remained." And when this act took place there was but one understanding of its intention and design. Bishop Andrew was left to his own election, whether he would obey or proceed to exercise the office, in view of his responsibility to the next General conference. 1. He understood it so himself. 2. The southern preachers understood the matter thus. 3. And so did the southern papers, and they explained it so. 4. The college of bishops so understood it. And even Bishop Soule must have, at one time, so understood the act of the General conference in the light above expressed; otherwise, why did he say, "the eventful resolution, the passage of which made my hands hang down"—"discouragement filled my heart?" Yet "Bishop Soule," says Mr. Finley, "takes it upon himself officially, under the full power of his episcopate, to call on Bishop Andrew to exercise his office, thus disregarding the sense or judgment of the General conference, and the solemn decision of the college of bishops, who had but a short time before, and in their official capacity, decided—and Bishop Soule being present—that to assign to Bishop Andrew any part of the episcopal oversight without his asking for it—in writing—would be a contravention of the act of the General conference. Yet Bishop Soule calls on him to disregard all, and to come to his assistance. (See his letter to Bishop Andrew, and his address before the Virginia conference, where he boastingly says, that he 'does it in full view of his responsibility, and with his feet firmly planted on the platform of the Discipline.')

Now, I ask, is not this act in defiance of the sense or judgment of the General conference? Did they not say to Bishop Andrew, '*desist*,' and did not Bishop Soule say, '*do not desist*,' and that, too, in defiance of the decision of the college of bishops, 'that it would be a contravention of the act of the General conference to assign to Bishop Andrew work, unless he made application in writing,' which decision every one of them was bound in *honor and honesty* to observe? But Bishop Soule, in the full exercise of his episcopal power, takes the whole responsibility to officially call on Bishop Andrew to disregard all, *forsooth*, because 'he stood on the platform of the Discipline.' To me there seems to be in this position something too boasting, and in these expressions something too taunting, and unbecoming a bishop: I do this act knowing the 'sense or judgment of the General conference.' I do this act knowing that the bishops determined in their council, that they would not give Bishop Andrew any part in the episcopal work, unless he asked it in writing. Moreover, that agreement was confided to Bishop Soule. But notwithstanding all this, he *fearlessly and officially* calls Bishop Andrew to the work. And when he is charged with taking the power to veto the General conference, and the expressed decision of the college of bishops, he as flatly denies it, and says, in one of his letters, 'that

whenever the General conference shall enact laws or rules, or the college of bishops, or a majority of them, shall make decisions which, in my deliberate judgment, I can not comply with, or carry into execution consistently with my obligations to the Church, which I have voluntarily taken upon me, I will not hold my office.' Now, I ask the reader to compare this declaration with the Bishop's acts. Did he not contravene the decision of the General conference, according to the decision of the board of bishops in Bishop Andrew's case? Had they not decided, that to call, and assign any part of the episcopal work to Bishop Andrew, would be a contravention of the act of the General conference in his case? Did not Bishop Soule call on him, without even consulting him about what he would do? Does not Bishop Andrew say, 'he had determined his course, in obedience to the injunction of the General conference; but Bishop Soule's letter had changed his mind?' Did Bishop Soule comply with the course agreed upon by the college of bishops, which they were to pursue in Bishop Andrew's case, and which was trusted in his hands to execute? Does he wait till Bishop Andrew has made application to him, or some one of the bishops, in writing, for work? No, not a word of all this. And then the palpable violation of those obligations would not appear so revolutionary, were it not for the manner in which it was done. Knowing all these things, and in view of meeting an insulted General conference, and in full view of all his obligations to his colleagues in the Episcopacy, he most triumphantly takes the responsibility, and does this, too, in view of his episcopal authority, that is, 'If we have any Episcopacy at all!' It is fully able to do all this, with 'its feet planted on the platform of the Discipline.' O, consistency, thou gem! I have read as many of the Bishop's explanations of his course as I could get; but it is still all *dark—dark*. His letter, No. 4, is not less mystified than his former communications.

"The true doctrine taught in the action of the General conference is, that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church are officers of the General conference at will, and that the conference has the right, whenever the good of the Church requires it, to remove any or all of them, and appoint others in their place and stead, and that without any impeachment of their ministerial or moral character.

"The second doctrine taught is, that we are as much as ever opposed to the evil of slavery; and while, in many of these United States, both our ministers and members are prohibited from setting their slaves free, and those slaves are by law prohibited from enjoying freedom, we, as law-abiding citizens, and as a Church, have not disfranchised our brethren from any right in the Methodist Episcopal Church; but where the law does not prohibit the freedom of slaves, we will use all lawful means to extirpate this evil; and we can not and will not ever give our consent to connecting this evil with the general itinerant supervision of our Church in North America. This is what the act of the late General conference teaches; and this is the doctrine that has always been taught, and I hope always will. This is what gave the great offense—interdicting the Bishop in the exercise of his office, till he remove the impediment of slavery; and for its exercise he will be held strictly accountable to the next General confer-

ence; and so will Bishop Soule, also; and if he has not acted contumaciously, he will be able to show it; but if he has, he must stand corrected.\*"

Thus far we have given the views of Mr. Finley, on the course of Bishop Soule, up to his fourth letter to C. Elliott, inclusive. Our readers must judge for themselves how far his explanation and strictures are correct.

9. The opinions of persons in the north, respecting the course of Bishop Soule, but not in controversy with him, may be brought under consideration. The most intelligent and candid of these, as impartial observers of the course pursued, have been of the same mind with those whose circumstances and duties have brought them into contact with him. We will give some specimens. Mr. Cartwright, in a letter of January 12th, affirms that the act of calling Bishop Andrew to work was "a high-handed disregard of the advice of the General conference, and of his colleagues in office;" that he exercises "assumed powers, and vetoes the acts and doings of the General conference."† A writer in Zion's Herald, under date of December 20, 1844, who, indeed, gives the general views on this subject entertained in New England, says in reference to the case of Bishop Andrew: "The will of that body was expressed; the highest in our polity, the legislature, published to the world that, for reasons named, one of the bishops, all and each of whom are amenable to that body, should cease from the exercise of his episcopal functions, till the disabilities be removed. So the majority of the members understood it. So the bishops themselves understood it, and accordingly left his name out of the plan of visitations. And yet, in the face of the Church authorities, Bishop Soule, with a temerity bordering on presumption, calls the censured man to resume his suspended functions, and he, with the admission that the action of the General conference was mandatory, has the hardihood to obey the call. Now, had the action of that body been merely advisory, the views entertained by Bishop Soule some few years since would have prevented this startling stride toward supreme power. It will be recollected that, at the General conference of 1836, the bishops in the pastoral letter held language like the following: 'We advise you wholly to abstain from the abolition movement,' and Bishop Soule himself penned that letter. But now, the very man who penned that sage advice lifts himself up and says, I will take the responsibility of setting your authority aside. Who now is to be bound by the action of that body, if a bishop may trample upon it with impunity? Alas! the bond is loosened, the foundation is broken. 'How are the mighty fallen!' How has the bow of the veteran archer been broken in his hand! Tell it not in Oxford, publish it not in the eternal city, that a Methodist bishop, and son and follower of John Wesley, has trampled in the dust the authority of the Church, on the altar of whose union he had vowed to be immolated. 'O cease ye from man.' But now we beg to know if for this high-handed rebellion there is no

remedy? Must we suffer still without redress, when if a preacher less than a bishop should do the same thing he would be immediately expelled the connection? It seems to me clear that the Bishop can not now consider himself a bishop of the whole connection, but of the secession; taking it for granted that the secession will take place, he concludes to conciliate the southern by thus outraging northern feelings, and trampling their sense of propriety in the dust. Be this as it may, whether the south do or do not secede, Bishop Soule can not again preside in a northern conference, without due confession and amendment.\*\* A writer in the New York Advocate† speaks of "the deleterious effects of Bishop Soule's letter to Bishop Andrew, inviting him to resume his episcopal work."

The preachers of the Springfield district, Vermont, declare, February 11, 1845, as follows:

"Whereas, Bishop Soule, in our opinion, has acted in open violation of the sense of the General conference, expressed in their action in the case of Bishop Andrew, and to us there appears to be no justifiable reason for such conduct; therefore,

"Resolved, That the course of Bishop Soule has merited our decided and unqualified disapprobation."‡

The preachers and official members of Dover district, New Hampshire conference, January 22d, declare the course both of Bishop Soule and Andrew, as a "usurpation of episcopal power without a parallel in the history of Methodism, if not in the history of Protestantism, and portends results destructive of the best interests of the Church, and, therefore, they should not only be sternly rebuked through the press, but in our opinion they have rendered themselves unworthy of the high trust reposed in them."§

Multitudes of quotations similar to the above could be given were it necessary.

10. Such was the delicate position of Bishop Soule's course in reference to the General conference and Bishop Andrew, that his southern defenders manifestly felt themselves compelled to have recourse to ridicule, applause, and denunciations, in the place of having recourse to the history and documents in the case as his opponents had done. At the South Carolina conference he was applauded while he narrated his doings, "with several involuntary bursts of applause."¶ The Nashville Advocate merely recites the expressions uttered concerning his course from the northern press.‡ The Richmond Advocate flourishes a little, and affects to show that his course was in accordance with the decision of the bishops.\*\* The editor of the Southern Advocate writes of "how miserable a blunder our New York Tallebrand has committed, in his savage attack on Bishop Soule," and finds nothing else to say except to vary the expressions of abuse.††

\* Z., January 22d. Scraps, II, p. 793.

† C., February 26th. Scraps, II, p. 272.

‡ Z., March 5th. Scraps, II, p. 311.

|| Id., p. 312.

§ S., January 3d. Scraps, II, p. 20.

¶ N., January 3d. Scraps, II, p. 36.

\*\* R., February 14th and 27th. Scraps, II, pp. 222, 278.

†† S., January 31st and March 7th. Scraps, II, pp. 182, 342.

\* W., May 23d. Scraps, II, pp. 669-673.

† W., February 14th. Scraps, II, pp. 229, 230.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

## POSITION OF PARTIES BEFORE THE CONVENTION.

1. THE positions and proceedings of parties from January, 1845, up to the session of the Louisville convention, may be considered in this place. The survey of the course of Bishop Soule, as presented in the last chapter, will furnish this in part; but it is necessary to enter into more detail, and consider the position of the northern conferences, as well as the general views entertained in the south.

We may place, with propriety, Dr. Smith as mouthpiece for the south. His famous speech before the Virginia conference, in November, 1844, and published next April in the Richmond Advocate, presents the generally-adopted views of the south in a fair light. It is true the south themselves, up to 1844, considered him as a man who entertained ultra and extravagant views. And even up to the convention many of them believed him to be an unsafe leader.

Dr. Smith, after referring in his introduction to the "subjugation of the south to the fanatical misrule of the north," and to the "presumption of a body of ecclesiastics who would dictate to national legislatures, what shall be the civil policy to the country on the subject of slavery," lays down the following proposition, italicized:

"The laws of the several states, on the subject of slavery, and the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were grossly disregarded, or palpably violated by the majority in the late General conference; we can not sanction this action, by remaining under the jurisdiction of this body, without infidelity to the Church and treason to the country; hence, if they do not recede from this position, and give a safe guarantee that our civil and ecclesiastical rights will be secure in future, we have no alternative but to dissolve our connection with the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church."\*

Dr. Smith then proceeds to lay down two postulates:

"*Firstly.* That every member of the Church holds his privileges and is held to duty under the clearly-defined rules of the Church, nor can duties be required of him, nor his privileges be suspended, but on the authority of these rules.

"*Secondly.* That these laws of the Church must always be subordinate, or, at least, inoffensive to the civil constitution and laws of the country, unless the constitution and these laws are found to contravene the plainly-expressed provisions of God's word."

Dr. Smith next inquires,

(1.) "*What is the position of the slave states upon the subject of African slavery?*" He answers it by saying slavery is a civil institution, and the Church can not take ground against this civil institution without violating her own principles as expressed in her 23d article.

(2.) "*What is the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery?*" He

answers this by reaffirming what he said in the case of Bishop Andrew, in which he asserted what he calls the compromise law of 1816, which did not require manumission where the laws prohibit it. He thinks for the Church to do any thing for the extirpation of slavery, is without warrant from Scripture.

(3.) "*Wherein did the majority in the late General conference grossly disregard, or palpably violate, the civil laws, together with the Discipline of the Church, on the subject of slavery?*" He answers this by going over the whole ground in the cases of Bishop Andrew and Mr. Harding, which we need not detail. Dr. Smith then concludes:

(4.) "We can not sanction this action, by remaining under the jurisdiction of this body, without infidelity to the Church and treason to the country." Dr. Smith here unjustly, and without truth, charges the Church with what she never believed, recommended, attempted, or even allowed.\* In continuation of his speech, he says:

(5.) "That if they do not recede from their position, and give a safe guarantee that our civil and ecclesiastical rights will be secure in future, we have no alternative but to dissolve our connection with the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

Dr. Smith then asserts that the present government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, because the majority disregards the written constitution and laws, is a popular tyranny, and the minority must quietly submit or dissolve their connection with the government.

Dr. Smith then proceeds to draw out in detail the following ingenious theory which had been broached before, but which he places in the following shape: He had stated that "separation, in itself considered, is a revolutionary movement, with the consent of the dominant party if we may, without it if we must." He then theorizes as follows:

We do not propose to separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but from the *General conference* of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In other words, as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we propose to dissolve our connection with her present ecclesiastical jurisdiction; that to separate from the General conference, or refuse any longer to submit to the jurisdiction of the General conference, is not a schism, or separation from the Church itself, will readily appear. What is the Methodist Church? What is the Methodist Episcopal Church? What constitutes the identity of each? and what is the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church? These are altogether different, the one from the other; and to withdraw from the one is not, necessarily, to withdraw from the other. The *Methodist Church* is distinguished by her doctrines as found in the *Articles of Religion and the General Rules of the Church*. These fully identify the *Methodist Church*. The *Methodist Episcopal*

\* R., April 10th. Scraps, II, p. 516.

\* R., April 10th. Scraps, II, pp. 516-524.



Church is distinguished by the itinerant general superintendency. . . . Thus defined, the Methodist Episcopal Church has existed since 1784, but the present General conference has existed only since 1812. . . . The Methodist Episcopal Church will remain the Methodist Episcopal Church after the present General conference is materially modified, or reduced, by the withdrawal of thirteen annual conferences, or even after the present General conference should be entirely abolished, should such an event ever transpire. Now, let it be observed that it is not from the Methodist Church, nor yet from the Methodist Episcopal Church, that we propose to withdraw, BUT FROM THE GENERAL CONFERENCE OF THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, *which is the creature of the Church*. And why? Because this body is not disposed any longer to *serve*, but forthwith to rule as a tyrant, both Church and state.\*

Dr. Smith concludes his long and labored address by giving the topic on which he says he challenged Dr. Bond to meet him in public discussion, namely:

"That the southern people, as a humane and Christian people, have no alternative in the present and, to them, unavoidable moral condition of the African race among them, but to maintain the institution of domestic slavery."

Such are the views of Dr. Smith, delivered in November, 1844, and published April 10th and 17th; and these we may safely place as the general sentiments entertained by the south, or such as they practically adopted at their convention in May, 1845. Dr. Smith could not avoid allowing that *separation is a revolutionary movement*, and that the south were engaged in a *withdrawal*, or secession, from the General conference. And to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the General conference was the same thing as to withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church; for his distinctions are merely sophistical evasions that could mislead none but those who desired any excuse for the course which they had determined to take.

2. In regard to the opinions held in the north, we may notice those of New England in general, in the first place, and then the views that were held in other portions of the country. An article was published in Zion's Herald of January 15, 1844,† headed, "Things as they are, addressed to the Ministers and Members of the New England conferences," and signed by sixteen traveling preachers. This article professed to give the views of New England in regard to slavery and current events. It deprecated any compromise which would allow pro-slavery persons to remain in the Church, or that would approve of slavery. The article spoke highly of the course of the Baltimore conference. There were some expressions in the address that were rather unguarded, and were, therefore, liable to misconstruction. Most of the members, and many of the preachers, in New England, were as truly conservative as any in the Church, although there were still left some traces of ultra-abolitionism in existence. The editor of the Western Christian Advocate; felt it his duty to defend the New England conferences from the assaults of the south, although he passed

some severe strictures—indeed, as he afterward ascertained, too severe.\* Dr. Bond considered the document with care, and viewed it as a harmless production, and pleaded for the soundness of our New England brethren.† The southern papers published "Things as they are," and made considerable capital of it in furthering secession.‡ The South-Western struck off many extra copies of them, and spread them throughout the Baltimore conference; while "a member of the New York conference," a true pro-slavery man, commented at large, in the Southern Advocate,|| on the unmethodistic features of New England Methodism. Nevertheless, the contents of "Things as they are," although, in our view, partly erroneous, were not half so exceptionable to the south as the disciplinary course of the General conference, as well as some of the principles in the Discipline itself on slavery.

3. The position of Kentucky, for the four months previous to the convention, will require some notice. Many circuits and societies expressed themselves strongly against division in any form. We may mention the following; namely, Minerva circuit, Russelville, Frankfort, Augusta district, Covington, and many others.§ Various individuals, also, as Dr. Tomlinson, Rev. Evan Stevenson, Milton Stevenson, Dr. J. S. Pierce.¶ Mr. Thomas Smith wrote vigorously against division. Indeed, most of the members in Kentucky were opposed to any division, and they were placed in a false position when they entered the communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, south.

4. The state of opinion in Missouri, previous to the convention, will show that the division of the Church was not a favorite scheme with them. Mr. Moses U. Paine represents the matter thus\*\* in Missouri, and, withal, uses very plain language in reference to Bishop Andrew. Mr. Paine is a slaveholder, yet a strong anti-slavery man, of large soul, liberal feelings, and great liberality. He says:

"But I am not willing to be cut off with the southern Church. I see no necessity for a division, and am, therefore, unwilling to aid or encourage those who wish to effect it. In this expression, I doubt not, I speak the feelings and sentiments of tens of thousands, and, perhaps, hundreds of thousands, of the southern members. I know there are some restless spirits, some of them good men, too, who make some ado about this matter, yet I believe a large majority of the Church are for peace within; and if the Church is divided, or rather if the south secedes, there will be many, very many, who will not be satisfied with the bargain and transfer; and, if they do not speak out their dissatisfaction in terms as strong as the English language affords, it will be because of that retiring modesty which now keeps them silent. In regard to the number of quiet, faithful, satisfied members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, south of Mason and Dixon's line,

\* W., January 31st. Scraps, II, pp. 167-169, 296.

† C., March 12th. Scraps, II, pp. 806-809.

‡ R., February 13th. Scraps, II, pp. 219-221. February 27th. Scraps, II, p. 282.

§ S., April 18th. Scraps, II, p. 577.

¶ W., January 10th. Scraps, II, p. 63. February 25th. Scraps, II, p. 270. See, also, the following references: Scraps, II, pp. 316, 319, 354, 376, 400, 413, 468, 553, 555, 570, 581, 591, 607, 608.

¶ Scraps, II, pp. 62, 63, 169.

\*\* W., March 21st, Vol. XI, p. 193. Scraps, II, p. 273.

\* R., April 17th. Scraps, II, pp. 529-534.

† Z., January 15th. Scraps, II, pp. 77-79.

‡ W., January 17th. Scraps, II, pp. 96-98.

I may be mistaken. There may be a minority instead of a majority; but let that minority be ever so small, it has rights, and they can not be thrown overboard, and out of the pales of the Church, unless they leave their homes; for the terms of secession forbid the formation of societies across the line. To leave our homes will not suit us, and our alternative will be to claim Church property, and seek supplies from the God of providence.

"We want peace, and would much prefer giving up Bishop Andrew, Bishop Soule, or any other bishop, to yielding our rights in the Methodist Episcopal Church. And if Bishop Andrew is capable of filling other appointments, and should he be made subject to them, he will, no doubt, in the day of judgment, feel full as well at rendering up a faithful account of low stations as he would at having rent the Church contending for high ones. Beside that, such appointments will better enable him to oversee his negroes than the office of bishop. These negroes have become his 'household,' and he must not 'neglect' them; and the office of bishop requires such long trips that he can not take them and do his duty both at home and abroad. His incumbrances forbid it. I am aware it is contended that 'circuit preachers, presiding elders, etc., do this thing.' I know they do too much of it. The Church knows it, God knows it, and the women who own slaves know it, after it is too late. I have known many preachers become owners of slaves, but have never known one made more holy or useful by it, and have often seen the opposite effect produced. If I understand this matter, Bishop Andrew, by his marriage, became the master, and, therefore, responsible for the treatment of those negroes as long as they remain slaves. It is true he made a 'deed of trust,' but that will not exonerate him from obligations arising from ownership. It is a miserable subterfuge, which places the negroes beyond the reach of the Bishop's control, but does not place the Bishop beyond responsibility for their treatment, education, etc. In comparison with it, the law of Georgia forbidding emancipation is a merciful enactment. Under his 'deed of trust,' no doubt, the negroes are disposed of in such a way as to place them under the management of an overseer, and he may treat them as bad as he pleases, even in sight of the Bishop, who can not prevent it. Yet he could have done it, therefore he is responsible, having placed them there by that 'deed of trust,' which is recorded as his act and deed for the purpose therein mentioned. And can any one say that the Bishop's moral relation is an enviable one? Now, with the Bishop's hands thus washed, and yet stained, shall they be used to consecrate a holy ministry, and thereby be the channel through which the overflowing stream of salvation is handed down to generations yet unborn? May God forbid it! Shall we exonerate Bishop Andrew upon the score of ignorance? No, he is a southern man, and a man of intelligence. The old doctrine, taught by our Savior, is true, 'That the hireling, whose own the sheep are not, careth not for the sheep, because he is an hireling;' and with men, who hire to oversee and drive negroes, there is generally less principle than with men who hire to take care of sheep. It is clearly obvious that slavery is growing on us as a people, the membership as well as the ministry; and if the Church, north,

can check its growth, they will have done a good deed. They, however, in the Bishop Andrew matter, do not propose to check its growth on us, but only propose to check its growth on them; and, on this account, the hue and cry is raised, and the Church is to be rent, and the wheels of Zion's car clogged.

"The bishops delivered an address to the General conference, objecting to the marriage of young preachers, and Bishop Andrew signed it. They think the taking of a wife is evidence 'that a young man has either backslidden or mistaken his call.' (Did Bishop Andrew pen this sentence?) And it does seem to me that a wife and fifteen negroes will fill the head and hands of an old man as full as a wife will the head and heart of a young one; yet the young one commits crime, according to Bishop Andrew, 'has backslidden or mistaken his call,' while there is nothing wrong or improper with him, even if he make a sale of three-fourths of a score of men, women, and children, to continue them in slavery. But this is a 'deed of trust!' which is no better, nor is it as good, as a clear deed of sale; for a clear sale places them under an owner, and a trust sale under the control of a 'hireling,' for the benefit of his family, and consequently himself, that he may suck their blood through an overseer's lash; and this man must and shall be bishop against the will and consent of a large majority, and no man must even intimate his disqualification upon pain of being branded with abolitionism, in all its hideous forms, by the holy ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

5. In the Baltimore conference, though much of it lay in the bounds of Virginia and Maryland, there was strong opposition to division of any kind. The right to divide the Church was denied almost generally.\* Resolutions against it were passed in different places.† Westmoreland circuit, as might be expected, were in its favor.‡ This noble conference kept its position as formerly, maintaining its strong antislavery character, and yielding to none of the innovations of the times. The truth is, Baltimore well earned the name of the "break-water" conference, as she stood on the one side in firm opposition to every thing pro-slavery, and on the other was not influenced by ultra abolition principles and measures.

6. The general sentiments of the Philadelphia conference may be represented as follows: The quarterly conference of the Union Church declared that they "regarded with feelings of deep regret, every attempt to interrupt the harmony or dissolve the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church;" and they would exert all their influence "to perpetuate her union and to promote her prosperity."§ The quarterly meeting of Chester circuit declared, "that there does not legally or ecclesiastically exist any right or authority in the General conference, or in any other judiciary in our communion, to divide the Church."¶

7. In Arkansas there was much opposition to the separation. An address was prepared by the members of Fayetteville circuit, and adopted by others, to the Louisville convention, against the separation, and published before the convention

\* C., February 19th. Scraps, II, p. 805.

† C., February 12th and 19th. Scraps, II, pp. 200, 253.

‡ R., April 10th. Scraps, II, p. 510.

§ C., February 19th. Scraps, II, p. 253.

¶ C., February 26th. Scraps, II, p. 276.

met. The address commences by saying that well-enough should be let alone; that the members do not wish a change; that there exists no sufficient cause for a change; that a division of the Church might promote a division of the Union. Most persons deplore a division; the missions will suffer; subdivisions must follow; a division would increase the weight and tighten the bonds of slavery. It would limit the Gospel commission; it would lead to the organization of a new Church. The plan is oppressive, because it forces out of the Church those who do not desire to go. The line will be an occasion of strife; the part south of the line will be a secession; the north and the south will become rivals. The circumstances of the division are revolutionary.\*

8. In western Virginia, whether in the bounds of the Pittsburg conference, or out of it, the separation met with a strong resistance. Morgantown station, Virginia, passed resolutions against division.† Wytheville circuit declared, among other resolutions, "that the action of the General conference is not a sufficient cause for rending asunder our beloved Church; and that the action of the southern convention should be to reconcile the conflicting elements of the Church, and dissipate all asperity of feeling among us."‡

9. To accomplish the work of secession, we can easily see that the southern leaders changed their grounds of grievances to a convenient extent. The southern delegates asked the plan as a peace measure, declaring their hope to use it advantageously to prevent division. If division were inevitable, they said the plan would lessen the evil. But the next day after the conference adjourned, they took preliminary measures for separation, and accomplished it as far as they could; and then returned home to persuade the people it was necessary; and that the General conference approved of it. They subsequently declared the whole south were of one mind; although vast multitudes were opposed to division. The southern delegates declared slavery to be an evil, and the Discipline on it must not be touched; but they are now apologists for it, and the section on slavery must be erased. During the session of General conference, and after it, they declared that Bishop Andrew was *deposed*; but now he is only *advised*, and this advice should not be taken.¶

Various statements were made in the south to promote division. As a specimen, we give the following, which is from a Methodist of Gaston, Sumpter county, Alabama, dated January 18, 1845:

"That the late General conference dealt unjustly with Bishop Andrew; that their act was unlawful.

"That it is intended next to cut off all slaveholders from membership.

"That the General conference of 1840 agreed that slaveholding should not disqualify for any office in the Church.

"That all slaveholders are sinners; that they fastened on us the testimony of colored persons in Church trials.

"That Bishop Hedding is, and has been for the last ten years, an abolitionist.

"That all the delegates in the late General

conference who voted for the resolution in Bishop Andrew's case, are abolitionists."\*

10. Dr. Bond, up to the convention, was peculiarly obnoxious to the south. Indeed, the southern papers indulged in vehement railing against all who opposed division. For the most part the charges were rung on the same topics relative to the General conference and its action in the case of Bishop Andrew. Statements and arguments which have been answered again and again, have been dished up anew, as if presented for the first time. They overlooked the principal point in question; namely, that the sole purpose of the General conference was to prevent bishops from becoming slaveholders, for there was no apprehension of the election of one. At any rate, Dr. Bond was vilified by most of the southern correspondents, and by all of the editors, without stint, courtesy, or truth.† Indeed, the Alabama conference, which, at its previous session, lauded him, passed several resolutions, preceded by an abusive preamble, retracting their former act, and denouncing him in the most unjust terms.‡

11. The editor of the Western Advocate came in for the next greater share of abuse from the southern press, whether correspondents or editors, especially the latter. The Southern Advocate abused him unsparingly.¶ The Richmond Advocate was by no means behind in this work.§ The Nashville Advocate was past all forbearance, because he published Mr. Cartwright's letter on Bishop Soule.¶ This was not all; in an anonymous article he represented him both as insane and changeable, and doggedly endeavored to make this impression on the public mind throughout the south.\*\* And this course was afterward persisted in in a variety of ways, so as to make the public believe that the editor was unworthy of credit, because he was mentally deranged. It is true, the authors of the slander did not believe it, but the uninitiated took it for granted.

The editor of the Western Advocate maintained, at General conference, that new Churches might be organized, and hoped that, should this be the case now, that evil would not follow. Accordingly, he did not, for several months, enter into the controversy. But when the south changed their course and their principles, he felt himself compelled to enter the lists. In April, 1845, after reaffirming his former views, he says:

"It is useless to quote, or refer to our influential name or office, to sustain these new measures. We therefore maintain that such a division, or secession as is likely to take place, has no countenance from any thing we have said, written, or done, either at General conference or since, in public or private. Some have represented us as having changed our ground. This is an entire mistake. The very nature and circumstances of the original case have changed, and we therefore retire from it in consequence of the mutations thrown around it. Those who have changed grounds themselves can not frighten us by any charges they can furnish

\* C., March 5th. Scraps, II, p. 796.

† C., March 14th. Scraps, II, p. 809. N., January 31st and March 21st. Scraps, II, pp. 151, 380. S., February 14th. March 14th. Scraps, II, pp. 224, 304.

‡ S., March 14th. Scraps, II, p. 363.

§ S., February 7th. March 14th. Scraps, II, pp. 193, 363.

¶ R., April 11th. Scraps, II, pp. 535, 547.

¶ N., March 13th. Scraps, II, p. 343.

\*\* N., January 31st. Scraps, II, p. 166.

\* W., April 25th. Scraps, II, pp. 609-615.

† P., February 19th. Scraps, II, p. 254.

‡ C., February 19th. Scraps, II, p. 274.

¶ C., January 3d. Scraps, II, p. 60.

against us, for charges attributed to us, but chargeable to themselves."\*

The editor of the Pittsburg Advocate comments thus on the subject:

"The editor of the Western Christian Advocate receives the special notice of the editors down south, and has the honor of being placed by them in the same category with Dr. Bond. So long as Dr. Elliott stood aloof from the controversy, the southern editors and writers were loud in their commendations of his prudence and distinguished abilities, and also in the expressions of regret that he did not occupy the chair of Dr. Bond. But now that he has seen proper to give expression to his views, and that these views are averse to the south; now, forsooth, that they

could not coax the Doctor to hold *his* peace, while *they* were speaking out constantly in their own behalf, and against the north, they change their tone toward him. Now they accuse him of change, of inconsistency, and find it difficult to admit that he is 'in his right mind.' O, how, in southern estimation, has 'the mighty fallen!' Act in accordance with *our* sense of prudence and right, and we will pronounce you a great man—we will load you with our praises; but step aside from that, and we will regard you as vacillating, inconsistent, *insane!* Surely, if this be a specimen of the stuff southern fame is made of, we presume to say that their praise or censure will be, in Dr. Elliott's judgment, equally light commodities."\*

## CHAPTER XXXII.

### EVENTS PRECEDING THE CONVENTION OF 1845.

1. THE General conference looking toward a probable *separation from* the Methodist Episcopal Church, they said, in their *plan*, how they would treat those who declared they must separate from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The General conference neither divided the Church nor provided for its division, nor did they believe they had any power to divide it.

Mr. Thomas M. Smith, an intelligent lawyer of Louisville, maintained, in January, this proposition, "that there exists no legitimate power in the General conference, or in the authorities of any portion or department of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to make such division." For what men may do, in civil or ecclesiastical society, resolving themselves into their original elements, and acting on the principles of revolution or secession, is not the question. No authority exists from the Discipline, either to divide or dissolve the Church. Such a thing would be a monstrosity.†

Even in the south that doctrine of division did not obtain which afterward was so much relied on. Rev. Evan Stevenson, on December 27, 1844, asked the following question, which is answered by Mr. M'Ferrin, January 10, 1845:

"Has the General conference any constitutional authority to *divide* the Methodist Episcopal Church?"

"The General conference, however, did not assume the right to divide the Church. It only made provision for separation, in case the southern conferences found it necessary to form a distinct organization."‡ And this explanation of Mr. M'Ferrin proves that his resolution, offered in June, 1844, instructing the committee of nine to provide for a constitutional division, was neither entertained nor acted on.¶

In January, Dr. Bangs expresses himself thus on this topic: "1. I do not believe that the General conference, in adopting that report, sanctioned or authorized a division of the Church. 2. I do not believe that any power or right exists any where, either in the General con-

ference, all the annual conferences, or the entire membership, to divide the Church. 3. Hence it follows, that if the south, or any portion of the Church, divide, or form a separate organization, they must withdraw, and declare themselves independent, assigning their reasons for so doing, and if they are satisfactory to themselves, their consciences will rest easy under the circumstances, whether those from whom they separate will approve or disapprove of their conduct."†

In consequence of the change of ground by the south in reference to division, the editor of the Western Advocate took occasion in March, to maintain, that the committee appointed to consider Dr. Capers's resolutions of June 3d, which provided for two General conferences, and for a mutual division of the Church, concluded, after mature deliberation, that they could not entertain the resolutions of Dr. Capers; and, therefore, no report was made upon them, except that the thing contemplated could not be done. Hence the General conference considered and treated this severance, not as a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but as a separation or secession of the south from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

There are three ways to effect the severance of members from the Church; namely, by *division*, by *separation*, *secession*, or *withdrawal*, and by *schism*.

Division is the distribution of the whole into two or more parts, by the acts of the whole, with the consent of each part, as well as the whole, so that each part possesses the same or similar powers in regard to itself, as the whole formerly did in regard to the whole. Division of a different sort may be nothing more than a mere separation, withdrawing, or secession, or even an unchristian schism. The name division may be retained while the thing itself may be a mere secession or schism. A separation or secession, is a severance of a part of a religious community, or Church, from the whole, by the act of the separatists themselves, and without the approval or act of the whole from which they

\* W., April 11th. Scraps, II, p. 551.

† W., January 3d. Scraps, II, p. 46.

‡ N., January 10th. Scraps, II, p. 69.

¶ R., January 16th. Scraps, II, pp. 86-89.

\* P., April 9th. Scraps, II, p. 505.

† C., January 23d. Scraps, II, p. 133.

separate. In this case, those who separate, renounce the jurisdiction of the whole, and set up a government of their own, to which alone they acknowledge responsibility. They usually give reasons for their separation. If the reasons are Scriptural and valid, they are justified in their secession. If their reasons are insufficient, they are nothing more than schismatics.

The third mode by which a part may be severed from the whole is by *schism*, and schism is an unscriptural or sinful separation of a part from the whole, without just cause or reasons moving thereto.

The General conference considered and treated the south, not as a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but as a separation, secession, or withdrawal; because, 1. The plan for division comprised in Dr. Capers's resolutions of June 3d did not obtain.\* 2. The resolution of Messrs. M'Ferrin and Spicer, "to devise, if possible, a constitutional plan for a mutual and friendly division of the Church," was not adopted by the committee of nine. They did *consider* it, and decided that it was not constitutional, and therefore they did not provide to meet division, but separation or secession. 3. The wording of the committee in their report shows that the thing contemplated was secession, and not a division. Notice the following: "In the event of a separation—should the annual conferences in the slaveholding states find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection"—"the Church, south"—"the southern Church"—"the Church, south"—"the Church, south, should one be organized"—"the southern organization, should one be formed"—"should the separation take place"—"the southern organization"—"the Church so formed in the south." 4. Beside, in direct contradiction to this *separation* of the south, the former name of the Methodist Episcopal Church is retained in the document, and the Methodist Episcopal Church is represented as existing and organized, and as taking no part in organizing the southern Church.

When the point was reached in the General conference that the southern delegates announced their determination to secede, as a matter of necessity, it was agreed by all that the thing in fact must be a secession. But the north charitably believed they would depart in peace; they therefore were not disposed to call them seceders, as they thought no good would result from the name, because it would annoy them. They also desired that the south should have in public estimation the best ground possible for winning souls to Christ. Leading southern brethren expressed the hope that they would not be called a secession, and the northern brethren were disposed not to do it. The committee of nine, acting in this spirit of kindness, substituted the word *separation* for *secession*; and though it means *secession*, it does not sound so gratefully to the ear. The editor of the *Western Advocate*, on the floor of General conference, made some remarks, applying to this separation, as far as was possible to adapt them, principles proper to a regular ecclesiastical division, fondly hoping to make secession itself virtually a genuine division, or at least a peaceable separation, omitting that harsh word—*secession*.

Now, had the south chosen to leave peaceably, first finding, and not creating a necessity for going, the result would be different. The unprecedented abuse cast on the Methodist Epis-

copal Church, her bishops, preachers, and members, from primary meetings, editors and correspondents, shows the conciliatory character of the Methodist Episcopal Church and General conference was not met by the same temper from the south. Look at the following considerations:

*First.* As the south depended on General conference courtesy and action, they should have fulfilled, on their side, the obligations created by such conference courtesy and action. Will men who hold the General conference and its *expressed will* in utter contempt, claim, on the same authority, a portion of the Book Concern, or a certain geographical boundary? Shall the acts of the General conference bind one party, and leave the other to do as it pleases? Is its authority good *against* itself only, and a mere cipher when it claims something of regard for itself? If the General conference was authority for her, it was also authority *against* her, and she should have remembered it.

*Secondly.* The south now began to claim that she is the Methodist Episcopal Church. But if so, the Methodist Episcopal Church is not the Methodist Episcopal Church, and hence no commissioners will make any appropriations to them.\*

Dr. Capers, in an article dated March 23, 1845, complains of the version which we gave of his resolutions in our article of the 14th of March, on division. Yet he allows two very important facts to have existed. He says the committee on his resolutions agreed that the thing contemplated "ought not to be done in the manner specified in the resolutions, or by any action on the resolutions;" and he allowed that nothing was done on that basis. This leaves us in possession of the views we entertained, and still entertain.†

2. Indeed, the separation of the south, as far as it had progressed in the spring of 1845, could be set down as nothing else than a secession in progress.

Dr. Bangs represented the contemplated new Church as a secession, as we have seen.‡

This is placed in a very clear light by the Rev. G. M. Keesee. He had asserted, on November 7th, 1844, "that it was the purpose of the southern delegations to secede, in case there had been no provision made for a peaceable separation by the conferences." This was questioned by Mr. Lee. In a letter dated January 27th, Mr. Keesee maintains his grounds by the following proofs, drawn from the debates in General conference. He then quotes the declarations of Dr. Winans, Mr. Drake, G. F. Pierce, Dr. Smith, Mr. Dunwoody, and the declaration. We give what Mr. Dunwoody says: "If this course were persevered in, they would force the south to *secede*, because they did not believe that this conference had any right to interfere in the question of slavery."||

Dr. Akers, on February 12th, showed clearly that the *necessity* urged by the south did not exist.§

But Dr. Smith, as we have already seen, made up a new theory to evade secession. It was this: that the south did not secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but from the jurisdiction of the General conference.¶

\* W., March 14th. Scraps, II, p. 351.

† S., March 28th. Scraps, II, p. 435.

‡ C., January 23d. Scraps, II, p. 133.

§ R., February 6th. Scraps, II, pp. 185, 186. See, for the quotations from the speeches, Debates, pp. 89, 156, 106, 111, 143, 165, 200.

¶ C., February 12th. Scraps, II, pp. 212, 213.

¶ R., April 10th. Scraps, II, pp. 529-532.

\* See Journal, p. 68.

3. The powers and prerogatives of the Episcopacy were considered and canvassed among other points of controversy. In the south they were extended and magnified, while in the north they were viewed as formerly, or perhaps in some cases they were somewhat curtailed.

Mr. Griffith lays down the two following propositions, respecting the powers of the General conference and of the Episcopacy:

"First. That the General conference has full power to make rules and regulations for the Church, under the six restrictions found in the constitution; so that whatever is not excepted, or expressly taken away, by the limitations and restrictions, is delegated and given: and,

"Secondly. That no more power is vested in any office or department of official authority; or in any officer, individual, individuals, or agency whatever, acting under or by authority of the Church than is given or vested by express authority of the General conference, or which may not be derived by fair and direct implication from the powers given."\*

Mr. Griffith defines Episcopacy further, and maintains that Methodist Episcopacy is that Episcopacy which the General conference shall not do away. It is a superior office, which the conference of 1784 adopted as a distinct department of official authority and power, and incorporated it as a primary element of the organic law for the government of the Church; and the General conference is bound to fill this office from time to time with suitable men, so as to maintain it. Thus the office is distinguished from the incumbents which fill it.

The bishop is distinguished from both preachers and members,† in not having an appeal. Hence he is distinguished from them in name and disciplinary rights throughout the Discipline.

A bishop, after his election, is divested of his rights as an elder or traveling preacher. He is no longer a member of an annual conference, he has no vote in the General conference, nor can he sit on the trial of a preacher in an annual or General conference any further than to preserve order.

The Rev. James Quinn, indeed, thought that the power of defining law awarded to the bishops was an improper stretch of prerogative. He says, under date of March 21st, "I was afraid, when the General conference of 1840 acceded to the Episcopacy law-expounding prerogatives, that it might grow, and finally come forth with veto, veto. To this, perhaps, the high-toned aristocracy of the south and southwest might submit, but the cool, determined Franklinian republicanism of the north and west would never submit."‡

The Rev. William Burke wrote several elaborate articles for the Nashville Advocate, in the beginning of the year, on Episcopacy and the General conference. Mr. Burke assumed higher powers for the Episcopacy than those formerly ascribed to it, while he proportionately depressed the powers of the General conference.¶ Dr. Bascom did the same in his answer of the Reply to the Protest.

4. The effect of the southern secession was dreaded by many as having a disastrous effect on the union of the states. Mr. William Booth

addressed letters to Mr. Clay and Mr. Polk inquiring what effect this would have. Mr. Polk made no reply. Mr. Clay, in a letter dated April 7, 1845, expressed his opinion that the effect of secession in the Church might greatly promote disunion between north and south, in connection with other causes.\* The disunion among the Baptists increased the fears of many on this topic.

5. It was constantly declared by the south "that the Church has no right to interfere with the civil institution of slavery by any ecclesiastical legislation whatever." But the Church never attempted to legislate on it as a civil institution, but as a *moral subject*, the same as upon grogeries, gambling, horse-racing, or the like. These subjects are partly moral and partly civil, and the Church regulates only the moral. It is, therefore, vain to say that if the southern delegates would recognize the right of the General conference to interfere in the case of Bishop Andrew, it would be the same as to acknowledge the right of the conference to legislate authoritatively on the subject of slavery.†

6. In March it was ascertained that the alteration of the 6th Restriction was lost, according to the recommendation of the General conference, there being about one hundred and fifty votes wanting to carry it. This was acknowledged by the southern papers.‡ The Richmond Advocate, after enumerating the votes, says: "These facts satisfy us that the question is lost. The northern conferences have refused to divide the property of the Church with their southern brethren; but will this stay or prevent the division of the Church? Not a whit. There is something more than money involved in this question; and dollars and cents can never be suffered to mingle in a question of principle. The southern conferences will, undoubtedly, separate, money or no money. They go for principle, not *interest*." The Southern Advocate approvingly quotes the above. At this time the doctrine did not prevail in the south that they could get this property in any way but by a constitutional vote of the annual conferences.

7. The property question now assumed a serious form. The Kentucky conference declared, as we have seen, that they could not consent to any division which would place them in the position of a secession, or would peril their title to Church property. Dr. Tomlinson, in August, 1844, inquired of the commissioners whether the carrying out of the plan would *disconnect* the south from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The reply of the commissioners, Messrs. Bangs, Peck, and Finley, was, that unless the south were to be a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, they could not, according to the plan, receive any thing from the Book Concern. Heretofore, in all legal decisions, the loss of membership in a Church deprived the person of all legal claim to the property conveyed for such Church. This position was taken by Judge Robinson, of Kentucky, in 1842, and his decision was published by Dr. Tomlinson, shortly after, in the Western Christian Advocate. It was, in effect, as follows: "That a secession of membership

\* C., March 5th. Scraps, II, pp. 801-804.

† See Restriction 5.

‡ W., March 21st. Scraps, II, p. 375.

¶ N., April 4th. Scraps, II, pp. 482-501.

\* C., May 14th. Scraps, II, pp. 637, 706, 812.

† C., February 12th. Scraps, II, p. 214.

‡ R., March 21st. Scraps, II, p. 403; and S., April 3d. Scraps, II, p. 465.

in any Church, no matter from what cause, draws after it a total privation of all legal claim to the property of said Church."

The Rev. M. M. Henkle, A. M., in a pamphlet entitled "The true Issue and Property Question," professes to show the real matter in controversy, and the legal rights of the parties to the Church property.\* Mr. Henkle gives nine reasons in order to show that the course of the south was one based on due ecclesiastical forms and principles, in the place of one founded and conducted on revolutionary principles. In regard to Church property he aims at showing,

"(1.) That much of our Church property is not held under the deed prescribed in the Discipline, and that, in strictness of construction, very little of it is so held.

"(2.) The deed in our Discipline, acting under the provision of the common law, unaided by local enactments, the statute of charitable uses, or some like help, is of no legal force.

"(3.) That if our deed were absolutely perfect, and of paramount legal authority, it does not vest the title of a local church, or meeting-house, in all the members of the Church equally throughout the Union, and that it had no such intention.

"(4.) By the deed itself, and the Discipline generally, the General conference is invested with such control of the property as fully authorizes that body to appropriate to the south legally such portion of it as belongs there in moral equity.

"(5.) The General conference, having adequate power to act in the premises, the courts will enforce that action in its true legal meaning and intention."

It were easy to show that very much in these propositions is at variance with the deeds, with the Discipline, with the common law, with the statute laws of the country, and with equity and the voluntary principle of supporting Church institutions. After contending for, but not proving, these propositions, Mr. Henkle draws on the southern fiction of two Methodist Episcopal Churches formed out of the old one, and shapes it up to suit the case of the south. He does not place the claim of the south on any fixed legal principle, but he endeavors to form a new principle to suit his new case, as none of the legal principles ever acknowledged by jurists would answer the purpose.

To meet the case of the Book Concern, he thinks the annual conferences would yet vote this to the south. At this time no one contemplated that it could ever be obtained in any other way.

At any rate, Mr. Henkle's pamphlet formed into a sort of theory the occasional remarks uttered by the southern press in regard to southern claims. He may be said, indeed, not just to have invented, but to have compiled the formulas on which Judge Robinson's decision was founded, that on which the southern commissioners drew in suing for the property, and that which Judge Nelson adopted. Judge Robinson was Professor of Constitutional Law in Transylvania University, of which Dr. Bascom was President. Mr. Henkle was a resident of Lexington at the time he wrote the pamphlet. And, indeed, the Judge seems to have drawn largely in his decision, not on any

of the legal principles which guided his predecessors, but on the new theory of Mr. Henkle, which, doubtless, was drawn up by the help of Dr. Bascom.

Judge Robinson seems to have followed implicitly the principles, or rather assumptions, of Mr. Henkle's pamphlet. He states that the General conference approved a proposition for an amicable reorganization under two conferences, one for a territorial segment south of a designated line, and the other for the remaining portion of our Union north of that line, and hence two coordinate conferences instead of one body. Such are the fundamental principles of Mr. Robinson's decision. Indeed, it shows pretty manifestly its paternity. Mr. Bascom's style and sentiments seem to be interwoven throughout the whole, while the pamphlet of Mr. Henkle contains much in common with it.

But the Judge's decision had reference to the property in churches and parsonages; yet he gives, in passing, his views concerning the Book Concern. He says, "The fundamental restriction concerning the appropriation of the Book Concern and Chartered Fund, being inviolable in any other mode than that prescribed by itself, [the General conference,] this portion of the personality of the Church can not be disposed of otherwise than as that Restrictive Article directs, unless the Article itself be constitutionally altered." The Judge here pronounces, in form and in words, against the principle of Judge Nelson's decision. But at this time no one claimed that the Book Concern could be divided without the three-fourths vote of the annual conferences.\*

8. Dr. Bascom, at the close of General conference, promised, or rather threatened, in a published card, to answer the Reply to the Protest. After ten months the answer, entitled "Methodism and Slavery,"† makes its appearance, made up, to a great extent, of quotations of all sorts, and takes up all points included in the Reply, and almost every other topic embraced in the whole controversy. The quotations are given without any reference, except rarely to page or volume, and mostly with only remote relevancy to the points which they were designed to establish. The irrelevant, or apocryphal authorities, adduced in no authentic form, furnish a gemara, or a collection of the sayings of men, calculated to baffle the endeavors of review.

Dr. Bascom so elevates the civil above the ecclesiastical powers as to leave no room for the exercise of any ecclesiastical power, whether in morals, doctrines, or Discipline, or otherwise, which in any manner, proximately or remotely, will influence civil institutions. If his doctrines are to be carried out, ministers must not preach the Gospel or induce men to become Christians, because some law, constitutional or statutory, will be rescinded or modified in the event.

Dr. Bascom's views of Episcopacy seem to run up into high prelacy, which leads to Pusey-

\*Pamphlets, XLVI, pp. 357-366; and S., May 16th. Seraps, II, pp. 644-654.

†METHODISM AND SLAVERY, with other matters in controversy between the north and the south, being a review of the Manifesto of the majority in Reply to the Protest of the minority of the late General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the case of Bishop Andrew. By H. B. Bascom, D. D., President of Transylvania University. Frankfort, Kentucky. Hodges, Todd, and Pruett, printers, pp. 165, octavo.

ism and ends in Popery. On this subject, too, he misrepresents the views of the majority. Dr. Bascom, while he embraced and defended the exaggerated characters ascribed to Methodist Episcopacy, maintained these exaggerations as inseparable from it. Now he embraced what before he opposed, and hence he becomes the propagator of a theory on Episcopacy always rejected by the fathers and leaders of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Of Dr. Bascom's Review, the Southern Advocate of March 28th says: "This important publication has been delayed, of set purpose, in order that the amplest information respecting the topics it discusses might be obtained, and that the full impression which it is destined to produce throughout the whole border section, from Maryland to Missouri, might be felt just previously to the convention of the southern delegates at Louisville."\* Arrangements were made to scatter broadcast this Review, just in time to sway public mind, to effect the disruption of the Church so that it might do its work before any answer to meet it could be prepared and circulated. The *set purpose* of the work is to effect secession.†

Others than ourselves have entertained similar views of Dr. Bascom's Review. Cassius M. Clay thus speaks of it in a number of his new paper: "We have read this Review carefully and painfully. As a chronicler of the times we would be doing him injustice to pass, with seeming indifference, this work, lying right across our path, so deeply mixed up with the engrossing political movements of this and all countries; yet we must let this cup pass from us. We venture to call Mr. Bascom our personal friend. We regard him as a man of large soul, but the *victim of a false position*."‡

Mr. Mansfield, editor of the Cincinnati Chronicle, a man of science, talents, and strict moral and religious integrity, reviewed Dr. Bascom's work. He asks, "What special command have the ministers of the Gospel to become the champions of slavery? Is it a thing so admirable, so altogether lovely, that the ministers of peace and good-will should embrace it with all their heart and all their mind? Are there no worldly men, no great lawyers, no illustrious statesmen, no editors of newspapers, no traffickers in the blood and bones of men, to become the knights of chivalry in the defense of slavery? Must the chains of human oppression be soldered, and riveted, and rattled, and dragged about by the only men in the wide world who seem to be exempted, by their solemn commission, from such an office?"

Mr. Mansfield describes the book thus: "It is what the law calls a *hotch-pot*, in which all conceivable matters and things are brought with about equal interest. Of course, the book is like dressed salad, on which every thing in the casters has been indiscriminately poured. Such a mixture of good and bad, sweet and sour, and no point, we have rarely seen. Dr. Bascom's mind seems to have been an *omnium gatherum* for all the shreds and patches of information which came in his way—now poured forth on his Methodistic brethren, as a grand sacrifice upon the altars of the slave Church."

Mr. Mansfield thus replies to Dr. Bascom, in

regard to his argument on the connection between the civil and moral character of slavery:

"(1.) Dr. Bascom says that the *moral and civil* relations of slavery are essentially connected. So they are. If every man observed the rule to 'love thy neighbor as thyself,' would there be a slave on earth longer than time would be required to take legal measures, and make proper provision, for them? Yet Dr. Bascom says 'the Church must not move'—this is all a civil matter—if the state chooses to commit adultery what is that to us? The state, as states have done, authorizes polygamy. It is a matter which concerns Churches, states, and families; but we must not seek to change such a state of things as that, because it is the law, and we must obey it. Certainly; and what has obedience to do with a movement to repeal it? Presbyterian ministers go to distilling whisky. It is a matter which deeply concerns both Church and state; but the Church must not say any thing against these ministers, because it is a *lawful* occupation.

"(2.) Slavery is national, and the Constitution protects it. Suppose it does, does that force slavery on the state of Ohio? Does that oblige any one man in Ohio to give his countenance to slavery? Does that oblige any man to support a slaveholder for President? Does that oblige any man to support a Church which aids slavery? If Ephraim be joined to his idols, does that oblige Judah to do likewise?

"(3.) Any man who would reduce the 'value of slave rights' is guilty of a *moral trespass* as well as civil. The amount of this is, that every Church, and every mouth, and every press must be *sealed up*; for there can not be any thing uttered against slavery which does not go to reduce the value and the rights of slavery, so far as that utterance has any effect. This idea, however, was too monstrous for Dr. Bascom. So, on page 36, he says: 'We ask not the north to approve slavery. We do not ask them to cease warring against it, so far as such war be protected by right; but we do ask the north to respect justice and good faith, in connection with the original compact and subsequent compromise, binding the north and south together as one great people.' He does not ask us to approve nor to cease warring against it, so far as that war is protected by right. Now, is not the right to *preach*, and the right to *vote*, and the right to *publish* about as well protected as the right to hold slaves?

"But Dr. Bascom thinks our respect for *compromises* ought to keep us in dignified silence. What *compromise* is violated by refusing to vote for slavery? What *compromise* is violated by refusing to build the Church upon slavery? No reasonable antislavery man proposes to violate any principle or letter of the Constitution. Those who do are too few to be feared.

"Suppose that certain states of this Union had allowed a man to have three or four wives, and the Constitution did not forbid it. The municipal rights are sacred. Now, shall the citizens of other states keep silence, and exert no moral influence against polygamy? Slavery may never be abolished, but it will never cease to be the duty of a Christian man to oppose it in all righteous ways."\*

On the subject of civil liberty, Mr. Mansfield quotes the Review, and remarks that what

\* S., March 28th. Scraps, II, p. 440.

† W., April 11th. Scraps, II, p. 551. W., April 16th. Scraps, II, p. 660.

‡ P., April 30th. Scraps, II, p. 701; III, p. 134.

\* Cincinnati Chronicle. W., May 30th. Scraps, II, pp. 690, 691.



others call liberty Mr. Bascom calls slavery. What has been called civilization he calls oppression, and he thinks that slavery is a kind and benignant arrangement of society to throw light and blessings on the human race. Dr. Bascom's views may be found in certain speeches made in South Carolina, in certain documents of Mr. Calhoun, and in every defense of slavery. He then gives the following positions of Dr. Bascom in reference to colored persons:

"(1.) The declaration of his freedom—in free states—is a fraud.

"(2.) Every victim of injustice is a slave.

"(3.) No actual abolition of slavery has ever taken place in the United States.

"(4.) The servitude of the negro, at the north, has only changed its form.

"(5.) The slave at the south gets more than the free negro at the north."

On the above, Mr. Mansfield remarks: If every victim of injustice is a slave, and the freedom of the states be a fraud, then the world may sigh, in vain, for civil liberty, or for any change in the relation of oppressor and oppressed. Dr. Bascom confounds two ideas; namely, that of *social equality* and *civil liberty*. They are totally distinct. The one never existed, and the other is maintained by every American. Liberty is the right of a man over his own actions. Slavery is the reverse, and is the subjection of one man's person and actions to the will of another. There are differences in the civil rights of men, which no man can mistake. In the one case, the man works, goes, and comes at his own will. In the other, he works and moves at the will of another. Every colored man in Ohio and Massachusetts, can come, go, do, and labor as he pleases. He can learn to read, and take the newspapers. No slave can do these things. If "every victim of injustice is a slave," it is only necessary for a man to be cheated by a swindler, to be a slave.\*

Nevertheless, Mr. Bascom's review had its admirers, as if to cover its glaring defects and incongruities. The southern editors praised it beyond all bounds. Mr. Wightman calls it a *thorough armory*, and says the work is standard and a masterpiece.† The Nashville Advocate calls it a "document overwhelming in argument, and unanswerable in its positions."‡ We postpone any further remarks on Dr. Bascom's work, till we come to notice Dr. Peck's able reply and confutation of it.

9. As the south insisted that slavery was solely a civil institution, with which the Church had nothing to do, consequently, the Church must, also, as a matter of course, give it sanction. This view of the subject was now maintained, generally, by the southern Methodist press. This gave occasion to the editor of the Western Advocate, in his issue of April 18th, to pen an article on "southern politics—religious terms of compromise," in order to show the real demands of the south, and the subserviency that would be required of the north. The following is the article:

Two principal terms of compromise have been generally required by our southern brethren, both in their conferences and by their writers. They are the two following, namely:

(1.) Reparation for the past, by restoring Mr. Harding and Bishop Andrew to their former relation to the Church.

(2.) Security for the future.

And we may add another, not just insisted on in so many words, but to be inferred from the former two, or necessarily growing out of them. It is the following:

(3.) Assistance and protection in sanctioning, continuing, and perpetuating slavery, by the judicatories of the Church, her executive officers, and her presses.

Such are the terms on which the south would settle the present difficulties; and these are terms which the Church, we are persuaded, will never agree to. Let us examine each of these conditions, and see what they demand.

*First. Reparation for the past is asked.*

The Church is required to undo the action against Bishop Andrew and F. A. Harding.

The Bishop is to be permitted to retain his fifteen slaves or more, and, at the same time, to exercise his official duties in the Church. While he is presiding in conferences, ordaining preachers, and doing the other duties of his station, his slaves must be disposed of in some one of three ways. 1. They must be hired out by the Bishop to masters for wages, at, perhaps, as high rates as are usual. 2. Or they must be placed under a hired overseer, who, generally, are none of the most humane persons in the world. Or, 3. The Bishop must act the overseer himself, when at home, carrying the overseer's whip under his arm, and using it, too, when necessary. We must say that this is not tolerable in a Methodist bishop; and it is useless to propose that such a course would be allowed.

Add to this, Mr. Harding must be freed from censure; and hence, every tyro preacher in Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, in imitation of their more southern brethren, must, also, be permitted to obtain slaves by marriage, purchase—at the barracoons, if necessary—or in any other way in which they may be obtained.

What would be the consequence of such reparation? Why, that every preacher, south of the Ohio, must *lose caste*, unless he have slaves, few or many—and the more numerous the more honorable—either to oversee them himself, place them under a hired overseer, or have them hired out to the highest bidder. Few preachers would be able, long, to itinerate with such incumbrances, and if they would, their services would be of little use in promoting godliness and in elevating man, while they act so conspicuous a part in enslaving and oppressing their fellow-men.

Such reparation is out of the question, and the proposition containing it can not be even entertained, for grave consideration.

*Secondly. Security for the future is demanded.*

Some would demand—they have demanded, peremptorily—to erase every thing in the Discipline against slavery, and *just let it alone*. Or it is asked to leave the matter entirely to the south, to manage as they deem best. The application of rules in practice, in reference to slavery, we allow, must belong to them, in the nature of things. But for the General conference to take no cognizance, whatever, of the matter, would be strange, indeed. Then every preacher and member would deem himself at liberty to buy and sell human beings for gain, as he would any other article of traffic, without the least censure. Such a course could not be tolerated.

*Thirdly. The Church must furnish official assistance and protection in sanctioning, continuing, and perpetuating slavery by her Discipline, her judicatories, her executive officers, and her presses.*

\* Z., June 4th. Scraps, II, pp. 699-701.

† S., March 25th. Scraps, II, p. 440.

‡ N., June 5th. Scraps, II, p. 706.

This demand has not been made in just so many words, but it has, in part, been asserted, and it would follow as a whole, from acquiescence in the two former requirements.

The Discipline must be compelled to speak a language to sanction slavery. The General conference must declare that either no sin is connected with it, or so trivial as to be left to every man to do as he pleases. The evil of slavery, in short, must be annihilated. It is to be called a domestic institution; it is patriarchal; it is wholly civil. Just let it alone. The Church must declare, that to doom men to ignorance of letters—to break up the marriage relation—to establish concubinage—to separate husband and wife, parents and children—to buy and sell, for gain, the souls and bodies of men—to unman beings—to imbrute them—all these, and many other such things, are to be overlooked as venial, or as nothing. But, at the same time, the Church must be long and loud about preaching the Gospel to all—to master and slave—while these enormities are to pass for nothing, or are not to be meddled with, though contrary to every precept of the Gospel.

And then all the judicatories of the Church must employ their official authority in their respective grades of judicatorial action, in supporting slavery.

The General conference must shape the Discipline into due form, or they may let it alone with its present letter. But enactments, and pastoral letters, and resolutions, must all speak a language, so as not to touch or molest the institution of slavery, in any of its parts whatever. Bishops, editors, book agents, and missionary secretaries, must be chosen of the right stamp, so as to let alone the delicate subject of trafficking in human chattels.

And then the annual conferences must pass no resolutions against slavery, but utter some kind things about preaching to the slaves, and about the conversion of their masters, who traffic in such vendibles as Church members. Probationers for the itinerancy, candidates for full connection, and the characters of all the conference members must be so watched as there will not be a trace of abolitionism about them. And local preachers, too, must be carefully overseen, so that none of them are to be ordained, except those who have no evil thing to surmise about man-stealing, or such political or civil things which properly belong to Caesar.

After this the quarterly conferences have their parts to act, in keeping precisely with the models furnished by the General and annual conferences. Local preachers must be licensed, and recommended to the itinerancy, and the licenses renewed of those only who are of the true succession. Exhorters and stewards must be looked after, as a matter of course, so as to be sure they are orthodox, and men of prudence.

But every grade of pastorship must also comport in their respective executive departments with the foregoing. The bishops must watch the reputed abolitionists and antislavery men, and none of these must be appointed presiding elders, or placed in prominent stations. Presiding elders must see to those under their care. The preacher in charge must watch the Church members, and see what kind of men he selects for leaders, or nominates for trustees or stewards. In short, bishops, presiding elders, and preachers in charge, must protect their brethren who have the onerous duty of buying, selling, or in-

heriting slaves intrusted by Providence to their paternal care.

And then the press must do its full share of the general work. The southern editors must be permitted, nay, authorized and enjoined to say what they please about the abolition north, or the reckless majority of 1844, while every good thing must be said about slavery—not, indeed, about buying or selling slaves, or annulling marriage, or any such naughty thing—but about the oral instruction of the slaves, and the kindness of the masters who buy and sell them for God's sake. But the northern editors must be muzzled, except to excuse some ugly things in the south that they can not avoid noticing, and to curse heartily, once in awhile, the antislavery men, and call them Amalekites and mad dogs.

It might be suggested, too, after a little, when things are ripe for it, to take into consideration the propriety of having two indices prepared in imitation of his Holiness. The one would be an *expurgatory Index*, which would provide that in due time the writings of Wesley, Watson, Clarke, and others, should be rid, in future editions, of those hasty things they said about American slavery, with which they ought never to have meddled. The other would be a *prohibitory Index*, that would guard, in future, against publishing any book, pamphlet, editorial, or communication, that would come within many miles of touching slavery.

Thus slavery must be sanctioned, protected, and perpetuated by all the enactments the authority of the Church can make—by all the proceedings of her conferences, whether General, annual, or quarterly—by all her functionaries, whether bishops, presiding elders, preachers in charge, editors, agents, etc. And the Methodist press, the most powerful in the world, must be made tributary in supporting the great evil, or, in other words, a system morally wrong—and so far wrong as to be at variance with every commandment of God's own decalogue.

The foregoing, we believe, is a real picture of what may be expected, if the terms of compromise referred to should be complied with. It is a mere, abrupt skeleton of the vast topic which we sketch. Our limits will not allow us at present to enlarge. But these demands are not properly made by southern Methodism. They are the demands of the political proslavery spirit of the south, which has goaded Methodism into its measures. The voice is Jacob's, but the hands are Esau's.

If our southern brethren, as good Christians, and good citizens, would employ their ample talents and great Christian influence in soberly endeavoring, in their respective states, to promote a gradual emancipation of the slaves, they would do a great and godlike work. But if, instead of this, they will employ their vast moral resources in sanctioning and prolonging slavery—to perpetuate it is impossible—with its moral abominations, they will bring upon themselves the curse of almighty God—they will promote schism in the Church—they will be a hissing and a by-word among all good men—and the very political demagogues, whose aids they may become, will curse them in their hearts, while they employ them as instruments to accomplish their purposes. We would say to our southern brethren, PAUSE. You are in danger of entering on a work in which you can receive no aid from God, or no coöperation

from good men, except such as are misled by error.

Methodism has always refused to be a politico-religious party. According to the principles of its excellent Discipline, founded on Scripture, it *tolerates* slaveholding in certain persons, under certain circumstances, for a time; but it never *sanctions* slavery as either *right* or *good*; much less can it furnish auxiliary influences in protecting and continuing slavery. The ultra-abolitionists would lay Methodism under contribution in accomplishing their rash and unscriptural purposes, while pro-slavery nullifiers would lay it under a similar contribution in forwarding their designs. Methodism can not be thus employed by either without periling its very being. It never can be *forced* into such measures. The ultra men, both of the north and south, will be disappointed. They may separate or secede just as soon, and to such an extent as they can, and yet Methodism will grow and flourish, supporting law and constitution, and at the same time on the side of sound morality, and of religious and political freedom, constitutionally and Scripturally asserted and maintained in every jot and tittle, to the full extent of the just rights of all men. *Bondage*, of soul or body, Methodism will never be brought to *support*, *sanction*, or *defend*; and it is a work of mere supererogation to attempt to press into such services the followers of Wesley, Asbury, M'Kendree, and their successors. The thing is impossible.\*

The foregoing gave great offense to the south. The Nashville Advocate abused its author right heartily.† The Richmond Advocate ascribed the authorship of it to Bishop Hamline, and persisted to assert this in several editorials.‡ The Southern Advocate adopted the charge against Bishop Hamline with equal pertinacity.¶ The editor of the Western Advocate deemed himself bound to contradict the false charge against Bishop Hamline.§ The truth is, Bishop Hamline never saw the article till he saw it in print; nor had he any part in any manner in the publication any more than the editors of the southern papers had. There is, however, this excuse for the southern editors. Certain

eavesdroppers in Cincinnati, devoted to southern interests, circulated industriously that Bishop Hamline wrote some of our editorials. The southern editors relied on their informers as veritable. In this they were misled, although they persisted in this strange course of accusing an innocent man of what he never did. In short, there was little importance in the thing itself. Yet, in consequence of the use made of it, Dr. Bond deemed it his duty to defend the Bishop from the attacks of the southern editors.\*

10. About the same time in which matters came to a crisis in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Baptists also divided, the south from the north, on account of slavery. The same elements were at work which disrupted the Methodist Episcopal Church, and produced similar effects. Yet the Baptists suffered less by the rupture. Their government being independent or congregational, the severance was not so violent as in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which the connectional principle existed, and the bond of union is therefore stronger.† It is also believed by many that the Presbyterian Churches were divided by the same cause, or that it was a principal element in the separation.

11. The work of the Lord seems to have been progressing among the slaves, notwithstanding the predictions of ruin uttered from opposite quarters. In the South Carolina conference during the previous thirteen years, there was an increase of ten thousand whites, and twenty thousand colored members.‡ In Georgia conference the good work progressed among the slaves.¶ In Alabama conference great zeal was manifested for the salvation of the slaves.§ Indeed, the Lord seems to have particularly watched over the concerns of the colored people, so that their religious instruction was not hindered, but on the contrary it was promoted.¶ The synod of Kentucky took fresh measures to instruct the colored people.\*\* After all that has been said, we can not see the least advantage in reference to the religious instruction of slaves, in this southern secession, which was professedly entered on for the sake of the colored population.

## CHAPTER XXXIII.

### THE CONVENTION.

1. At nine o'clock, A. M., Thursday, May 1, 1845, the delegates of the southern conferences met in Louisville, Kentucky. The meeting was called to order by Dr. Capers, and Dr. Lovick Pierce was called to the chair, and Rev. T. N. Ralston, of Kentucky, was chosen Secretary, *pro tem*. On motion, it was

“Resolved, That the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church now in attendance, be requested to preside over the meeting under such arrangements as they may make from day to day.”

Bishop Soule informed the convention that he would express his views, on the subject of the resolution, both on behalf of himself and his colleague, on Friday. After some other business was transacted, and Mr. Somers elected Secretary, the convention adjourned.

2. On Friday, the 2d, Bishop Soule declared his willingness to serve them as president, in a long speech reiterating such sentiments as he

\* C., May 28th. Scraps, II, p. 675.

† N., May 16th. Scraps, II, p. 643. W., May 3d. Scraps, II, p. 691. June 13th. Scraps, II, p. 749.

‡ S., January 17th. Scraps, II, p. 101.

¶ S., January 31st. Scraps, II, pp. 170-173.

§ S., March 14th. Scraps, II, p. 360.

¶ S., April 2d. Scraps, II, p. 462.

\*\* W., May 21st. Scraps, II, p. 375.

\* W., April 18th. Scraps, II, p. 584.

† N., April 25th. Scraps, II, p. 601.

‡ R., May 15th, June 5th. Scraps, II, p. 641, 705.

¶ S., May 18th, June 6th. Scraps, II, p. 663, 711.

§ W., May 16th. Scraps, II, p. 654.

published to the world in a variety of ways during the previous months. In addition to the usual round of business the following resolution was adopted:

*"Resolved,* That a committee of two from each annual conference represented in this convention, be appointed, whose duty it shall be to take into consideration the propriety and necessity of a southern organization, according to the plan of separation adopted by the late General conference, together with the acts of the several annual conferences on this subject, and report the best method of securing the objects contemplated in the appointment of this convention."

Other business was transacted, and considerable debate arose between Dr. Longstreet and Dr. Capers in regard to organization. The action of the convention obviously implies, that as they need an organization, this makes them separatists or seceders in the fullest sense of the terms. For why do they need an organization if they are organized? If they are still members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they do not need any organization, for that Church is already organized. If they are of us they are already organized; if they need an organization, it is because they sever themselves from the Church.

The committee sat with closed doors; yet they admitted their friends very freely, excluding those who differed from them.

3. On Saturday, May 3d, after receiving memorials and petitions, little was done except the passage of the two resolutions; namely, that no memorial or petition would be referred to the Committee on Organization after Tuesday, 6th, and that Bishop Soule be requested to furnish a copy of his speech delivered on yesterday.

4. On Monday, 5th, the chief business consisted in two resolutions offered. On motion of Mr. Winans, it was

*"Resolved,* That the Committee on Organization be instructed to inquire whether or not any thing has transpired during the past year, to render it possible to maintain the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the same General conference jurisdiction, without the ruin of southern Methodism."

Drs. Winans and Capers spoke at large on this topic. Drs. Smith and L. Pierce presented the following resolution, which was intended to lie on the table and taken up next day:

*"Resolved,* by the delegates of the several annual conferences in the southern and south-western states, in general convention assembled, That we can not sanction the action of the late General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the subject of slavery, by remaining under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of that body, without deep and lasting injury to the interests of the Church and the country; we, therefore, hereby instruct the Committee on Organization, that if, upon a careful examination of the whole subject, they find that there is no reasonable ground to hope that the northern majority will recede from their position, and give some safe guarantee for the future security of our civil and ecclesiastical rights, that they report in favor of a separation from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the said General conference."

5. On Tuesday, 6th, the motion of Dr. Smith was the theme. He and others spoke in such

style, and with such arguments as they used on previous occasions, and which need not be repeated here, although we have a faithful report of the proceedings in our possession.

6. On Wednesday, 7th, except the routine of business, the time was spent in making speeches on Dr. Smith's resolution. Dr. L. Pierce spoke an hour and a half, and Dr. Capers occupied three-quarters of an hour. Adjournment then took place, to give time for the session of the Committee on Organization.

7. Thursday, 8th, was occupied as the previous day. The speeches were delivered by Messrs. L. Campbell and G. F. Pierce.

8. On Friday, 9th, Bishop Andrew delivered an address, and defined his position.

The Western Advocate noticed the week before on good authority, that there were many in the south in favor of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This seemed to alarm the members of the convention, and many, especially in Kentucky, disavowed any such thing on their parts. Still, it seems that the opposition was not strong enough to embody itself in any organized form. Hence it was overpowered for the present.

9. On Saturday, the same subject was continued. Dr. Longstreet spoke at length, on the worn-out topics of Bishop Andrew's case, in which he especially noticed Bishop Hamline's speech, and laid down the interpretations of the south, as those formed for the north an episcopal theory which no man in the Methodist Episcopal Church believed or maintained.

Mr. Dunwoody delivered a true pro-slavery speech, in which he maintained that slavery was upheld by the Bible, that it was wholly a civil institution, and the Discipline on the subject was, and always had been, wrong. We refer his speech to our documents.\*

10. On Monday, 12th, Dr. Paine made a long, labored speech in favor of organization, the purport of which was such as had been taught by the south, in their Protest, and discussions in the papers.†

11. Nothing of special interest occurred on Tuesday, 13th, as the speeches had been nearly all made. Rev. James E. Evans offered a resolution, which stated that it was unnecessary to continue the discussion any longer, unless some on the borders were disposed to speak. Accordingly, Messrs. Brush, Kavanaugh, Stringfield, Patton, and others, made remarks, and gave in their adherence to the new organization.

12. The business of Wednesday, 14th, was merely desultory, and consisted principally of adhering observations from various individuals on or near the borders.

13. On Thursday, 15th, the convention resolved itself into a committee of the whole on missions. After this, the Committee on Organization made their report. Dr. Bascom occupied nearly two hours in reading it. One hundred copies were printed for the use of the convention.

14. On Friday the convention was occupied with the business of missions.

15. On Saturday, May 17th, the report of the Committee on Organization was taken up and adopted. The first two resolutions are as follows:

*"Be it resolved,* by the delegates of the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the slaveholding states, in general convention assembled, That it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the annual conferences

\* Document, No. 62. † R., May 22d. SCRAP, III, p. 762.

represented in this convention into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as at present constituted; and, accordingly, we, the delegates of said annual conferences, acting under the provisional plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844, do solemnly *declare* the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said annual conferences, by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *entirely dissolved*; and that said annual conferences shall be, and they hereby are, *constituted* a separate ecclesiastical connection, under the provisional plan of separation aforesaid, and based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and canonical rules and regulations of said Discipline, except only in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of **THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH.**

"(2.) *Resolved*, That, although we can not abandon or compromise the principles of action upon which we proceed to a separate organization in the south, nevertheless, cherishing a sincere desire to maintain Christian union and fraternal intercourse with the Church, north, we shall always be ready to entertain, and duly and carefully consider, any proposition or plan, having for its object the union of the two great bodies in the north and south, whether such proposed union be *jurisdictional or connective*."

The Committee on Organization then presented an additional report, which was amended and adopted in the following form:

"(3.) *Resolved*, That this convention request the bishops presiding at the ensuing session of the border conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to incorporate into the aforesaid conferences any societies or stations, by a majority of the members, according to the provisions of the plan of separation adopted by the late General conference, that request such an arrangement.

"(4.) *Resolved*, That answer 2d, on 3d section, chapter i, of the book of Discipline, be so altered and amended as to read as follows: The General conference shall meet on the first day of May, in the year of our Lord 1846, in the town of Petersburg, and thenceforward in the month of May or April, once in four years successively; and in such place and on such day as shall be fixed on by the preceding General conference.

"(5.) *Resolved*, further, That the first answer in the same chapter be altered by striking out the word *twenty-one*, and inserting, in its place, *fourteen*."

16. On Monday, May 19th, the Committee on Organization then made an additional report, as follows:

"The Committee on Organization beg respectfully to report the following resolutions, for adoption by the convention:

"(6.) *Resolved*, That Bishops Soule and Andrew be, and they are hereby respectfully and cordially requested, by this convention, to unite with and become regular and constitutional bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, upon the basis of the plan of separation adopted by the late General conference.

"(7.) *Resolved*, That, should any portion of an annual conference not represented in this convention, adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, according to the plan of separation adopted by the late General conference, and

elect delegates to the General conference of 1846, upon the basis of representation adopted by this convention, they shall be accredited as members of the General conference.

"(8.) *Resolved*, That a committee of three be appointed, whose duty it shall be to prepare and report to the General conference of 1846, a revised copy of the present Discipline, with such changes as are necessary to conform it to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

The following documents were received from Bishops Soule and Andrew, in answer to the invitation to unite with the new Church:

"DEAR BRETHREN,—I feel myself bound in good faith to carry out the official plan of episcopal visitations, as settled by the bishops in New York, and published in the official papers of the Church, till the session of the first General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, from which time it will be necessary that the plan should be so changed as to be accommodated to the jurisdiction of the two distinct General conferences; that when such Southern General conference shall be held, I shall feel myself fully authorized by the plan of separation, adopted by General conference of 1844, to unite myself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and, if received by the General conference of said Church, to exercise the functions of the episcopal office within the jurisdiction of said General conference.

"JOSHUA SOULE.

"*Louisville, Kentucky, May 19, 1845.*"

"DEAR BRETHREN,—I decidedly approve the course which the convention has taken in establishing the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, believing, as I do most sincerely, that it will tend, under God's blessing, to the wider spread and more efficient propagation of the Gospel of the grace of God. I accept the invitation of the convention to act as one of the superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and pledge myself, in humble dependence upon divine grace, to use my best efforts to promote the cause of God in the interesting and extensive field of labor assigned me. May the blessing of God be upon us mutually in our laborious field of action! and finally, may we all, with our several charges, be gathered to the home of God and the good in heaven!

"Affectionately, your brother and fellow-laborer,

JAMES O. ANDREW.

"*Louisville, May, 1845.*"

Toward the close of Monday evening session, the two following resolutions were passed, which may be considered as parts of the decisions on organization:

On motion of Thomas N. Ralston, it was

"(9.) *Resolved*, That, in the judgment of this convention, those societies and stations on the border, within the limits of conferences represented in this convention, be constructively understood as adhering to the south, unless they see proper to take action on the subject; and in all such cases, we consider the pastor of the society or station as the proper person to preside in the meeting."

On motion of William A. Smith, it was

"(10.) *Resolved*, That the Pastoral Address be printed, and that such border charges or societies as may feel themselves called upon to make an election between the northern and southern division of the Church be, and they are hereby respectfully requested to have the Pastoral

Address of this convention read before the society or the several societies of the charge before voting on the subject."

A Pastoral Address was published by the

convention, in which there is nothing which calls for special note.

The convention adjourned on Monday, May 19, 1845.

## CHAPTER XXXIV.

### REVIEW OF THE CONVENTION.

1. We will now review the proceedings of the convention, especially the Report on Organization. It will be seen, by its proceedings, that the convention did not look to any future action of the annual conferences, nor to the future General conference, for any ratification or confirmation. The secession from the old Church, and the formation of the new one, are the final acts. The Church from which they separated can only look at the act of secession itself, and construe it according to the import of the language employed in effecting it.

The Report of the Committee on Organization is a long one, indeed, covering twenty-seven pages octavo, professing to set forth the causes, and to assign the reasons which rendered secession necessary. We have published the resolutions comprised in this report, and connected with it. The other matter in it is such as has, for the most part, been published in the other documents, such as the declaration and Protest; so that we need not even place it among our documents, seeing it is before the world in several publications already.\*

The Report on Organization is a singular production, both as to style and matter. The style is so verbose and confused that, like most other productions of its author, it is difficult, indeed impossible, to analyze it, and collect from it precise and clear views. But we especially take exceptions to the *matter* of the report. We had a right to expect a great production. The occasion called for it, and the acknowledged abilities of the convention were equal to it. Yet the world will pronounce it a failure. The premises are unsound, the arguments weak and sophistical, and the facts misplaced. We look in vain for the great principles, the high-toned sentiments of morality, the spirit of devoted piety, which ought to characterize a document of this kind. It lacks the majesty of conscious truth.

2. The convention, both in withdrawing from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in forming their new Church, did not act with either the authority or sanction of the General conference of 1844. The conference did not form any plan to guide the south, or any others in the work of seceding from the Methodist Episcopal Church. This is no work of our Church or its General conference. They left those concerned to form their own plan, and pursue such measures as they saw fit. The General conference neither *authorized*, *advised*, *sanctioned*, nor even *approved* of this separation or secession; they barely *assented* to it as they would *assent* to a man's *withdrawing* from the Church. They declared how they would *treat* the separatists, provided the separatists would act peaceably, and would

act for certain *reasons*. The General conference made no plan providing for the session of the convention, the presidency of bishops in that body, or other things employed to produce the rupture.

But the Report on Organization speaks as though the General conference gave absolute power to the southern conferences to separate. Hear its language: "The General conference of 1844, in the plan of *jurisdictional* separation adopted by that body, gave *full* and *express* authority to the annual conferences in the slaveholding states to judge of the propriety, and decide upon the necessity of organizing a separate or ecclesiastical connection in the south."\* This authority "was given without limitation," and might be exercised "irrespective of the whole Church." Indeed it is said that the General conference "duly and formally transferred its right and power over the question to these annual conferences," etc. This is strong language, and was manifestly designed to make the impression that the General conference legislated for *actual* and *absolute* division. Whereas, its action was altogether *provisional*, depending on a *contingency* which, it was hoped, might not happen. It was to be a case of *absolute* necessity.

3. The General conference could not, and therefore did not, confer on the annual conferences the power to divide the Church. The reason is, that the General conference possessed no power to enact or perfect any plan for the division of the Church. As individuals, they might signify their assent to a measure that was asserted to be necessary or unavoidable; but as a legislative body they could do nothing that would sanction a division of the Church. Such an act would have been a nullity in itself, not being sanctioned by any powers constitutionally or legally vested in the body adopting it. The fact is, the General conference did not claim the right; they only submitted to a necessity which the southern delegates assured them was beyond their control. Hence they referred the whole matter to the annual conferences. The plan was not confirmed, and therefore the action of the convention based upon it, is without authority, being unconstitutional.

The Report, though it denounced the General conference for its action, when claiming privileges under its authority, endows it with all sorts and degrees of power, in order to sanction secession. "It is the supreme legislative power of the Church." "It is the only constitutional organ of action on all subjects involving the power of legislation." Allowing even this, it can not legislate beyond its power. It is a body of strictly *limited* power. Where is the power granted to the General conference to divide, or adopt a plan to divide the Methodist Episcopal

\* See, for this Report, *History Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, pp. 207-234. W., July 11th. *Scraps*, III, p. 49. Also, C., June 25th. *Scraps*, II, p. 823.

\* *History Methodist Episcopal Church, South*, p. 208.

Church? It has no power to make another General conference. It could not do away the *general superintendency*, by sanctioning a division of the Church. It could not circumscribe the work of the Episcopacy. In limiting the bishops to the respective sides of a division-line would break the constitution. But when the part on one side of the line withdrew, and became another Church, then, of course, the bishops or preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church could not officiate in another Church. And this proved to be the fact, and in reference to this the General conference *provisionally* acted in forming their plan. And this was not a plan to *authorize, sanction, approve, or even consent* to secession or separation; but a plan to meet it, and treat it, should others effect it. For the plan to *divide* was not acted on, or was never entertained or adopted. The threatened secession was never approved of; it was merely submitted to as a necessity; but the Methodist Episcopal Church no more provided for secession proper than she did for the secession of the Methodist Protestants, the followers of Mr. Scott, or for that of any other class of seceders.

4. The Report gives a false character to the plan of separation, in speaking of it merely as *jurisdictional*. On this we remark,

*First.* The distinction attempted to be made between withdrawing from the jurisdiction of the General conference, and from the Methodist Episcopal Church, is purely *fictitious*. It is a distinction without a difference. It is merely imaginary. It is as if a person would say, I do not give up my citizenship in the United States of America; I only renounce my allegiance to the General Government of the United States. If a man is not out of the Methodist Episcopal Church, when he renounces the authority of the highest judiciary of the Church, it will be impossible to tell when he is out of it.

*Secondly.* This new theory is contradicted by the plan itself, which looks only to "a *distinct* ecclesiastical connection." No authority is given for the promotion of a separate *jurisdictional* control simply. What can be meant by a *distinct* ecclesiastical connection, other than that those who form it are cut off from the Church to which they belonged?

*Thirdly.* Dr. Capers's plan, which looked toward a jurisdictional separation, received no countenance or authority from the General conference.

*Fourthly.* The plan leaves the old Church in possession of its true name—"the Methodist Episcopal Church;" while the new Church is to select a new name, such as "the Church, south," or "the southern Church." The convention dissolved all ties of connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and organized a new one. And when they profess to have merely effected a "jurisdictional separation," they sail under false colors. They have made a General conference for themselves—have their own bishops, Book Concern, Missionary Society.

*Fifthly.* The Report clings to this fictitious jurisdiction for obvious reasons, and such as they have themselves, in various ways, declared. There are two obvious reasons why this should be done, in order to induce those who fear to leave the Church, to submit to the secession, by calling it a jurisdictional organization. The first plea is, to induce persons to believe that the *jurisdiction* of the Church is only divided, while the *union* of it remains. Hence the Report says,

"The division relates only to the power of general jurisdiction;" that this is authorized "by the supreme, or rather highest legislative power of the Church." A labored effort is made to establish the absurd notion of a divided union, by reference to the early history of the Church. It is true enough that, as the Report says, the power of jurisdiction was first exercised by a company of unordained preachers, under a superintendent appointed by Mr. Wesley; that it was subsequently placed in the hands of annual conferences; that it was next lodged in the hands of the bishops and a small committee, and again deposited with the itinerant ministry assembled in General conference; then placed with the elders and the General conference. But this does not favor the doctrines of the Report. The whole tendency is to a firmer union. Our fathers were successful in forming a united body. The present movement is to divide the same body.

*Sixthly.* It is an organization upon some common basis which gives to a Church its unity, its individuality, its identity. One of the articles defines a Church to be "a congregation of faithful men, to whom God's word is preached, and the sacraments duly administered." This description necessarily requires organization. It provides for the constituting of a *congregation* or Church, which is an organized body, as its name and nature show. It provides for *preachers*, and *administrators* of sacraments, and these persons necessarily combine with them organization. A common creed will not answer. The British Wesleyans, the Methodist Protestants, agree with the Methodist Episcopal Church in doctrines, and in most respects in institutions; yet they are distinct, independent Churches. Now, as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has an organization solely its own, it is a distinct Church. As to the phrases, "the different divisions of the Church," "the different sections of the Church," such language is romance. Churches are not divided into sections or divisions in this sense, any more than juries, congregations, or the like, are thus divided.

*Finally.* Another object of this jurisdictional theory is to secure the title to property. The convention says: "The committee are compelled to believe, that the mere *division* of *jurisdiction*, as authorized by the General conference, can not affect either the *moral* or *legal* unity of the American family of Christians, known as the Methodist Episcopal Church, and this opinion is confirmed by the *ablest* jurists of the country." This language is deceptive. There are at least two errors in it. First, the General conference did not *authorize* a *division* of *jurisdiction*, or any division or separation; it merely *assented* to such separation or secession as the south saw fit to make on their own sole authority and responsibility. Secondly, the separatists, by their act of separation, according to the plan, cease to be known as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, this designation being retained by the Church proper.

5. As to the *necessity* governing the case, the Report, as well as the declaration and Protest, assumes much, and greatly exaggerates the whole matter.

As to the supposed necessity, in reference to Harding's case, it is briefly this: It was in conformity with the Discipline, which required a preacher coming into the possession of slaves, to emancipate them, when the laws of the state allowed emancipation. The laws of Maryland do

allow it; and in no case do they permit a person so freed to be again reduced to slavery. And hence, the large Baltimore conference, in 1845, renewed the suspension of Mr. Harding, twelve only voting against it. As to the necessity of preachers holding slaves in Maryland, Kentucky, and Missouri, there is nothing of it.

As to the Bishop's case, we have sufficiently explained this already, and from our survey of it, it will be clearly seen that no necessity governed in the matter. It has been, however, made a handle to show, that there was only a commencement with Bishop Andrew, and this must reach to all preachers in the south. Of this there never was a case, and we presume never will be one. All the outcry on this point was manifestly for effect, and nothing else.

The Committee on Organization foresaw that something more was necessary to sustain their charge than the cases of Harding and the Bishop. They therefore advert to the abolition excitement in some portions of the Church, as rendering it necessary for the south to dissolve their existing relations. It is unfortunate for this argument that the two preceding General conferences contained each more ultra-abolition delegates than that of 1844, and yet no abolition measure was carried, nor even proposed by any of the committees. The violent agitators had seceded from the Church, and the abolition storm had spent itself before 1844. The only real cause of complaint was, that the General conference refused to sanction slavery in its decisions. This was the real cause, and nothing else.

Indeed, whatever of real or plausible necessity for secession existed when the convention met, seems to have been created by the course of the south, and which did not grow out of the nature of the case. The southern delegates met next day after the adjournment of the General conference, resolved on the Louisville convention, fixed the ratio of representation, and sent out an inflammatory circular to the people. The southern papers hoisted at once the secession flag, and every effort was employed to *get up*, not to *allay* excitement; to *make*, but not to *prevent* the necessity. The necessity contemplated by the General conference, was one spontaneously arising from the state of things; not one got up or made for the occasion. The convention can find no reason whatever for its decision from the provisional plan of the General conference. They were to *find*, not to *create* or *make* the necessity.

6. What then is the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, but a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church? The Report on Organization makes it a secession, by its decision, though it denies it in its argumentation. The convention renounced the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; for they renounced the jurisdiction of the General conference; but the jurisdiction of the General conference is the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; therefore they renounced the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and with it the Church itself.

Beside, they *constituted* a new Church. And how could they constitute a new one, and form it from *themselves*, and therefore belong to the new Church, without withdrawing, or seceding, or separating themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church?

7. The convention, in its Report, gives an unfair interpretation of the law of slavery in the Discipline. It states the law correctly, but

reasons on it unfairly. It makes no distinction between the law for a local preacher and that for a traveling preacher, and yet there is a manifest difference, and for good reasons. The law must be contemplated in a threefold light.

*First.* As it applies to members. All that refers to them is the General Rule, which, though very brief, is very significant and comprehensive. But as all official persons and preachers are also members of the Church, this Rule will also apply to them, though the rule for official members and traveling preachers will not apply to Church members.

*Secondly.* In regard to official members and local preachers, the law is that "no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." If the laws of the state admit of emancipation, but do not allow the emancipated slave to live in it, and enjoy freedom, slaveholding is no bar to official station.

*Thirdly.* In regard to traveling preachers the law is, "When any traveling preacher becomes the owner of a slave, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, *if it be practicable*, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives." There is a manifest difference between the law for a local preacher and that for a traveling preacher. By the law for a local preacher the slave must be "permitted to enjoy his freedom," in the state where he is manumitted, before slaveholding can be regarded as a bar. A traveling preacher is bound to manumit, *if it be practicable*; that is, if the laws of the state do not prohibit it. Under this law Mr. Harding was dealt with. The reason for the difference between the law for a traveling preacher and that for a local preacher is this: The residence of a local preacher is permanent; that of a traveling preacher is not so. He may be removed every year; and if he be in a slaveholding state one year, he may be in a free state the next. And yet the Report on Organization says, contrary to truth, that the law for the official member and local preacher is the only law binding upon any "grade of ministers in our Church, from the lowest office up to the bishop."

*Fourthly.* The Report gives a wrong view of the action of the General conference in 1840 on slavery in the Westmoreland case. We need not quote the resolution here, as it has been frequently quoted already.

This resolution does not mean what the Report seeks to make it mean. They say, "It was the unanimous voice of the great representative and judicial council of the Church, then acting in the character of a *high court of appeals*, for the decision of an important legal question." The conference was not sitting as a court of appeals; for there was no trial from which the appeal could come; and this is proved more fully that those concerned were local preachers, whose cases never came before the General conference by appeal. Thus, the convention gives a false character to the action of the General conference of 1840.

The true state of the matter is this: Certain local preachers, in the North Neck of Virginia, applied to the Baltimore conference for ordination, and their application was rejected by that



body. Supposing their application was rejected because they were slaveholders, they memorialized the General conference, complaining of the Baltimore conference. The response of the General conference expressed the general sentiment of the Church, which no one before or since has called in question.

Now, however, the convention apply to the Episcopacy what belongs only to local preachers. No discussion ensued on the Report, because it made no discovery, and only affirmed a position never disputed. Who can believe that this resolution taught the doctrine that slaveholding was no barrier to the Episcopacy, and that such would pass in 1840 *unanimously*?

The Report on Organization alludes to what it calls "the novel and dangerous doctrines practically avowed and indorsed by that body, [the General conference,] and the northern portion of the Church generally, with regard to the constitution of the Church, and the constitutional rights and powers respectively of the Episcopacy and the General conference." These restrictions are the mere guards thrown around the constitutional elements composing the Church organization. In this view some have called them, properly enough, the constitution; yet these do not comprise all the constitution of the Church, although they are salutary guards to preserve the Articles of Religion, to fix the ratio of representation, to secure a general superintendency, to maintain the General Rules, to secure the right of appeal, and guard the Book Concern and Chartered Fund. Indeed, all the organic bodies of the Church and the officers necessary to carry them out, enter into, and form parts of, the constitution, although these restrictions are properly enough called the constitution, as they are the proper guards of many, if not most, of the elements which constitute the Church. The convention make a mere show of zeal for the constitution of the Church, while they invade some of its most sacred provisions.

9. The convention, in support of their new theories and revolutionary course, represent the General conference as acting a double and contradictory part. It is represented as acting without law, above law, against law, extrajudicially, extra-legislatively, when the views of the south are not met. But if the conference pass a plan of separation for which there is neither law nor constitution, the General conference is "the supreme legislative power," "the only constitutional organ of legislative power." The Report, too, makes the General conference act speak both *advisory and judicially*. They make the action *judicial*, when made to bear on the General conference, but *advisory* when made to bear on Bishops Soule and Andrew.

10. The convention takes great pains to array the Methodist Episcopal Church against the civil powers of the country. The Report, explaining the law on slavery, calls it the "great compromise, conservative arrangement, which had been looked to as the only reliable bond of jurisdictional union between the north and the south for more than half a century." They say "the compromise was practically disregarded and abandoned;" that the "whole law of the Church, and the most important adjudications had upon it, were treated as null and obsolete, and that body proceeded to a claim of right, and course of action, amounting to a virtual appeal of all law;" that it "brought the

Church into a state of direct and violent antagonism with the civil authority and the rights of citizenship, throughout all the slaveholding states." All this is false. Where is the law, whether constitutional or statutory, which requires that a Methodist bishop, or a Methodist preacher, must hold slaves? or that slaveholding is a prerequisite to the right of citizenship? The Report reasons as though the laws of slave states made it the duty of citizens to hold slaves. A man may be a good citizen without being the owner of slaves; and a Church may organize its institutions, excluding all slaveholders from its pale, without coming into antagonism, either violent or otherwise, with the civil authorities. Quakers will not permit their members to hold slaves, and no one charges them with contravening the laws of the state.

We deny positively that the action of General conference, in reference to the Bishop or Mr. Harding, conflicts either with the civil institutions or the Discipline of the Church.

In regard to the Bishop, though there is no law declaring a bishop shall not be a slaveholder, yet by the just moral analogies he is debarred from being a slaveholder. Officiating in free states, he must not be a slaveholder, as no member of the Church, official member, or traveling preacher, in free states, are allowed to have slaves. There is no Discipline against dancing, horse-racing, dealing in lottery tickets, etc. If an act be evil moral discipline must reach it; therefore, if an officer of the Church can not discharge the duties of his office, there ought to be power in the government to regulate him. The General conference had such power in the Bishop's case; because, 1. The Discipline takes from that body the power to destroy the general superintendency. 2. The Bishop is amenable to the General conference for his conduct, and they can expel him for improper conduct. This brings the Bishop under the restraint of the conference for his entire conduct and even capability; and though he was a resident of Georgia, whose laws forbid emancipation, he was also the Bishop in many states whose laws prohibit slavery; and, in the latter case, a slaveholder officiating would be justly odious. The procedure of the conference did not come in contact with the civil institutions of Georgia. That state did not command that a Methodist bishop must be a slaveholder, though residing in the state. It was only as a *bishop* that the General conference touched him. They did not interfere with him as a citizen of Georgia, nor as an elder, deacon, or member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In neither of these capacities did they interfere with him as a slaveholder. They took him up as an *officer*, or bishop of the whole Church, and in no other way. There is, therefore, no collision between the acts of the General conference and the laws of Georgia.

As to the case of Harding, the Discipline is so clear, and the fact so well established, that by the laws of Maryland slaves can be manumitted, it amounts to effrontery to say that he was dealt unfairly by, or that any law, civil or ecclesiastical, was infringed.

The Report resorts to an unworthy expedient to make out opposition to the law of the Church. Keeping altogether out of view the law governing traveling preachers, they apply the law on local preachers to the case of trav-

eling preachers. They then regulate the bishop as a traveling preacher. They then found on this false assumption the charges of tyranny against law and the like. But there is one law for the local preacher, another for the traveling preacher, and a third and distinct authority to regulate the bishop.

It were easy here to retort on the convention and its new Church. By giving up their Christian liberty of regulating the Church according to the New Testament, they have, in spiritual and moral matters, allowed the civil power to govern them. Thus, the morals of Christianity are to be governed by the arbitrary laws of civil society, and that, too, in one of its most corrupt points, that of enslaving, and keeping enslaved, both the souls and bodies of men.

11. The Report charges on the action of the General conference that it would shut out the ministry of the Church from access to both slaves and masters; therefore duty requires them to separate from the northern portion of the Church. But, we may ask, when did the planters of the south demand, in order to have access to them and their slaves, that the Methodist Episcopal Church should have a slaveholding Episcopacy? They may require that we teach the slaves to obey their masters, but they have no right to interfere with our Church government. As a slaveholding Episcopacy would produce strife, contention, and every evil work, in the greater portion of the Church, we may not admit it, though the door should be shut elsewhere. But the planters, apart from ministers, never made any such demand. For sixty or seventy years we have had no slaveholding bishop, and no complaint was ever made by planters, except those who were Methodist preachers, and it was only recently that even these learned this lesson. There has been no instance up to 1844, or since, among Methodist preachers, whether in the West Indies or the United States, in which they did or said any thing to interfere with the relation between master and slave, in the discharge of their religious duties; and this day no such thing would be tolerated in any preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The charge is entirely groundless.

12. It is objected that the action in the Bishop's case creates a *caste* in the ministry. The phrase "caste in the constitutional eldership of the Church of Christ" is used. Though pompous in style, it has no definite signification. What can be meant by these swelling words? All elders are alike in office, and their duties are the same. Perhaps this caste may mean any thing which proscribes all who do not possess it. Good health and ability to travel are necessary requirements in a bishop; and yet the infirm elders, not in possession of these, do not form an odious caste. We have formerly understood our southern brethren as enduring slavery, but not approving of it, bearing it as a cross till Providence would remove it. We have understood them, too, as consenting and approving of a non-slaveholding Episcopacy, for Christ's sake. But a change has come over their feelings in this matter; for now to refuse to admit slaveholding into the Episcopacy is to be made a good ground of secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

There are several objections to the new Church, some of which we will here briefly present:

13. We object to the new Church, that it possesses several elements of schism. While professing adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, the minority carried matters to a dangerous extent that will be an element of schism in any body, and in time must produce decisive steps. What measures are more schismatic than the undue agitation of the press, condemnation of the Church, and much of the proceedings of the convention? In executive administration what is more distracting than the contumacious conduct of Bishop Andrew, and that of Bishop Soule in disregarding the acts of his colleagues and the acts of the General conference? The reason, too, for all this, in fact, is, plausibilities aside, to continue and protect slavery. The plea is not doctrines, nor Church polity, but to propagate or sustain a wrong system sustained by great moral wrongs.

14. We object to the new Church, that it is pro-slavery, if not in avowed principle, it is such in effect. The speakers in the convention, at least some of them, go to assert the doctrine that slavery is an institution of God, as well as of the civil power, and that all resistance to it is treason against both God and man. These assertions received no rebuke or opposition from the convention, and must be considered as the principles upon which the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is founded. We may refer here to Mr. Dunwoody's speech, published in our list of the documents as a mere specimen; and he seems to have been the interpreter of the south for many years on this subject. He preached a notable pro-slavery sermon before the South Carolina conference, which was received by that body with great favor and published.

15. The new Church possesses several elements of a revolutionary character; but as the movement was a revolution itself, every step beyond the offering of the Protest was a revolutionary one; for protest is the last act of regular Church action; therefore, every act beyond this is one of revolution. Minorities pushing their acts beyond protest become revolutionists. The revolutionary acts need not be given in detail. We will name, however, the address of the southern delegates at close of conference; the acts of Bishop Soule in calling Bishop Andrew to work; the convention, and many other things connected with the former.

16. It will be very difficult to maintain an efficient itinerancy with a slaveholding ministry. Those preachers in the south who become possessors of slaves have mostly become local on account of the incumbrance of slaves: hence the difficulty of filling up the ranks of traveling preachers by those who are confined to their estates and their slaves.

17. And this alliance of the Church with slaveholders must have the effect, in the end, of alienating the colored people of the south from the Church. They must view the ministry as taking part with their oppressors. Of course their confidence in them must be shaken, and the result will be, when circumstances will allow, to decline Church fellowship with them.

18. Throughout the Report of the Committee there is an attempt to bring odium on the Methodist Episcopal Church, by representing her as arrayed against the civil institutions of the country. This note is the same that was used on former occasions; and the writer of the Report was one of those who proclaimed it when the Methodist Protestant Church was organ-

ized. As the Methodist Episcopal Church outlived the one she will easily outlive the other.

19. Notwithstanding the frequent and strong asseverations of the convention in clinging to the plan, there are several parts of their action which totally nullify it. The resolution of the convention, authorizing any portion of an annual conference, on the line not represented in the convention, who may adhere to the south, to send delegates to the General conference of 1846, no matter on what agency it may have been gotten up, is a revolutionary measure. Add to this the annual conferences gave no official sanction to the plan, but, on the contrary, they refused to confirm it by a constitutional vote.

20. There are several doctrines embraced by the new Church, which were never before received by the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is new in Methodism to teach that slavery is sanctioned by the Bible; and we need not now dwell upon this, so as to maintain this charge, seeing so many of the members of the convention assert it. A degree of power, too, is ascribed to the Episcopacy, which was unknown to our fathers. Other innovations have been brought to view already in this narrative, so that we need not dwell on them in this place.

21. Several questions have been asked, after the convention, by numbers of persons on the borders or in the south, in order to satisfy their minds in reference to the true character of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and their relation to it. We will briefly state these questions, and furnish replies.

Who belong since the convention, to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South?

None belong to it, except Bishops Soule and Andrew, the members of the Louisville convention, and as many others as have formally united with them. They have no annual conferences, for the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church are conferences of this Church only, and will continue so till they are changed, or differ-

ently formed by the General conference of the same Church. Their members, many or few, may withdraw, one by one, but the conferences retain their organization, till the power that constituted them sees fit to change them. And no private members belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church except those who join it; but they belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church till they withdraw from it.

Did the southern delegates form themselves into a distinct Church during the convention, or did they only resolve to do so?

They have fully organized themselves into a new Church; because, 1. They have taken a new name. 2. They declare their annual conferences to be "erected into a distinct ecclesiastical organization." They declare the jurisdiction, formerly exercised over them, *entirely dissolved*, and they constituted a separate connection. Hence they have withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and are, therefore, no part of it. 3. The convention formed a new General conference. 4. They have altered their Discipline, and formed a new one. 5. They have left nothing for the annual conferences to do.

Must each annual conference sanction the action of the convention before the organization is completed?

The organization is completed. The convention calls for the *sanction* of no conference, but claims full power to act for every member, preacher, and conference in the south, and by this means transfer them with or without their consent.

Can Bishop Soule preside in conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church?

He certainly can not, because he was identified with the convention, in acting with it, signing, officially, its decisions, and approving of them. He withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and virtually, and even formally, united with the new Church in presiding in those they claim to be their conferences.

## CHAPTER XXXV.

### BISHOPS SOULE AND ANDREW VS. OUR BISHOPS.

1. THE presidency of Bishop Soule in the convention gave great satisfaction and encouragement to the south. But it was exceedingly offensive to the northern conferences. The offense was not that Bishop Soule acted for the south; but that he also claimed to act as a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the same time. This presented the strange anomaly of a bishop performing official duties in two distinct Churches at the same time. Nay, it had this as an additional aggravation, that his entire influence and official acts were employed in subverting the Methodist Episcopal Church, while he was professedly acting in promoting its interests. Such, indeed, is the general interpretation of his course by the principal men in the Methodist Episcopal Church. We will briefly recite their leading opinions, and refer to their published articles on this subject.

Dr. Bond, in an article dated June 11th, on "Bishop Soule's position and future purpose," maintains that he had dissolved his relation to

the Methodist Episcopal Church, in presiding at the convention; and his purpose to preside in conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church was without disciplinary warrant, and fraught with danger. And though the plan allowed of the transfer of preachers, it does not imply that one may belong to both Churches at the same time. And as Bishop Soule has identified himself with the convention, he must also be considered as having, with it, withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church.\*

Dr. Bond takes occasion here to state that, in conversation with him, at the commencement of General conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew, Bishop Soule said: "O, sir, if Bishop Andrew is inextricably a slaveholder, he will resign! I am confident of it; and the more so, because I have often heard him express a wish to resign before his late marriage. And, more-

\* C., June 11, 1845, Vol. XIX, p. 194. Scrape, II, pp. 819-823.

over, the admission of slavery into our Episcopacy is wholly impracticable—utterly impracticable." The impracticability of admitting slavery into the Episcopacy, Bishop Soule repeated elsewhere and to others, both at New York, during the General conference, and at the Baltimore conference, just preceding the General conference; as well as frequently in the west, and in our own hearing.\*

Rev. James B. Finley, in an article entitled, "Bishop Soule's course," maintained that our bishops could no more preside in the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, than in a conference of the Methodist Protestant Church; and that Bishop Soule could not preside in the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He adds, that "Bishop Soule has done more to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church than any other man living."† Rev. W. D. R. Trotter took a similar position.‡ Rev. Richard Bird, of the Illinois conference, protested against the presidency of Bishop Soule in their conference.¶ The quarterly conference of Lebanon, Illinois, protested against his presiding in the Illinois conference.‡ The editor of the Western Advocate contended that the ordination of Bishop Soule in the Methodist Episcopal Church would not be valid, or would not be acknowledged as such; and should he, by any means, force his presidency on us, candidates for ordination ought to decline being ordained by him.¶

Rev. Peter Cartwright declares the south to be an "apostasy from the good and right way of old Methodism;" and then proceeds to declare as follows, and in this he expresses no more than the common opinion of the entire north: "Permit me to say a few words more in behalf of many, very many of the Methodist preachers and members of the Church, in the Illinois conference, and I wish it to be heard by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church of these United States and territories.

"Bishop Soule has taken side with the south, even from the action of the General conference down to the consummation of secession, at the Louisville convention, and he has thrown his whole weight of influence, as we think, in rendering the Methodist Episcopal Church. See his argument at General conference, his addresses to the Virginia and other southern conferences, his letters in our Church papers, and his very extraordinary address to the Louisville convention. Also, witness his presiding in that body of disorganizers, his accepting a residence among and support from them, and his provisionally accepting their invitation to go and be their bishop. In view of all this, we do most solemnly think that he has no right to preside in any of the conferences that compose the Methodist Episcopal Church; for if he is 'bound, in good faith, to carry out the episcopal plan, formed by the bishops,' for two years, or till the General conference in Virginia, in 1846, why is he not 'bound, in good faith,' to carry out said plan for four years? We think that some one of the bishops who means to remain, according to his ordination vows, a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, should hasten to our relief. But if Bishop Soule will come, we will treat him

as a man and a Christian minister, courteously, and respectfully, having no personal quarrel with him; but we can not receive him as a bishop. There is a deep wound inflicted on many of the preachers and members here, about this unjustifiable—as I think—decision, and they are not disposed to submit to it."\*

The southern papers, however, held different language. Dr. Wightman insisted that Bishop Soule was still senior Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; that his good faith was involved in filling the appointments assigned him; and that Bishops Morris and Janes, by their acts in presiding in southern conferences, sanctioned the convention.† The editor of the Nashville Advocate repeated the sentiments of his leader, in Charleston.‡

On the foregoing we remark:

The Louisville convention withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church in renouncing it, and in constituting a new Church, into whose organization they entered.

Bishop Soule, in sanctioning, approving, acting with, and signing, officially, the acts of the convention, withdrew from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, therefore, from it.

He did all he could to disrupt and disorganize the Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as to establish a new Church on its ruins.

Bishop Soule, therefore, could not preside in the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, because he belonged to another Church, was acting for them, and acting against the interests and integrity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, over whose interests he claimed the right to preside.

And, therefore, as no act of his could be official in the Methodist Episcopal Church, any more than the acts of a Popish or Episcopal bishop, he could not ordain our ministers, preside in our conferences, station our preachers, or do any other properly official act.

The claims of Bishop Soule, in this matter, were monstrous, arrogant, and unjust; and, therefore, could neither be entertained, approved, nor submitted to.

2. As the convention, acting in the name and by the authority of the southern conferences, pronounced these conferences withdrawn, seceded, separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and constituted into a new Church, distinct from the Methodist Episcopal Church, the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church could not preside in these conferences. At a meeting of the bishops, held in New York, July 3, 1853, they declared this, and published it to the world.¶

The bishops quote four resolutions of the convention, which include, in substance,

That the convention "do solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said [southern] annual conferences, by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, entirely dissolved; and that said annual conferences shall be, and they hereby are constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection, to be known by the style and title of the *Methodist Episcopal Church, South*.

"That it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect these conferences into an independent Church.

\* C., June 11, 1845, Vol. XIX, p. 194. Scraps, II, pp. 819-823.

† W., June 27th. Scraps, II, p. 778.

‡ W., June 27th. Scraps, II, p. 781.

¶ W., June 27th. Scraps, II, p. 784.

‡ W., July 4th. Scraps, III, p. 26.

\* W., July 4th. Scraps, III, pp. 29, 30.

† S., June 20th. Scraps, II, p. 742.

‡ N., July 4th. Scraps, III, p. 18.

¶ Document, No. 69. Scraps, III, pp. 34, 89.

"That the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over these conferences, by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, be *entirely dissolved*."

"That these conferences are constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection, by the name of the *Methodist Episcopal Church, South*."

The bishops, for the foregoing reasons, agreed to the following:

"Therefore, *resolved*, That acting as we do, under the authority of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and amenable to said General conference, we shall not consider ourselves justified in presiding in said conferences, conformably to the plan of visitation, agreed upon at the close of the late General conference, and published in the journals of the Church."

In consequence of this action, Bishops Morris and Janes gave notice that they declined attending the southern conferences.\*

Many were of the opinion that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church should attend the southern conferences, and preside in each of them, till, by some formal act, they sanctioned the act of separation, passed by their delegates, and then, disclaiming all official relation to any annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, call upon those who considered themselves as ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to do the business of the conference. If none such appeared, the duty of the bishops would cease.

Nevertheless, the greater portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church considered the course of our bishops, on the whole, the more proper one.†

The northern conferences generally considered Bishop Soule as withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and they, therefore, looked on his presidency in their conferences as differing nothing from that of any other minister or bishop, not of their Church. The Illinois, Iowa, and Rock River conferences being, by the episcopal plan, under the charge of Bishop Soule, thought themselves greatly aggrieved in having him for president. Indeed, as conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they considered a seceded bishop no more entitled to preside over them, than that a withdrawn preacher, serving in another Church, should be a member of their conference, or receive pastoral work. The editor of the Western Advocate received several formal protests, the following of which he gave to the public in his paper:‡

The Rev. B. Weed, of the Iowa conference, writes, "I speak advisedly when I say, the brethren of Iowa conference will not be willing to receive Bishop Soule. I have been induced, at the instance of several brethren, to write with the hope that there may be such action taken by the bishops in the premises, as to shun the difficulties alluded to, and let our conferences be served by a bishop who has not virtually seceded from us."

Rev. John Van Cleve, of the Illinois conference, concludes his letter thus: "We can not receive Bishop Soule as our bishop. Our preachers, in general, will not accept of ordination from his hands; and some of those with whom I am acquainted, who are eligible to orders, would not attend conference, if they knew he

would be present. It is my humble opinion, that he had better not come; his voluntary absence will save us the mortification of rejecting him, and him the mortification of being rejected. If a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church can be with us, we will receive him cordially, and receive our appointments from him cheerfully; but we want no factious, schismatical bishop of the 'Church South.'"

The Rev. N. S. Bastion, of the Illinois conference, declares: "We will use every means warranted by the spirit and doctrine of Christ, within the compass of our abilities, to prevent Bishop Soule from presiding in our next annual conference."

The Rev. S. P. Barr, of the Rock River conference, concludes his letter on the subject as follows: "Bishop Soule says, in his letter to the convention, that a change in the plan of episcopal visitation will be necessary after the General conference of the Church, South, in May next. *Query*. Can not that change take place before the 20th of August next? We hope it will. And that one of the remaining bishops will attend our conference, and save us from much that will be very unpleasant."

After presenting the foregoing the editor of the Western Advocate said:

"These are specimens of the letters in our possession. As we have not room this week for the whole, we give these extracts. Perhaps arrangements are entered on to relieve the brethren of these conferences from the embarrassing circumstances in which they are placed. So we hope. But if the encroachment will be attempted, we trust they will meet it with the firmness of Christian ministers, and elect, in the absence of an acknowledged bishop of our Church, a president according to Discipline, and leave the event to God, and the decision of their brethren at the next General conference."

3. As Bishop Soule seemed determined to act independently of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, without consulting them, he addressed a letter "to the preachers and border societies of the Kentucky and Missouri conferences, and of other conferences bordering on them," calling on them to decide to what Church they would belong. This letter is dated Lebanon, Ohio, August 4th, and published in the Western Christian Advocate of August 22d.\*

After quoting the first and second articles of the plan, he states that the contingency mentioned in the plan had arrived, and that it was the duty of the administration to carry the plan into effect, and that it was of binding force as far as his administration was concerned. The following are his instructions to the border societies:

"In order to ascertain fairly the desire and purpose of those societies bordering on the line of division in regard to their adherence to the Church, north or south, due notice should be given of the time, place, and object of a meeting for the above purpose, at which a chairman and secretary should be appointed, and the sense of all the members present be ascertained, and the same be forwarded to the bishop who may preside at the ensuing annual conference; or forward to said presiding bishop a written request to be recognized, and have a preacher sent them, with the names of the majority thereto appended. This will apply

\* C., June 9th. Scraphs, III, pp. 34, 39.

† C., July 16th, Vol. XIX, p. 194.

‡ W., July 18th. Scraphs, III, p. 83.

\* W., August 22d. Scraphs, III, p. 223.

to border societies on either side of the line. But when any border society on one side of the line adheres, by a majority, to the other, it is very desirable for the preservation of order and harmony, that the presiding bishops at the conferences on each side of the line be duly informed of such adherence. And in no case should any blame attach to any society thus adhering. As it is highly probable that I shall attend the ensuing sessions of the Kentucky and Missouri conferences, I most earnestly and affectionately request the ministers, and border societies of those conferences, to adhere strictly, but in the spirit of Christian kindness, conciliation, and peace, to the provisions of the 'plan of separation,' as contained in the resolutions before cited; and, as far as practicable, to observe the mode recommended to ascertain fairly and peacefully the desire and purpose of the border societies in every case where there is any doubt relative to the choice of the majority. Pursuing such a course, I cherish the hope, as I possess the ardent desire, that peace and harmony may be restored to our deeply-afflicted Zion; and that the two great departments of the Church, north and south, may still be united in all those essential elements which constitute the real unity of the household of faith."

The plan required the majority of votes in two distinct bodies; namely, 1. A majority of votes of all the members of the Church in each conference, taken by societies in circuits and stations; and 2. A majority of the votes of all the preachers in a conference. The language of the plan is, "All the societies, stations, and conferences adhering to the Church in the south, by a vote of a majority of the members of said societies, stations, and conferences," and "stations, societies, and conferences adhering by vote of majority to the Methodist Episcopal Church." Thus, according to the plan, it required a majority of Church members and of the preachers, too, to make the plan available. Bishop Soule entirely overlooked the majority of lay members by conferences.

The plan regarded as bordering societies and conferences, those on the *northern borders* of the protesting conferences, and these alone were required to take action. The plan never contemplated that the *southern* border of the conferences north of the protesting conferences should take action; for they made no complaint, entered no protest, and sent no delegates to the convention. The plan, for instance, had no reference to the Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, or Iowa conferences, or any societies in them, and the line could never take a single society from them. But Bishop Soule, in direct violation of the plan, calls on societies in these conferences to act, whereas, according to the plan, they could not act.

Bishop Soule assumes to act here for the entire board of bishops; for though he professes to act for himself alone, he nevertheless prescribes rules, the observance of which involved the official acts of others.

The Bishop, too, speaks of the "two great departments of the Church, north and south," as if there was yet only one Church comprising two departments. This, too, is a perversion of the plan, which contemplated a new Church, and not two departments of the old Church. But this phraseology now became a favorite one, in order to show that the real unity of the Church was still preserved.

4. In consequence of the acts of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Soule, under date of July 15th, wrote to Bishop Andrew. He states that there were sixteen annual conferences left to Bishop Andrew, and three to him north of the line, making nineteen for both. He thinks the outposts should be well guarded. He proposes that if he could get Bishop Morris to go to the Rock River, Illinois, and Iowa conferences, he would attend Kentucky, Missouri, Arkansas, Mississippi, and Texas conferences. He quotes the meeting of bishops as saying to him, "The meeting took no action relative to your appointments; but thinking, perhaps, in view of the decisions of the meeting above stated, you might choose to change your field of labor, it was agreed that Bishop Morris should be present at the Rock River, Iowa, and Illinois conferences, to preside in them, in case you should decline attending them." He then states that he does not *choose* to change or *decline* his appointments. He thinks the bishops did not consider him as withdrawn, or that his ordinations should be invalid.\*

Bishop Andrew publishes the letter of Bishop Soule in the Southern Advocate, and adds one of his own, in which he cooperates with Bishop Soule, and publishes by his own authority an episcopal plan for the southern conferences.† Bishop Soule, though he contends that it is his right to preside in the northern conferences assigned him, sees fit to choose to aid Bishop Andrew in presiding over the seceded conferences. This shows that he acted officially with the secession even then, and preferred this to presiding in conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. If this alone was not an act of secession, we are at a loss to know what secession is.

Nevertheless, Bishop Soule seems to have had no scruples in acting officially for two Churches, at a time when their interests were at direct variance; for he claimed the right of exchanging services with Bishop Hamline at the session of the Ohio conference, the particulars of which will be noticed in connection with the acts of that body.

5. The course of Bishop Soule was lauded beyond bounds by the south, though in general terms, without defined reference to his official acts. But in the north, his course was generally viewed in a very different light. All the leading men in the north, whether ministers or laymen, considered it as at variance with his former course, injurious to the peace and welfare of the Church, and as furnishing a very hazardous precedent for the future.

Rev. Henry Smith, of the Baltimore conference, one of its oldest and most venerable members, in a letter in the New York Advocate, of October 29th, speaks as follows, respecting the course of Bishop Soule. And, indeed, there were very few in the northern conferences who viewed the matter in a different light. Mr. Smith says:‡

"But 'many great and good men have gone off with the south, and Bishop Soule among them.' Bishop Soule is certainly a great man, and has done much good in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and I hope that he will receive his full reward. I think I can make a

\* S., August 1st. Scraps, III, p. 171. † Id., p. 170.

‡ C., October 29th, and W., November 14th. Scraps, III, p. 565.

better apology for Bishop Soule's going off with the south than I give for any preacher or member in the Baltimore conference.

"But Bishop Soule, after all, is only a man, and is as liable to be swayed by circumstances as other great men have been. Great men in Church or state can do a vast amount of good, when they employ their talents, and exert their influence, in a right direction. But they may err, and take a wrong direction, and then the consequences are fearful. It is well known to many yet living, that Bishop Soule owes his election and elevation to the episcopal office to the south and west. I do not think that he received a single vote east and north of the Baltimore conference, except two from Canada. Had not the Baltimore conference been unanimously in his favor he could not have been elected. But when elected, though by a small majority, and ordained, the east and north received him in his proper character with civility and courtesy. But for some reasons he never was a favorite with them. In the west and south, and in our conference, it was quite different. We did not only receive him with great cordiality, but gloried in him. For proof of this I will only say, a sermon the Bishop preached—I think before the South Carolina conference—was so highly thought of that the conference called for a copy, and it was published. This sermon was extolled in the south, and, so far as I know, it was well thought of by the preachers of our conference. But the preachers in the east and north took exception to some parts of it, and saw, or thought they saw, heresy in it. Our high opinion of Bishop Soule's orthodoxy led us to put a more favorable construction upon it. The Bishop was, however, called upon before the General conference in 1828 to explain his meaning. He disavowed the errors that some parts of his sermon were thought to lead to. His explanation was so far satisfactory as to put a stop to further proceedings in the case. Not even Bishop Soule, with all his philosophy and piety, could help feeling the difference between the 'breath of the people' in the north, and the warm and congratulating 'breath of the people' in the south.

"At the late General conference he announced, that he was not the bishop of the north, south, east, or west, but the bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and 'if he was immolated, it must be on the altar of the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church.' I rejoiced to hear this, for I had reason to believe Bishop Soule had great influence with the southern preachers, and would throw himself in the breach to preserve the union; and that if it were dissolved, he would nobly lay down his office, or refuse to be the bishop of north or south, but only the bishop of the united Methodist Episcopal Church. These were my 'fore-thoughts.' But his subsequent course in the General conference and council of bishops, his letters, and his address to the Virginia conference, forced 'after-thoughts' upon me; and I really do not know what the Bishop meant by his solemn declaration.

"It is also known that Bishop Soule has advanced higher notions of Methodist Episcopacy than were entertained by Coke, Asbury, McKendree, or any of our former bishops. And in this he seemed to have many disciples among the preachers in the south; but few, if any, in the north and east. He seemed to have been

afraid of the power of the General conference, and their construction of a certain rule, by which they could get at their bishops, for 'improper conduct,' in a summary way.

"Now, with all this in view, had Bishop Soule nothing to fear from the next General conference? And is it any wonder that he 'foresaw the evil, and hid himself?' In addition to all this, Bishop Soule's health made it necessary that he should take up his residence in the south. Might not another man, under the like circumstances, have done the same? Even the unjust steward, as we have it in the parable, was commended for having 'fore-thought,' and acting 'wisely.'

"Bishop Soule is to be pitied; for so far as he, or any other man, has aided or encouraged this division, he is responsible for all the strife and contention that has, or may, take place in and about our Churches: yea, all the mobbing and lynching that may grow out of it."

Bishop Soule felt intensely the unfavorable views entertained of his course, and expressed himself to this amount at several times. But he had fully enlisted in the cause of the south, and he was not the man to retrace his steps; and should he even try it, it would not materially extricate him from the difficulties of his position. In a letter dated March 29th,\* on his return to Ohio, after attending the southern conferences, he exults that he had been treated very civilly in Cincinnati; and from the mere acts of common civility, he seems to infer that his adherents and admirers in the north are both numerous and influential. He seems, too, to feel with some intensity the current views of the north respecting him, that he had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church; while he concludes his epistle with a pretty strong expression of confidence that the sober men of the north will ultimately approve his course, and that they will not pronounce the plan unconstitutional.

6. In April, 1846, just before the Southern General conference, Bishop Andrew addressed a pastoral letter "to the Methodists of the south and south-west." In this he congratulated them that the southern conferences had ratified the acts of the convention, and elected delegates to their General conference. He also congratulates them on the unexampled unanimity of sentiment and feeling with which the movement was carried through, the peace which pervades the new connection, and the security and equality of rights thus effected. Southern Methodists now feel that their privileges are not held at the mercy of a wild and wayward fanaticism, which makes its caprice and its power the rule of action, and which by mere courtesy allows slaveholders to continue members of the Church.†

One would suppose from the Bishop's tone, other circumstances apart, that he considered the privilege of slavholding to be a necessary element of true Christianity; and that the wild and wayward fanaticism of non-slaveholders was a great evil, because they were not engaged in buying and selling their fellow men. Beside, the Bishop is not the right man to preach about "a wild and wayward fanaticism," and of caprice and power being a rule of action. A man who refused subjection to the power which he promised solemnly in ordination to submit

\* N., April 10th. Scraps, IV, p. 376.

† S., April 24th. Scraps, IV, p. 450.

to, but afterward lent himself to subvert it, should be the last to say any thing about a rule of action.

7. Bishops Soule and Andrew, ever since the convention, became the bishops of the secession. They call it a *new Church* when they speak a little off their guard. But when its legitimacy is in peril, it is just one of the departments of the Church, or the like. Bishop Soule did not follow the episcopal plan of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as he did not attend the Illinois, Iowa, or Rock

River conference. He entered at once into the services of the new Church, and did not wait to do so till May, 1846, but identified himself with the secession all along. If he did not formally in terms withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church, he did it in fact, and officially, by his official acts in the new Church. In all sobriety he was a seceder, and nothing else, from May, 1845, and onward; and he was no more of the Methodist Episcopal Church, than a bishop of any other Church was one of their bishops.

## CHAPTER XXXVI.

### ACTION OF CONFERENCES IN 1845-46.

1. WE will here take a survey of the action of the conferences from the convention in May, 1845, to the first General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in May, 1846. We will notice the doings of the New England conferences by themselves; next the other conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and then the seceded conferences which formed the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

On the subject of slavery the Methodist mind in New England had, for the previous two or three years, been settling down upon the principles of the Discipline. Indeed, the great body, both of preachers and people, have all along adhered to these principles as the true and only tenable position; though some had adopted visionary and impracticable theories, and would have urged the Church to ultra and extravagant measures. Antislavery in opinion the Methodists of New England now are, and always have been; and so are all true Methodists every-where.

The two following resolutions were passed by a rising vote in the Providence conference, with four only dissenting; and may, as far as we can learn, be considered as the sentiment of the great body of preachers in New England:

"(1.) *Resolved*, That we are satisfied with the Discipline of the Church, *as it is*, on the subject of slavery; and as we have never proposed an alteration in it, so neither do we *now*; and that, in connection with our brethren of the other conferences, we will ever abide by it.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That we have entire confidence in the antislavery character of our brethren of the Baltimore conference; that we greatly rejoice that they stand, where they have ever stood, upon true Methodist ground; that we deeply sympathize with them in all their trials which have arisen out of their resolution to maintain their integrity; and that we pledge ourselves to abide by them in their support of Methodism, as transmitted to us by 'THE FATHERS.'

"A true copy,

D. PATTEN, JR.,

"Secretary of Conference."

The Vermont conference,\* the New Hampshire conference,† and the New England conference,‡

\* Z., July 9th. Scraps, III, p. 36.

† Z., August 13th. Scraps, II, p. 787.

‡ Z. October 22d. Scraps, III, p. 464.

adopted pretty strong antislavery reports. Yet there was a manifest modification of sentiment in New England on the subject of slavery, approaching, if not identical with, the views generally entertained in the west. There were, it is true, various opinions expressed and held in New England on the subject; but none very materially differing from the views given above.\*

2. The North Ohio conference, which sat August 13, 1845, passed the following preamble and resolutions in reference to the present state of the Church:

"CHURCH, SOUTH.

"Whereas, a convention of delegates from several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the slaveholding states, assembled at Louisville in May last, did formally dissolve their connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and form themselves into a distinct ecclesiastical organization, under the style and title of the 'Methodist Episcopal Church, South,' claiming, as authority for said act, the provisional plan of separation recommended by the last General conference, notwithstanding said plan is *void*—allowing that the General conference had the constitutional right to recommend it—by the refusal of the annual conferences to confirm it; and *whereas*, it appears to us that our southern brethren have not found such a necessity for separating from the Methodist Episcopal Church as was affirmed did, or would exist, and on the *real, undoubted existence of which necessity* the General conference based the plan of separation; and *whereas*, said convention did, by resolution, provide for the incorporation of all societies within the slaveholding states—represented in the convention—and for the representation of fractional portions of conferences—not represented in the convention—in their General conference, thereby violating the *letter*, as well as the *spirit* of the plan; and *whereas*, there are many ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the jurisdiction claimed by the southern organiza-

\* See the various sentiments in the citations that follow: Rev. Abel Stevens, on the views in New England. Z., August 6th. Scraps, III, pp. 174-180. The Church and Abolitionism, by Crandall. Z., November 19th. Scraps, III, p. 556. Asa Kent's Strictures on the above. Scraps, III, p. 625. Position of New England Methodism, by Rev. Abel Stevens. Z., December 3d. Scraps, III, p. 629. Strictures on Crandall's Letter. W., December 5th. Scraps, III, p. 649. Crandall to Dr. Elliott. Z., December 31st. Scraps, III, p. 731.



tion who can not consent to be transferred from the Church of their choice by the force of a *dead* recommendation, but will remain, or seek to remain, under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from a conviction that the act of separation is unnecessary, revolutionary in its character, and drawing after it all the fearful consequences of a schism in the body of Christ. Therefore,

*"Resolved, by the North Ohio conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in conference assembled,*

(1.) That we deeply regret the precipitate haste with which this great and momentous action has been had by the southern conferences.

(2.) That we can view the action of the Louisville convention in no other light than that of secession—made respectable by the number engaged in it—and a voluntary surrender of all right and privilege in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(3.) That those south who adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church have our sympathy in this their hour of darkness; that for them we will make supplication continually that they may endure hardness as good soldiers; and that we will furnish them aid as they may require.

(4.) That it is the duty of the Methodist Episcopal Church to provide for the special wants of our southern brethren who adhere to her jurisdiction, whether they be majorities or minorities of conferences, circuits, stations, or societies.

(5.) That we recommend to our adhering brethren in the south, in such prudent way as they best can, agreeably to the Discipline of our Church, to continue the organization of their conferences, districts, circuits, stations, and classes, till the next General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(6.) That, in our opinion, it will be the duty of the next General conference to provide fully for all who desire to continue in, or who may return to, the Methodist Episcopal Church, that they may enjoy all those inalienable privileges to which they have a constitutional right, and which can not be wrested from them.

(7.) *Resolved*, That a copy of this preamble and resolutions be furnished, by the secretary, to the editor of the Western Christian Advocate for publication, and that the other papers of our Church be requested to copy.\*

The foregoing may be said to give the common sentiments of western Methodists respecting the new Church and its proceedings.

3. The Ohio conference sat in Cincinnati, Wednesday, September 3, 1845. Bishop Soule was present at the opening of the conference.

On the morning of Thursday, 4th, before the opening of conference, brothers Raper, Wright, and Marlay, visited Bishop Soule at his room, and endeavored to dissuade him from occupying the chair, urging, as the reason, that the members of conference would almost unanimously oppose it. Bishop Soule gave them to understand that he would deem it his duty to preside, because principle was involved. The brethren informed him that they themselves could not consider him a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and could not submit to his presidency; and that, for the sake of peace, they deemed it his duty to decline occupying the chair, as to test this might produce considerable commotion in the conference.

These brethren were not deputed by others to wait on Bishop Soule. They went on their own responsibility, as his friends and acquaintances of long standing. All who know these brethren, know them to be men of great prudence, moderation, and firmness of purpose. And certainly brothers Raper, Wright, and Marlay, will compare with any three ministers in our Church for all the amiable qualities which adorn human nature, and that go to constitute the mature Christian. Bishop Soule, however, we believe, considered that great injustice had been done him by the editors of the Christian Advocate and Journal and of the Western Christian Advocate. He, therefore, deemed it his duty to test the matter on this occasion, and avail himself of the offer of the chair tendered to him by Bishop Hamline, through courtesy, as a visiting bishop. Accordingly, Bishop Soule attended conference, and opened the session in the usual manner.

Those do great injustice to Bishop Hamline, who suppose, as we find some have supposed, that he offered the chair to Bishop Soule, with the intention of exposing him to such a repulse. Bishop Hamline had no such views, nor did he do any such thing. He invited Bishop Soule to preside by way of courtesy, just as it is stated below, and explained by Bishop Hamline himself, in his brief address, given on resuming the chair, after it was vacated by Bishop Soule.

The following, we believe, is a correct view of the proceeding:

On Thursday the conference was opened by Bishop Soule, at the request of Bishop Hamline. After the secretary had called the roll, the Rev. Jacob Young rose immediately before Bishop Soule, and stated that he wished to present a very important resolution for the action of the Ohio conference. Bishop Soule seemed disposed to press a document on the conference, for reference, in advance of the business proposed by brother Young. At this juncture, the Rev. James B. Finley arose in his place, and said, "I most positively protest against this conference proceeding any farther, till the resolution about to be offered by brother J. Young shall have been acted on by this conference."

The following is the preamble and resolution offered by brother J. Young:

*"Whereas*, Bishops Soule and Andrew did preside at the convention at Louisville, in May last, composed of delegates from the southern conferences; and *whereas*, said convention did resolve the said conferences into a 'separate and distinct ecclesiastical connection,' solemnly declaring that they were no longer under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and *whereas*, Bishops Soule and Andrew did pledge their adherence to the Church, South, and, in view of the southern organization, and the course of said bishops, at a meeting of the bishops in New York, Bishops Morris and Janes declined presiding in the southern conferences; therefore,

*"Resolved*, That, although the conferences composing the Methodist Episcopal Church will treat the bishops of the Church, South, with due courtesy and respect, yet it would be, in the estimation of this conference, inexpedient and highly improper for them to preside in said conferences.

"Signed,

JACOB YOUNG,

"URIAH HEATH.

"September 4, 1845."

After the resolution was read by the secretary, Bishop Soule remarked to the conference that he took the chair at the request of his colleague, and would not leave the chair except at the instiga-

\* W., September 26th. Scraps, III, pp. 347, 348.

tion of the bishop who invited him; but that the question was one which he could not put. The question being called for by many voices, and some demanding of Bishop Hamline that he would put the question himself, Bishop Hamline remarked that Bishop Soule was in the president's chair, and that it would be disorderly for any other person to put the question to vote. Upon this, Bishop Soule offered the chair to Bishop Hamline, who declined taking it, remarking that, as the resolutions respected the superintendents, he would request the Rev. D. Young to take it. Brother Young declined to take the chair under the circumstances. Bishop Hamline then invited brother J. Young to take the chair, who also declined to occupy it. Brother James Quinn was then invited by Bishop Hamline to take the chair, and brother Quinn complied with the invitation. It was then moved and seconded that the question be taken without debate, by a rising vote. But then this called forth a desultory debate. Brother Schon declared his intention of protesting against the legality of the question, whoever might be in the chair. After some further desultory remarks, on which it was manifest that the conference was likely to get into great confusion, Bishop Hamline called the conference to order, and resumed the chair himself.

On resuming the chair, Bishop Hamline addressed the conference nearly as follows: "The confusion which is arising, promises to be so great, that I feel solemnly bound to interpose, and will cheerfully assume the responsibility of doing my utmost to conduct the conference through this crisis.

"The southern conferences have met, by their delegates, in Louisville, and, undisturbed, have organized a Church, declaring themselves separated from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I trust that, while we will not invade their rights, we may innocently seek to enjoy our own. If they expect us to leave them free, we will expect them to leave us free and undisturbed. I trust we will show our brethren of the south that we know how to respect their rights and secure our own. I am an officer of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and for the time preside over this conference. All I can legally do, or rightfully sacrifice, to direct the business of the conference in a calm and devout manner, I will cheerfully attempt. I would sooner have my right hand wither, than not feebly reach it forth, when the peace of the conference is threatened, and exert myself to avert the evil. These remarks are not intended to apply to Bishop Soule, but those which follow are.

"I have extended to him, as a visiting bishop, the usual courtesies; but if this is to break up the peace of the conference, and interrupt its business, it will cost *you* too much. I can not claim to practice courtesies of mere ceremony at the expense of the Church. I now wish to know if Bishop Soule can occupy this chair without inflicting on you what you deem a grievance. The resolution before you will decide that point. I shall, therefore, put the previous question, without allowing further debate, and, if carried, the main question will promptly follow."

The previous question was then called for and put, and carried by an almost unanimous vote. The main question was then put, by a standing vote, and one hundred and forty-five voted for it, and seven against it. So the question was decided that it was "inexpedient and highly

improper for Bishops Soule and Andrew to preside in conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

In this way, this vexed question was decided, in a brief and satisfactory manner to the conference. In short, the members of the Ohio conference, with the few exceptions mentioned above, considered the conference, with Bishop Soule in the chair, as an *acephalous body*, or a body *without a constitutional or legal head*, and under the presidency of such a head, they could not do business. Had they been afflicted with the continuance of Bishop Soule in the chair, they would either have adjourned, till their lawful president would occupy the chair; or would have retired, in such an exigency, without the bar of the conference, and thus refused to do business in an irregular manner, contrary to the principles of our Discipline. But as matters were adjusted entirely to the satisfaction of the conference, the business proceeded with the greatest harmony; and all were delighted beyond measure, with the courteous, dignified, prompt, and masterly manner in which Bishop Hamline untied the Gordian knot of difficulty, and extricated the conference from its embarrassment.

The reasons which induced the Ohio conference to take the stand they did, were clearly these: they considered Bishop Soule no longer as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and therefore not accountable to it for his official acts; and they could not therefore submit to his presidency, in whole or in part. They were unwilling to be stationed by him; his ordination they would consider either invalid or irregular, or at best doubtful. The acts of conference, while he was in the chair, they viewed as null, informal, or doubtful. They would as soon sit under the presidency of a minister of any other Church, as under that of Bishop Soule.

After this difficulty was disposed of, the conference proceeded with great unanimity and good feeling in their business; and even this distressing affair was conducted through the conference with much less commotion than could be expected.\*

On Thursday, the 11th, the most material business of the conference was to pass the resolutions on the Church difficulties. In passing these resolutions, the conference did no more, and contemplated no more, than merely to express their *opinions* concerning the topics embraced in the resolutions. And this expression of opinion is of course no legislative act, but the defining of the position of an annual conference, constituting a strong and sound portion of the governmental department of the Church—of a conference, too, behind none other in the Union for its unwavering attachment to constitutional Methodism. The conference does not assume to infringe on or impugn any of the doings of General conference. Nor will the Ohio conference interfere with the administration of our bishops; but will support them to the utmost in their administration, according to their own interpretation of the rules and principles of the Church over which they are placed as superintendents. But the members of this conference esteem it their privilege to declare, as is customary, the light in which they view the editorial course of their official editors. They also deem it their duty, under the circumstances, to declare their

views on the leading topics of Church difficulties.

Preamble and resolutions of the Ohio conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, passed September 11, 1845:

"Whereas, events connected with the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, involving important principles in the government of said Church, have lately transpired; and whereas, the position of the annual conferences, constituting the governmental department, should be clearly defined; therefore,

"Resolved, That we heartily approve of the general tenor of the editorial course of the Western Christian Advocate and the Christian Advocate and Journal, in relation to all those questions involved in the existing controversy between the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the organization styled, 'the distinct and separate ecclesiastical connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.'

"Resolved, That we hereby tender to these worthy defenders of constitutional Methodism our warmest thanks, and assure them of our sympathies, and pledge them our hearty support.

"Resolved, That we tender to our brethren of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states, our sympathies and regards—hoping that, should they not alienate themselves from the Church of their choice, the next General conference will provide for them in the regular way.

"Resolved, That we consider the provisional arrangement, commonly called 'the plan of separation,' as a nullity, because unconstitutional in its nature, and virtually rejected by the annual conferences, in their action in regard to the change of the 'sixth Restrictive Rule.'

"Resolved, That we protest against the term 'north' being prefixed, or added to, or used synonymously for the 'Methodist Episcopal Church' in the United States of America.

"Resolved, That we recommend to all our brethren the importance of giving a more hearty support to the Western Christian Advocate, and we entreat all our ministers to present the claims of said paper to the entire membership as early as possible.

JACOB YOUNG,

GEORGE W. WALKER.

"Cincinnati, Ohio, September 9, 1845."\*

Eight members of the Ohio conference, who had enlisted warmly in the cause of the south, entered their protest against the foregoing report. But as their protest contains nothing more than the current doctrines of the south, we need not publish them.† The Rev. E. W. Sehon, G. W. Maley, and S. A. Latta, withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and on the 26th of October were received into the Tennessee conference.‡

In a letter dated Athens, Ohio, February 3, 1846, the Rev. Jacob Young speaks as follows, in reference to the Ohio conference and Bishop Soule. The soberness and truth of this communication recommended it to the acceptance of all sober men, and supersedes the necessity of our saying a word on the subject:

"The complaint now is the doings of the Ohio conference, in relation to Bishop Soule, and the plan of division devised by the last General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and recommended to the annual conferences of said

Church for adoption. I am truly sorry if the Ohio conference has done any thing calculated to wound the feelings of any conference, north or south, or any quarterly meeting conference in the city of brotherly love, or any individual; for I am very sure, that if any wrong thing has been done, it was not intended. I say this, because I am acquainted with the Ohio conference, and have been from the time of her organization. She is now, and ever has been, firmly attached to the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Of this she has given full proof by her uniform course through all the conflicts which the Church has passed during the last thirty years. Her attachments to the south have, at all times, been of the strongest and purest kind; and I am confident that, at this time, she is ready to give up any thing but principle, in order to satisfy the southern conferences; but further than this, she can not, or will not go.

"But as far as Bishop Soule's case is connected with the action of the Ohio conference, at her last session, I will say, that no blame can be attached to the conference. Whatever wrong was done in that unpleasant affair, it must be laid to the charge of the venerable Bishop and his friends, who advised him in this matter. It will be said, that this is a bare assertion, and is worth nothing. If your readers will have a little patience, I will prove it true. This man of God was a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and a bishop of high standing; and, for many years, he stood as high in the Ohio conference, as in any other conference on this continent. The venerable M'Kendree, in his day, was scarcely more highly honored than was Bishop Soule. He was received as the Lord's messenger, by preachers and people, within every part of our conference bounds. We thought that he was the last man on the earth that would leave the Methodist Episcopal Church. But it came to pass, that a large secession took place in the south, or slaveholding conferences; and Bishop Soule went and presided in their convention; and, as we understood the matter, agreed to be their bishop next May. We were sorry, and wept much. But we knew that he was a free man, and could do as he pleased, though we still loved him. We let him go; and our prayers followed him; and as we prayed, we wished that he might be happy and useful till his days were ended. Now, let it be observed, that the Bishop left us voluntarily. We did not grieve him, or drive him away. We parted in peace with the good old man. But could he expect to be our bishop when he had placed himself at the head of a large secession, that stood antagonistic to the Methodist Episcopal Church? Could he expect to be bishop of two Churches at the same time, and those Churches not under the same jurisdiction? This would be a new thing in the history of Methodism, or in the history of the world. Some of our leading men had expressed their minds freely on this point; and the Bishop must have known that we would not receive him as our bishop. Why then did he come and trouble us, by taking the chair as the president of the Ohio conference? He inflicted a wound on the feelings of some of his old and long-tried friends, and some of the men who took a very active part in raising him to the episcopate at his first and second elections. It was a painful task to remove him from the chair that he had filled so long with honor and success. We loved Soule much, but we loved Methodism more. But I have said enough on

\* W., September 19th. Scraps, III, p. 337.

† W., September 26th. Scraps, III, p. 352; also pp. 381, 391.

‡ W., November 7th. Scraps, III, p. 615.

this unpleasant subject. Let an enlightened public judge between the dear old Bishop and the conference, that he once appeared to love as he loved his own life.

"As to the three resolutions that were passed at the last session of the Ohio conference, touching the plan of division, I have but little to say. I will say, however, that Dr. Latta either did not understand the resolutions, or he made a feeble effort to misrepresent them; and all that have manifested any opposition to the above-named resolutions, are under the same mistake, in view of the designs of the conference in passing the resolutions. As they understand the matter, I am not surprised that they should feel opposition to the action of the conference in that case, and that they should manifest that opposition in respectful language. We claim no power to nullify the laws of the General conference; but we think we have a right to say, whether a law is constitutional, or not constitutional; and surely no wise man will deny us this privilege. We do most honestly think, that the General conference did wrong in appointing the committee of nine to devise a plan of division, and did worse in adopting the report of said committee. But we regard it as a law of the General conference, and intend to live up to it till the meeting of the next General conference. I have lived up to it to an inch. We have not crossed the line. We glory in obedience. We are law-abiding men, from the oldest to the youngest. But have our brethren, who say so much on the subject of nullification, been careful to fulfill the law themselves? I would call the attention of candid men to their doings in the Queen City, Maysville, and Parkersburg. Men who live in glass houses ought to take care how they throw stones. The Ohio conference has defined her position; and I am persuaded that she will not recede from the stand she has taken. The slaveholding conferences seceded of their own accord. The conferences in the free states are not to blame for their doings. If they are pleased with their new organization, all that the other conferences can desire is, that they should be quiet, and mind their own business; and if they are dissatisfied at what they themselves have done, whose fault is it but their own? Let them repent of their rashness, and retrace their steps, and return to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and all will do well.

"I am aware that some good men fear another division. Such brethren must be a little cowardly, with all their piety and good sense. This is fearing when there is no cause of fear. And should there be just ground to fear another secession, what then? Will they advise the conferences in the free states to give up a principle, that they hold dearer than life, to prevent it? Should there be another secession deep and wide, still the Methodist Episcopal Church will be in a better condition than she was before the first secession took place. She will be free from assisting to perpetuate slavery; and this one thing will more than remunerate her for all her losses. The design of almighty God, in raising up the Methodists, was to spread Scriptural holiness, not only over the land of Great Britain, but over the whole earth. And this she can and will do by the blessing of God. If our brethren in the south will cease hostilities, we will be thankful. But if they will fight on, I am persuaded that we will defend ourselves, and the good cause of old Methodism.\*"

\* W., February 27, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, p. 234.

The Ohio conference became the special object of attack by the south. North-western Virginia had, from the beginning, been connected with Ohio, and was constantly cultivated by this conference, by sending to it a succession of active, young, and laborious ministers. But it was too much to have it connected now with the north; hence all the influences that could be brought to bear to alienate it from its proper ecclesiastical connection were employed.

In Parkersburg, Virginia, a pro-slavery party, in the Church and out of it, held a public meeting, and drove, by force, the Rev. Isaac Dillon from his charge, and from the state. This, however, was the violent act of a party; for the greater portion of the community were averse to it, as subsequent events showed.\*

In Cincinnati, through the influence of Rev. Mr. Sehon and Bishop Soule, a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church took place, and a Southern Church was formed, in direct violation of the plan of separation, though sanctioned by Bishops Soule and Andrew, the southern press, and the southern conferences.† Details on this would be useless. The references in the margin will present the historical narrative. At present, we may say, it was a forced procedure, had its day, and will soon come to an end.

4. The Illinois conference passed strong resolutions on the Church difficulties. In their preamble they say, that the annual conferences, as pastors of the flock, and constituents of the General conference, "constitute the natural and proper tribunal, and exclusively possess the right to determine as to the constitutionality of all acts and doings of the General conference." The following are the resolutions which they passed:

"(1.) *Resolved, by the Illinois annual conference*, That the plan reported by the committee of nine, and adopted by the General conference, called by the 'Methodist Episcopal Church, South,' a constitutional provisional plan of separation, is, in its operations, in direct contravention of the third Restrictive Article of the Discipline, which prohibits the General conference from altering said article, as follows: 'They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away Episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency.' This it does, in that the said plan, adopted by the General conference, in its operations, excludes the general superintendency from the whole Church and territory south of the prescribed boundary—thus preventing them from traveling 'through the connection at large.' It also contravenes the fifth Restrictive Article, which says, 'They shall not do away with the privileges of our ministers or preachers of trial by a committee, and of an appeal; neither shall they do away the privileges of our members of trial before the society, or by a committee, and of an appeal.' The plan adopted by the General conference, in its operations turns out of the Methodist Episcopal Church, both ministers and members, without disciplinary privileges; and,

\* W., October 3d. *Scraps*, III, p. 387; also, pp. 404, 437, 501, 515.

† See W., August 22d. *Scraps*, III, p. 233. S., August 13th. *Scraps*, III, p. 208. W., September 5th. *Scraps*, III, pp. 281-283. R., October 30th. *Scraps*, III, p. 469. W., November 7th. *Scraps*, III, p. 564. Statement by Sehon, W. *Scraps*, III, p. 589. Bishop Andrew's letter recognizing the course, S., *Scraps*, III, p. 559. Notice of it by editor and Mr. Marlay, W., November 25th. *Scraps*, III, p. 628. Mr. Marlay's letter. W., December 18th. *Scraps*, III, p. 685.

hence, it is unconstitutional, and ought not to be carried into operation by the bishops and ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That we deeply sympathize with the ministers and membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who reside within the limits of the southern organization, in the troubles and difficulties they are passing through, and that we recommend to them to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church; and we further recommend that, in all the annual conferences within the limits of the southern organization, where there are traveling preachers who still adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, to meet and form themselves into the regular annual conference; and, in the event there shall be no bishop present to preside over their deliberations, to appoint a president *pro tem*, as is provided for by the Discipline in the absence of a bishop.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church are most respectfully requested to attend the Missouri and Kentucky annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and preside over their deliberations, and make all necessary arrangements to supply the members of the Church in the above-named annual conferences with preachers, to take the pastoral care of them; and to make such further arrangements, as they may deem necessary, to supply with preachers all the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, residing within the boundaries of the self-styled 'Methodist Episcopal Church, South.'

"(4.) *Resolved*, That the action of the Louisville convention was without any constitutional authority, and, consequently, it can only be regarded as a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church; that, in view of this being a secession, and of the difficulties now existing in the Church, growing out of the revolutionary spirit which caused them, being of such a nature, and to such an extent, it is sufficient to authorize the calling of a special General conference. The bishops are, therefore, most respectfully requested, and advised, to call a General conference as soon as practicable.

"(5.) *Resolved*, That, inasmuch as the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church are the only constitutional judges and determiners of the acts and doings of the General conference, it becomes their indispensable duty to determine as to the constitutionality of the so-called plan of separation, passed by the late General conference, at their next several annual conferences; and, if they determine it to be unconstitutional, to appoint delegates to the special General conference, should one be called.

"(6.) *Resolved*, That as soon as a majority of the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall have concurred in the above resolutions, the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church be, and they are hereby requested and advised, to proceed immediately to take charge of, and superintend, all the ministers and members adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church within the assumed bounds of the Church, 'South.'

"(7.) *Resolved*, That the course pursued by Drs. Bond and Elliott during the difficulties in the Church, since the last General conference, merits the highest praise from the Church, and that the unmerited abuse which the southern editors, and others, have attempted to fasten on them, for their faithful and able defense of the

Church, is worthy the cause they espouse, and deserves the stern rebuke of all the friends of the Church.\*"

As to the mere constitutional test, there was some demur in the minds of some as to its correctness, especially by the editor of the *Pittsburg Advocate*.† The other parts of these resolutions, as the sympathy for adherents to the Methodist Episcopal Church, that the south is a secession, and approval of the editors of the *Western and New York Advocates*, met with a general response from the northern conferences. The Indiana conference decided, by their act, to consider the south as a secession;‡ and the North Indiana conference passed a resolution approving the course of the editors.¶

5. The Baltimore conference sat March 11, 1846, in Baltimore, and, as it was a border conference, like the Ohio, it became the seat of much agitation and disturbance from the attempted encroachments of the south.

Dr. Lee urged, with great vehemence, the connection of the Baltimore conference to the south, and his columns were devoted to this as a principal part of his work. He urged that societies and stations, might, at any time before the next General conference, unite with the south.§ A Virginian, of the Baltimore conference, wrote several elaborate essays to induce Baltimore to go south.¶ Lexington circuit, through this southern influence, was induced to decide in favor of the south.\*\* A writer, calling himself Chesapeake, in the *Richmond Advocate*, in February, before the session of the conference, drew up an array of the most ultra abolition sentiments uttered in the north, and urged the members of the conference, and people, to secede with the south, otherwise the northern abolitionism would, in future, control them.†† Warrenton circuit was induced to proclaim for the south.‡‡

The Baltimore conference published a Pastoral Address to the people, the chief parts of which are the following: The Address states that petitions were sent to the conference from various bodies, as circuits and societies, and then proceeds to reply to them as follows. The things prayed for in these memorials are,

*First*. That the Baltimore annual conference should withdraw itself from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and attach itself to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

To this the conference replies that it can not comply; because, 1. The great body of the people, even in the slaveholding portions of the conference, are opposed to it. 2. There was no such necessity for them to separate as the plan supposes. They have not been cut off from access to masters or slaves, but have been allowed every-where to declare the whole counsel of God and administer Discipline.

*Secondly*. Some petitions ask to divide the conference, having the slave territory in one, and the free territory in another.

To this they reply that they have no power to divide the conference, as this belongs to the General conference, and to attempt it would be

\* W., October 10th. *Scraps*, III, p. 418.

† P., October 22d. *Scraps*, III, p. 456; and November 17th. *Scraps*, III, pp. 681-683.

‡ W., October 17th. *Scraps*, III, p. 447. ¶ Id.

§ R., August 14, 1845. *Scraps*, III, p. 209.

¶ R., October 16th. *Scraps*, III, pp. 427, 495, 550, 583.

\*\* R., November 28th. *Scraps*, III, pp. 532, 697, 703.

†† R., February 12, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, pp. 168-175.

‡‡ R., February 12th. *Scraps*, IV, pp. 113, 303, 405.

revolutionary; beside, as one of these conferences would be expected to unite with the new Church, they have no disposition to favor it.

Finally, Some declared that, unless they would have a division of the conference, they would withdraw, and unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

To this the Address replies that the privilege of the plan is confined to stations, societies, and conferences on the border, and the border is immutably fixed. Interior charges are not included; and all societies, except those on the border, are not to change their relation. The Baltimore conference can not, therefore, withdraw its jurisdiction from any circuit or presiding elder's district within its territory; for the bishops of the south, in accordance with the plan, could not send them preachers, and it would be cruel in the Baltimore conference not to send them preachers.

The conference concludes their admirable Address with a pious exhortation to all to cultivate and practice the pure religion of the Gospel; and the Address was adopted by a rising vote of 177 for it, and 3 against it.

The following action of the conference will clearly show its position:

"Whereas, the General conference of 1844 adopted the report, generally known as the 'report of the committee of nine,' embracing certain resolutions to meet the contingency of a separation of several annual conferences in the slaveholding states from under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and whereas, that separation was carried into effect by a convention of delegates from sixteen annual conferences, assembled in Louisville, Kentucky, in May, 1845; and whereas, by the said separation, the Baltimore conference became a border conference; and as the first resolution of the said 'report of the committee of nine' seems to contemplate that societies, stations, and conferences, bordering on the line of division, shall, 'by a vote of a majority,' decide whether they continue to adhere to, and remain under, the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; therefore,

"(1.) Resolved, by the Baltimore annual conference, in conference assembled, That we still continue to regard ourselves a constituent part of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

"(2.) Resolved, That this conference disclaims having any fellowship with abolitionism. On the contrary, while it is determined to maintain its well-known and long-established position, by keeping the traveling preachers composing its own body free from slavery, it is also determined not to hold connection with any ecclesiastical body that shall make non-slaveholding a condition of membership in the Church, but to stand by and maintain the Discipline as it is.

"(3.) Resolved, That the decision of this conference at its last session, non-concurring in the proposed alteration of the sixth Restriction, was not based upon opposition in the conference to a fair and equitable division and distribution of the property and funds of the Church, as provided for in the 'plan of separation,' to the Church, South, but on other grounds altogether.

"The first of the foregoing resolutions adopted *unanimously* by a rising vote; 183 affirmative.

"The second of the foregoing resolutions

adopted *unanimously* by a rising vote; 198 affirmative.

"The third of the foregoing resolutions adopted by a rising vote; affirmative 178, negative 1.

"On motion, the secretary was directed to furnish the above documents for publication, as early as practicable, in the Christian Advocate and Journal, with a request that our other Church papers copy; and five thousand extra copies were ordered to be printed for distribution by members of the conference.

"Attest: S. A. ROSZEL,  
"Secretary Baltimore Annual Conference."\*

The Baltimore conference maintained, with great truth, that the border societies were to be found only on the northern verges of the Virginia, Holston, Kentucky, and Missouri conferences; and the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa conferences have no territory which could be occupied by the Church, South, according to the plan. And the invasion of the Ohio conference, in Cincinnati, and the Kanahwa district, was an unwarrantable infraction of the plan. The conference, too, very wisely declared they could not fellowship a Church which would make non-slaveholding a term of membership. The reasons are obvious. The Scripture, though it condemns slavery, does not condemn all slaveholders. The primitive Church had no such term of communion; and where such a term is enjoined, there is always such ultraism connected with it that such a Church could not be a safe ally.

And in regard to their denunciation of abolitionism, the reasons that could be adduced are good. They did not denounce emancipation by this act; for they themselves were emancipationists, both in principle and practice. They were not pro-slavery on this account, because they were avowedly antislavery. By abolitionism they meant the system of organized societies, containing principles and measures neither sound nor safe. Even sober abolitionism, such as that espoused by Franklin, Washington, Jefferson, and many able divines, they did not condemn, because they were themselves just such abolitionists, in principle and practice, as these men were. Posterity will acknowledge the wisdom and rectitude of the Baltimore conference in reference to this whole affair.

6. The bounds of the Philadelphia conference was invaded by the south, in the occupancy of parts of Northampton circuit, in Virginia, which lies on the eastern side of the Chesapeake Bay, at the southern extremity of the peninsula. After irregular proceedings, at variance with the plan, Bishop Andrew sent them a preacher,† in defiance of the provisions of the plan.

The following is the action of the Philadelphia conference in reference to the concerns of the Church, and was published in the Christian Advocate and Journal of April 22d, and in the Western Christian Advocate of May 1, 1846:

"Messrs. Editors,—I transmit, by order of the Philadelphia annual conference, the following transcript from its journals, for publication in the Christian Advocate and Journal.

"D. D. LORE, Secretary.

"Philadelphia, April 10, 1846.

\* C., April 15th. Scraps, IV, p. 393. W., April 17th.  
† R., July 30th. Scraps, III, pp. 134, 495, 668.

## "RESOLUTIONS.

"Whereas, a portion of the Church within the bounds of this conference has been considerably agitated on the subject of slavery and abolitionism; and efforts have been made to destroy the confidence of our members and the community in that section in us as a conference, by representing us as abolitionists in the popular sense, and that our members will soon be denied the privileges of our Church, if they hold slaves, under any circumstances; and whereas, the Philadelphia conference are firmly attached to the Discipline as it is, and will perseveringly resist every attempt to alter it in reference to slavery; and are, also, fully persuaded that no new regulation affecting the membership of those who hold slaves, will or can be made; and whereas, it is desired by many of our members that their pastors should speak out to them, unequivocally and plainly, on this subject; therefore,

"Resolved, That a committee of seven be appointed by the chair, to consider this subject, and report to this conference, either by resolution or a pastoral address, or both.

"Signed,

"THOMAS J. THOMPSON,

"J. A. MASSEY."

"The committee, to whom was referred a certain preamble and resolution, on the subject of slavery and abolitionism, recommend the following Report:

"That we, the members of the Philadelphia annual conference, are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; but, at the same time, we know our calling too well to interfere with matters not properly belonging to the Christian ministry. We stand, in relation to slavery and abolition, where we have always stood, "walking by the same rule, and minding the same things," and ask that our action in the past may be taken as the index to our action in the future; therefore,

"Resolved, That we will abide by the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church as it is, and will resist every attempt to alter it in reference to slavery, so as to change the terms of membership.

"Resolved, That we sincerely deprecate all agitation of the exciting subjects which have unhappily divided the Church; and impressed with the vital importance, especially for these times, of the apostolical injunction, "Be at peace among yourselves," we will, as far as lies in our power, "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

"T. J. Quigley, Joseph Castle, L. M. Pettyman, F. Hodgson, J. Lednum, J. S. Taylor, J. Cunningham, committee."

"The following was also ordered for publication:

"Whereas, in the south, an interpretation has been given to the "plan of separation," to this effect: That whenever a border conference in the Methodist Episcopal Church does not vote to remain in said Church, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is at liberty to send preachers into said conference, to establish societies, and exercise the pastoral office, though this conference wholly dissent from such interpretation; yet, as a matter of prudence, to prevent all litigation on the question,

"Resolved, by the Philadelphia annual conference, in conference assembled, That said conference remain, as always heretofore, a part and

portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

"Signed, JOHN KENNADAY,

"THOMAS J. THOMPSON."\*

Such was the action of this conference. It had no affiliation for abolitionism "in the popular sense," though it was "as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery." It was abolitionism in the *Methodist Episcopal Church*, and not in *politics*, that the Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences diavowed fellowship with. They cared little about political abolitionism, as it then existed; that was not the subject of their solicitude; it had not disturbed their fears; but the abolitionism in some conferences that were instant to make non-slaveholding a term of Church membership. It was this ecclesiastical abolitionism that both these conferences resolved not to fellowship.

And, indeed, we may say with truth, that the sentiment of the Baltimore conference was that of the Church, as will appear from the action of the Providence conference in reference thereto, and which will also apply equally to the Philadelphia conference.†

7. Having surveyed the course and positions of the middle and northern conferences, we now proceed to notice the proceedings and position of the conferences which seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and formed the new Church, entitled the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

We will begin with the Kentucky conference, and notice events preceding its session, its proceedings, and those events that followed its session.

On June 1, 1845, Augusta took decided action against secession. They declared that the convention had no authority to prescribe a course to them, and that all those preachers and ministers forming the convention, and agreeing with its resolutions, are no longer members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.‡ Dr. Tomlinson, in an article dated July 7th, maintained that all who have not, in their proper persons, declared themselves as identified with the new Church, are still members of the Methodist Episcopal Church; that such should remain where they are; that the distinction from withdrawing from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, does not exist; that up to the time of the convention, the plan of separation was itself so deficient in authority, as to constitute no legitimate basis for the action of that body, and, therefore, all action had upon it is both null and void.¶ Marion circuit and others declared against separation.§

The Kentucky conference, which met September 10th, at Frankfort, over which Bishops Soule and Andrew presided, passed the following preamble and resolutions, on the first day of the session:

"Whereas, the long-continued agitation and excitement on the subject of slavery and abolition in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and especially such agitation and excitement in the last General conference, in connection with the civil and domestic relations of Bishop Andrew, as the owner of slave property, by inheritance and marriage, assumed such form, in the action

\* W., May 1st. Scraps, IV, p. 488.

† C., April 22d, and W., May 1st. Scraps, IV, p. 484.

‡ W., July 4th. Scraps, III, pp. 31-34.

§ W., July 18th. Scraps, III, p. 80.

¶ W., August 29th. Scraps, III, p. 272.

had in the case of Bishop Andrew, as to compel the southern and south-western delegates, in that body, to believe, and formally and solemnly to declare, that a state of things must result therefrom which would render impracticable the successful prosecution of the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization in the annual conferences within the limits of the slaveholding states; upon the basis of which declaration, the General conference adopted a provisional plan of separation, in view of which, said conferences might, if they found it necessary, form themselves into a separate General conference jurisdiction; and whereas, said conferences, acting first in their separate conference capacity, as distinct ecclesiastical bodies, and then collectively, by their duly-appointed delegates and representatives, in General convention assembled, have found and declared such separation necessary, and have further declared a final dissolution, in fact and form, of the jurisdictional connection hitherto existing between *them* and the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as heretofore constituted; and have organized the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, upon the unaltered basis of the doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, before its separation, as authorized by the General conference; and whereas, said plan of separation, as adopted by the General conference, and carried out by the late convention of southern delegates, in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, and, also, recognized by the entire Episcopacy as authoritative, and of binding obligation, in the whole range of their administration, provides that conferences bordering on the line of division between the two connections—north and south—shall determine, by a vote of a majority of their members, respectively, to which jurisdiction they will adhere; therefore, in view of all the premises, as one of the border conferences, and subject to the above-named rule,

*Resolved, by the Kentucky annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church,* That in conforming to the General conference plan of separation, it is necessary that this conference decide, by a vote of a majority of its members, to which connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church it will adhere, and that we now proceed to make such decision.

*Resolved,* That any member or members of this conference, declining to adhere to that connection to which the majority shall, by regular, official vote decide to adhere, shall be regarded as entitled, agreeably to the plan of separation, to hold their relation to the other ecclesiastical connection—north or south—as the case may be, without blame or prejudice of any kind, unless there be grave objections to the moral character of such member or members, before the date of such formal adherence.

*Resolved,* That agreeably to the provisions of the General conference plan of separation, and the decisions of the Episcopacy with regard to it, any person or persons, from and after the act of non-concurrence with the majority, as above, can not be entitled to hold membership, or claim any of the rights or privileges of membership in this conference.

*Resolved,* That as a conference, claiming all the rights, powers, and privileges of an annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and that all our proceedings, records, and

official acts hereafter, be in the name and style of the Kentucky annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

*Frankfort, Kentucky, September 10, 1845.*"

Bishop Soule delivered an address to the conference, and after avowing his uniform, unchanged course throughout, declared, "Since I came into Kentucky, I have felt that I have breathed a free air!"\* There was certainly a difference between the ecclesiastical atmosphere of Ohio and Kentucky.

Through the influence of Bishops Soule and Bascom, the Kentucky conference was induced to go for the new Church, contrary to the general sentiment of the people, and at variance with their proper and natural position as a conference. The interests of Lexington University had a share in this, as the University was looking for patronage from the further south. The conference of the new Church, in Kentucky, dissolved connection with the Augusta College, but set up for a claim to its property. This was promptly met by the trustees, who declared, in an official way, that the Kentucky conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, never had any connection with the College, and it could not dissolve a connection which never existed.† A spirit of strong opposition to the Methodist Episcopal Church was manifested in some places. The editor of the Frankfort Commonwealth, a Methodist, said, in reference to the continuance of the old Church in Kentucky: "Do they mean to obtain northern preachers in the south? We can tell them they had better cultivate their own fields. We hurl no menaces, but we may, in the most kindly spirit, warn the northern party that they had better not attempt any thing of the sort; for it will not be tolerated, in Kentucky, at least."<‡

In Maysville, which had, at first, by a majority, declared for the Methodist Episcopal Church, through the interference of Rev. J. Stamper and other southern influences, a strong southern party was formed, which seized on the meeting-house, Mr. Armstrong, who was the principal contributor to the church, brought a suit in chancery against the southern party, which was a resistance they could not well brook, however just it was in itself.¶

8. The Missouri conference sat in Columbia, September 25, 1845. Many in Missouri, both preachers and people, perhaps a majority of each, if left to themselves, were opposed to the organization of a southern Church. Rev. Wilson S. M'Murry, on the 1st of September, wrote to Bishop Morris, inquiring whether the Methodist Episcopal Church could be sustained in Missouri. The Bishop replied to him under date of September 8, 1845, and informed him that "if a majority of the Missouri conference resolve to come under the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, that would destroy the identity of the Missouri conference, as an integral part of the Methodist Episcopal Church;" and that two Missouri conferences could not exist.§ This was in accordance with the plan and with the views of the Methodist Episcopal Church as to its meaning, and without any decision as to its constitutionality, and they felt themselves bound to act accordingly, up to the General conference of 1846,

\* W. Scraps, III, p. 374.

† W., October 31st. Scraps, III, p. 509.

‡ P., October 31st. Scraps, III, p. 507.

§ N., October 31st. Scraps, III, pp. 512, 519-524.

¶ See History Methodist Episcopal Church, South, p. 243.



Bishop Soule, who presided at the Missouri conference, made a speech, on taking the chair, in favor of forming a Southern Church; and, of course, none other could be formed in Missouri under his presidency, all things taken into survey. Fourteen of the preachers refused to enter into the new Church.\* After this a preamble and resolutions were adopted, similar to those of the Kentucky conference, which need not be here inserted.†

The Rev. T. W. Chandler, James M. Jamison, M. B. Evans, N. Westerman, under date of October 6th, published a defense,‡ in which they give their reasons why they can not enter into the new Church.

(1.) They were satisfied with the Church, and desired no changes, whether doctrinal, ecclesiastical, or economical.

(2.) That the Methodist Episcopal Church does not desire or intend any change in the Methodist Episcopal Church, as to slavery.

(3.) The cause alleged is not sufficient to require this unnatural disruption of the Church.

(4.) No necessity existed for separation except what was produced by the southern delegates, at and after the General conference.

(5.) The action of the convention, as far as Missouri was concerned, was in opposition to the plan. No such necessity as the plan proposes does exist in Missouri.

(6.) The convention's action was contrary to the instructions of the Missouri conference to its delegates to the convention. The conference required that the new Church should not be regarded as a secession; hence, the thing formed is contrary to the expressed instructions of the Missouri conference.

(7.) A large majority of the membership in Missouri were and now are opposed to be transferred to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The subject of their transfer to the Methodist Episcopal Church, was never presented to the members of the Church except partially and unfairly.

In St. Louis, as early as in June, many members in St. Louis resolved not to go with the new Church.¶ After the session of the Missouri conference, on the 23d of October, they met, and

adopted a preamble and resolutions, expressive of their views. Among others were the two following reasons for their course:

"We were to be members of the Church, South, we should be identified with the first Church ever organized for the accommodation of a slaveholding eldership; a Church which, 'in the face of heaven and a gazing world, seeks to give the sanction of the religion of Jesus to the perpetuation of slavery;' and we should be partakers with them in perpetuating a 'great evil.'

"The Church, South, being founded upon the institution of slavery, and as it can only maintain its existence by a perpetuation of the evil, as members, we must forever forego the cheering prospect, however distant, of final emancipation upon any principle, as the existence of slavery and of the Church, South, will be identical; and all that a man hath will he give for his life."\*

In many places in Missouri protests were uttered against the new Church.†

The other conferences in the south took a course similar to that of Kentucky; so that we need not occupy space in furnishing identical matter.

9. The British conference, as was expected, took a lively interest in the affairs of the American Church. A preacher from the south, who visited England, was refused admittance to the conference because he belonged to one of the southern conferences.‡ The southern papers were very much incensed at this, and spoke out their minds in pretty free denunciation, referring to the common pro-slavery plea, "The slaves are better off than British laborers."

10. The Canada conference was differently circumstanced. It had seceded, in former years, from the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was chagrined that the south should be put down as a secession. It seems to have forgotten, to some degree, its antislavery sentiments, and became the apologist for the south. The Guardian denounced the editor of the Western Advocate in unmeasured terms of disparagement and censure, which, for the honor of the assailants, may now pass into oblivion, unjust and unbrotherly as they were in themselves.¶

## CHAPTER XXXVII.

FROM MAY, 1845, TO MAY, 1846.

1. THERE are several events and points of discussion between the convention in May, 1845, and the first General conference of the new Church, in May, 1846, that must be noticed, in order to make our narrative full and satisfactory. There is Dr. Peck's answer of Dr. Bascom's Review, Longstreet's pamphlet on slavery, the constitutional question, the property question, the condition of the adherents to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and some other matters that we will now briefly survey.

The title of Dr. Peck's Pamphlet is, "Slavery and the Episcopacy; being an examination of Dr. Bascom's Review of the Reply of the Majority to the Protest of the Minority." Dr. Peck states what he fully sustains, that he shall "attempt

\* W., November 14, 1845. Scraps, III, p. 504.

† W., September 5th. Scraps, III, p. 258; also, pp. 288, 689.

‡ See N., August 22d. Scraps, III, p. 232. P., September 17th. Scraps, III, pp. 321, 323, 327. R., October 30th. Scraps, III, p. 50. S., November 7th. Scraps, III, p. 602.

¶ E., August 13th. Scraps, III, p. 206. N., September 25th. Scraps, III, pp. 300, 431. C., September 17th. Scraps, III, pp. 318-332. W., October 31st, on Methodist Episcopal Church, Canada. Scraps, III, p. 508. R., December 4th; Guardian's Censure on Dr. Elliott. Scraps, III, pp. 642, 643, 663.

\* W., October 31st. Scraps, III, p. 511.

† N., October 24th. Scraps, III, pp. 483, 495, 502, 505. History Methodist Episcopal Church, South, p. 250.

‡ W., November 7th. Scraps, III, p. 615.

¶ W., June 20th. Scraps, I, pp. 761-763.

to convict Dr. Bascom of erroneous statements and false reasonings upon all the material points at issue." He then proceeds to show as follows:

That the real question at issue in the late General conference was slavery in the Episcopacy.

He then gives an accurate history of the case.

He next shows that the compromise so much contended for by the south has no existence.

The laws of the Discipline on slavery are then given. On these laws he remarks: 1. Our fathers endeavored wholly to eradicate slaveholding in the Church. 2. As the laws did not, in many states, admit of emancipation, they were compelled to admit of exceptions. 3. The anti-slavery character of the Discipline still remains. 4. The General conference always kept a steady eye to the moral and religious improvement of the slaves. He here shows the futility of Dr. Bascom's assertion that the slave laws were made by a dominant northern majority; and proves further that southern men were most prominent in this, by quoting the report of the General conference, in 1800, all signed by southern men.

He then shows that the spirit and letter of our Discipline declare that the General conference did right in the case of Bishop Andrew, and that no former pledges were violated by the acts of 1844.

That the action of the General conference was no violation of the Constitution of the United States, and did not interfere with civil privileges in any unjust or illegal manner, he proves in full.

The next point is to show that the constitution of the Church was not violated in the case of Bishop Andrew.

He next points out the true character of the action in the Bishop's case, in reply to the shifted interpretations put on it from time to time by southern interpreters.

On the law of expediency, the usage of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in electing bishops, on petitions, on slavery, and the temper of the north, Dr. Peck gives very instructive sections, in his able pamphlet, and corrects the erroneous statements and arguments of Dr. Bascom on these points.

He next proceeds to point out the new theory of the south respecting the Episcopacy, growing out of the emergency of the question in debate, and presents it in the following propositions:

(1.) That the Episcopacy is a coördinate branch of the government—constituting its executive department proper.

(2.) That the bishops are an integral part of the General conference, have a right to participate in its debates, and to a voice in its decisions.

(3.) Episcopacy in the Methodist Episcopal Church is an order superior to the order of presbyters.

(4.) The General conference has no power to depose a bishop except upon conviction of moral or official delinquency, after impeachment and a formal trial.

(5.) Our Episcopacy, in its origination and continuance, is derived from Mr. Wesley alone.

(6.) The right of episcopal jurisdiction is communicated in ordination, and not in election.

Dr. Peck, in a masterly manner, confutes the several parts of the new theory, and sustains the true and safe doctrines of Methodism on these points.

He concludes his work with giving the rea-

sons for the action of the General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew.

(1.) That as he was elected a non-slaveholder he should continue such.

(2.) Slaveholding in the Episcopacy would place the Church in a new relation to slavery never existing before; and would, therefore, sanction slavery.

(3.) That was not the time to give any countenance to slavery.

(4.) The civilized world has sealed the death-warrant of slavery.

(5.) The character of our Episcopacy, as a general superintendency, forbids its participation in slavery.

Such is a brief survey of Dr. Peck's pamphlet; but to be truly prized it must be read.

Our southern friends, however, endeavored to enlist distinguished southern statesmen in their cause, as if to make up for the defeat of Dr. Bascom's Review, by the reply of Dr. Peck. Mr. T. B. Stevenson, of Kentucky, received the following replies from Messrs. Calhoun and Clay:

"Fort Hill, July 7, 1845.

"DEAR SIR,—I am under much obligation to you for the copy of Dr. Bascom's Review of the manifesto of the majority, which you were so kind to send me through the kindness of the Rev. Mr. Wightman, of Charleston.

"I have read it with much attention and a great deal of pleasure. It is in every respect ably executed, both as to matter and manner, and is a full and triumphant vindication of the course adopted by the southern portion of the Methodist Church. Their conduct throughout the whole affair was such as became patriots and Christians.

"Dr. Bascom has displayed the talent and information, not only of an able divine and logician, but also of an able statesman and profound philosopher. I regard it, taken as a whole, the ablest production which has yet appeared against the fanatical agitation of the subject of abolition, which exists at the north and north-west, and which threatens both Church and state with so much mischief. The whole Union, but more especially the south, is indebted to him for his clear and full exposition of its character, tendency, and object.

"With great respect I am, etc.,

"J. C. CALHOUN.

"MR. T. B. STEVENSON."

The following is from Henry Clay:

"Ashland, August 12, 1845.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I received your letter informing me that a new and revised edition is about to be published of Dr. Bascom's pamphlet, in respect to the divisions which have unhappily arisen in the Methodist Church. I perused a copy of the first edition with very great satisfaction, and consider it as distinguished by uncommon ability. Beside the particular questions involved in the controversy, between the southern and northern sections of the Methodist Church, it treats of other subjects—slavery and abolition—in a masterly manner, and is well adapted to make a deep and lasting impression upon all patriotic and religious minds open to the reception of great and important truths. The intention of Dr. Bascom to divide the principal topics of the work into suitable chapters, will be an agreeable facility to the reader of it.

"An unwarrantable interpretation has been given to a letter which I addressed several

months ago to Dr. Boothe, in regard to the menaced separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was my purpose in that letter to confine myself strictly to an expression of my great regret of the consequences to the Church and to the Union, which I apprehended from the separation, without intimating any opinion whatever which of the two parties to the controversy was in the wrong. I understand that my letter has been constructed to imply that I thought the southern division of the Church in error, which is certainly not the opinion that I do really entertain. My profound regrets on account of the division of the Church, for the cause which brought it about, remain undiminished. I know that there are very high authorities for cherishing the belief that the event will add strength instead of creating danger to our political Union. I anxiously hope that experience may demonstrate the correctness of that and the fallacy of my opinion.

"Your obedient servant, H. CLAY.

"THOMAS B. STEVENSON, Esq."

Mr. E. D. Mansfield, editor of the Cincinnati Chronicle, at the time these letters were published and lauded in southern papers, under the heading of "A religious argument strengthened by political affidavits," makes the following observations:

"We took the liberty—an ungracious one we admit—of criticising, in a cursory way, a portion of Dr. Bascom's pro-slavery arguments. If it was in any way objectionable, the learned writer has the satisfaction to know that his book is approved of in quarters so high that our weak voice will be lost in the plaudits of praise.

"Messrs. Calhoun and Clay have certified that Dr. Bascom is orthodox! Doubtless the learned Doctor knows exactly the value of such a certificate in the religious world, and will feel himself uplifted in all ecclesiastical assemblies!

"Here are two distinguished slaveholders certifying to Dr. Bascom's ability and orthodoxy. Is he not satisfied? It is true, there will be much curiosity to know when John C. Calhoun arrived at his critical abilities in divinity; or, when Henry Clay became so anxious to convince 'religious minds' of important truths? The crosses of political ambition have probably convinced them of some important truths; but we think they are hardly yet qualified to give clerical advice to the pillars of the Church.

"There are other controversialists beside Dr. Bascom who will probably need a certificate from eminent slaveholders, before long, that they are orthodox in the Church and remarkably logical in controversy. When they get them, we will do our little endeavors to celebrate their fame."\*

Several southern writers reviewed Dr. Peck's reply, but with so little success that we need no more than mention the unavailing attempt. The southern editors affected to treat as ridiculous any attempt to answer Dr. Bascom.† Rev. M. M. Henkle wrote a long reply of irrelevant matter.‡ Rev. W. M'Mahan wrote his objections to Dr. Peck.¶ Others did the same, but to little advantage.

2. Dr. Longstreet wrote an elaborate pro-

slavery pamphlet addressed to Drs. Peck, Durbin, and Elliott, and challenged them to answer. Neither of them considered it of importance enough to reply to it. The southern editors praised it to the skies in the same strains in which they lauded Dr. Bascom's famous plea for slavery and oppression.\* Dr. Durbin wrote an expostulation to Dr. Longstreet, who furnished a reply, fully spiced with a pro-slavery spirit, and which placed all of us in the north in the list of extravagant abolitionists.† There was no note of dissent from Dr. Longstreet's views that appeared in the southern papers.

3. Between May, 1845, and May, 1846, there was much discussion on constitutional questions, constitutionality of the plan, position of the Church, South, etc.

The quarterly meeting conference, of Alton circuit, Illinois, passed, August 27, 1845, a preamble and resolutions, which declared the part of the plan providing geographical lines, as unconstitutional and injurious. The reasons given were that the plan effects a division of the Church or the destruction of one half of it, it infringes on the liberties of freemen, it imposes on some slaveholding bishops; should the Methodist Episcopal Church fraternize with the new Church, it would sanction slavery; that it would be wrong to divide the funds of the Book Concern with the south.‡

Mr. C., a lawyer from Baltimore, argued against the constitutionality of the plan, in two elaborate articles.¶ The following are his principal conclusions: That the Methodist Episcopal Church is not divided; the separating ministers are not ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and can exercise no authority over its members; the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who do not place themselves under the jurisdiction of the new Church, are still members of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church can not leave these members without sin. He also maintains that the action of the convention went to say, that a voluntary participation in the practice of slavery, either by purchase, marriage, or the acceptance as a gift, with the intention of gain, is compatible with the office of a minister.§

Dr. Bangs, under date of October 18, 1845, on "Constitutional test," maintains that the bishops have no right to decide on the constitutionality of the acts of General conference, nor can an annual conference assume this right; for they are bound, as well as the bishops, to obey it. It is, he argues, absurd to suppose it, for one conference might decide one way and another conference another way. It required a majority of three-fourths of all the annual conferences to decide constitutional questions. He concluded that the General conference alone could decide on the constitutionality of its acts.¶

Dr. Bond greatly deprecated the theory of allowing that the plan was constitutional, because it would be followed, as a precedent, with mischievous consequences. He remarked in response to Dr. Bangs, that "the plan was a

\* S., October 24th. Scraps, III, p. 473; and December 26th. Scraps, III, p. 709. R., November 20th. Scraps, III, pp. 547, 659.

† R., December 12th. Scraps, III, p. 660.

‡ C., September 17, 1845. Scraps, III, p. 322.

§ C., October 22d. Scraps, III, pp. 449, 596.

¶ Id., pp. 449, 596, 619. ¶ Id., p. 452.

\* W., October 31st. Scraps, III, p. 511. See, also, p. 261.

† N., August 29th. Scraps, III, p. 260.

‡ Id., pp. 262, 294. ¶ Id., p. 266.

simple act of legislation, and unconstitutional at that; and the body that enacted it has the unquestionable right to repeal it. He concluded that the Methodist Episcopal Church would provide for its members wherever they were found.\*

Dr. Bangs, under date of November 11th, maintains the constitutionality of the plan, and in reply to the allegation of the infraction of the fifth restriction, which respects the rights of members being secured by a trial and appeal, he states, that he thinks the minorities should submit to majorities, and this is the case in all Church trials and Church decisions, and that the minorities in the south have the same ministry, the same doctrines and Discipline. And if some have conscientious scruples so that they can not submit, others have made greater sacrifices. Our Pilgrim fathers fled to America to secure religious privileges, to say nothing of the primitive Christians and the martyrs among Protestants. But allowing there are some who can not submit, they must do the best they can under the circumstances, and better one suffer than many.†

Rev. Wm. Hunter, in the Pittsburg Advocate, maintained views contrary to those of Dr. Bond, and similar to those of Dr. Bangs on the constitutional question. He thought the fifth restriction was not violated, because the plan does not do the same thing that ordinary exclusion from the Church does. The latter excludes from the Lord's table, the class, and love-feast. The other is a different thing, as it does not disown them, nor exclude them from the sacrament or the privileges of the Church. Mr. Hunter wrote several articles to support his position; but as it was similar to that of Dr. Bangs, already presented, we need not go into details.‡

Mr. Griffith responded briefly to Dr. Bangs. He thought that now it was clear enough that the plan was unconstitutional, and the pleadings of Dr. Bangs went only to confirm the truth of this declaration.¶

Dr. Bond gives a general survey of the question, in two elaborate articles, of February 4th and 18th. He argues that the constitution is violated in the third Restriction, as the general superintendency is limited in its range. That the two Churches are not one in doctrine he argues; that though the Louisville convention adopted our Discipline, they interpret differently from what it has been generally understood to mean, in regard to the trial of bishops, the election of slaveholders to ordination, and the control of the civil power in Church matters. Dr. Bond sums up the matter thus, by enumerating the absurdities of the southern doctrines, "That a separation from the jurisdiction of a Church is not separation from the Church; that those who renounce such jurisdiction are still in and of the Church, though they set up another and independent Church; that a bishop who joins himself to the separating convention, acts as its president, signs its proceedings, and publicly approbates what has been done, is still a bishop in the old Church, with all the rights and prerogatives appertaining to the office; and finally, that the members who, being within the separating dis-

tricts, refuse to join the separatists, are not excluded from the old Church, though they are expressly told that they can not be supplied with the ministry of the Church, as the ministers are prohibited by a law of the Church to take the pastoral oversight of them."\*

Rev. G. W. Walker, in an able article on the plan and the constitution, dated February 25, 1846, proceeds to show that the south is a "violent separation," or secession, from the Methodist Episcopal Church; because, 1. It was unprovided for either by the constitution, statutes, or common law of the Church. 2. Because the annual conferences refused to concur with the General conference on the proposed alteration, upon which three-fourths of the plan was based. 3. There was a greater necessity against the action of the General conference than for it. No necessity can justify a legislature from passing acts unprovided for in the constitution, much less in acts contrary to the constitution, especially those at variance with its peace, unity, and prosperity. 4. The necessity did not exist in advance of the southern ministers themselves. 5. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has doctrinally and practically broken the plan. Instance in the convention's recognizing societies north of the protesting conferences, and their occupying, practically, Cincinnati, and other places, by the southern ministry.†

At best, the plan became surrounded with unconstitutional results, or operated to the infraction of the constitution. The annual conferences refused to sustain it. The south themselves, both theoretically and practically, disregarded it. If it be viewed as a compact, even then justice, truth, and the nature of compacts, will require that the General conference should not be bound by it, because the conditions of the compact, on the part of the south, were not fulfilled; and for the Methodist Episcopal Church to be bound by it would be absurd. We quote the views of Dr. Olin and Dr. Bangs on this topic as relevant to the purpose on this point:‡

Dr. Olin, in the Christian Advocate and Journal, of September 10, 1845, says, "The General conference did not divide the Church, or consent to the division. It left the responsibility of that deplorable act upon those who have since deliberately done the deed, on the alleged ground of uncontrollable necessity. Should they withdraw on this ground, then the General conference stood pledged to the observance of its resolutions, when they would assume the force and obligation of a compact."§

In the same article, Dr. Olin says, speaking of the plan, "The contracting parties mutually bind themselves not to attempt the establishment of Churches, and the extension of jurisdiction within each other's borders; and this, it is thought, conflicts with the great commission, 'Go ye into all the world,' etc. This stipulation, let it be kept in mind, was made upon the supposition and expectation that both parties should continue to preach the pure Gospel after the order of Methodism. If either shall cease to be Christians or Methodists, then the fundamental condition of the compact will fail, and it will cease to be binding. Should we of the north ever become infidels, or conform to other denominations, no doubt would remain of the clearest right on the part of southern

\* C., November 12th. Scraps, III, pp. 591-595.

† C., December 3d. Scraps, II, p. 507. December 3d, Vol. XX, p. 71.

‡ F., December 17th. Scraps, III, pp. 673, 692, 725.

§ C., January 14, 1846. Scraps, VIII, p. 292.

\* C., February 4 and 18, 1846. Scraps, IV, pp. 113-120.

† W., March 27th. Scraps, VIII, p. 201.

Methodists to visit us with missionary labors, and recall us, if they could, to the deserted standards of Wesley. There can be no hardship and no dereliction of Christianity in this mutual arrangement, so long as both parties shall maintain their integrity."

Such is the true state of the question. The *uncontrollable necessity* did not exist. The General conference neither divided the Church nor consented to the division. This division, was promoted, as Dr. Olin says, "through the party zeal and ungenerous misrepresentations of many of the southern preachers;" and then remarks, "Let it be known, however—let it be published through the length and breadth of these lands, that the subject of a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church *originated* with, was *perpetuated* and *carried* through, by her ministers in the south, assisted and sanctioned by ultra-abolitionists of the north, in opposition to the wishes and remonstrances of the southern membership." This is HISTORY; and as such it will pass down to posterity.

Dr. Bangs, in the Christian Advocate and Journal, of December 17th, says, "I have, all along, taken it for granted that the southern organization has been founded on the Discipline as it is, and that it will not be altered in any of its essential features. If, on the completing their organization, they should alter that item in the General Rule which prohibits our ministers and people from 'buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them,' or should they strike out section X, *Of Slavery*, or so modify its language as to deny that it is a 'great evil,' or so as to allow a slaveholder to be 'eligible to any official station in our Church, where the laws of the state will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom,' or make any other alteration affecting the vitals of the system of doctrine or government; should all, or either of these things be effected, then I allow that we should not be bound to abide by the principles of the report of the committee of nine, nor should we be under obligation to extend to them the right hand of fellowship. For no formal pledge was asked or given that they would thus preserve the Discipline inviolate; yet most of the speeches from the south expressed their entire satisfaction with the Discipline as it is, and avowed their determination to abide by it, and not to sanction its alteration. This was considered an implied pledge that they would remain Methodists, as the Discipline defined the term, and recognized the denomination. If, therefore, they should depart from the 'ancient landmarks,' and attempt to establish new boundaries for their sphere of operation, or should so change the meaning of words as to make slavery 'no evil,' and which, therefore, they are under no obligation 'to extirpate,' this would, unquestionably, effect an alteration in the obligation we are under to them."\*

Soon after the adoption of the plan, the Discipline on slavery has been denounced by the south, and this part of it may be considered as a dead letter.

4. A few words may be said here in regard to dividing the funds of the Book Concern. The Book Agents explain it as follows:

"CONFERENCE DIVIDENDS.—As there appears to be a difference of opinion with regard to

paying the southern conferences their quota of the funds of the Book Concern, it may be proper to state that the dividend for the current year was declared on the first day of January, out of cash funds actually on hand, except a small balance which accumulated long before the session of the Louisville convention. However the separation of the southern from the northern conferences may affect this question hereafter, the Agents do not conceive that they have any more authority to withhold from the several conferences the dividends declared previously to the separation, than the officers of any other incorporation would have to withhold from the stockholders dividends which had been declared in conformity with the laws of said institution.

"G. LANE, C. B. TIPPETT, Agents.

"October, 29, 1845."\*

Much had been said on this topic in the southern papers, in occasional paragraphs and sentences, and even formal communications have appeared on the subject. The editor of the South-Western Christian Advocate hinted very broadly that the Ohio preachers were disposed to put their hands in the pockets of southern men. The Rev. Jonathan Stamper maintained that the reason why Dr. Bond and the editor of the Western Christian Advocate argue against the south is, that the editors wish to retain the funds of the Church. These are mere specimens of one class of commentators. Another class in the south express themselves, confidently, that the Methodist Episcopal Church will, in due time, give to the southern brethren their full share of the funds concerned.

These funds may be divided into two classes; namely, *ministerial funds*, as the Chartered Fund, and the Book Concern. The General conference, and the annual conferences, have these committed to their care; and these bodies alone can dispose of them, and the disposition must be made according to Discipline, which involves a constitutional regulation.

The second class of funds, or rather property, belong exclusively to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and are invested in the hands of lay trustees, for the sole use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Neither the General conference, nor the annual conferences, are competent to dispose of this class of property, which consists of churches, parsonages, graveyards, etc.

Some individual annual conferences have, also, funds in their right, under the names of Aid Societies, and the like, with which other portions of the Church have nothing to do.

In regard to the *ministerial funds*, the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at this period, were not only disposed, but determined to distribute to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a full proportion of these funds, in some safe, constitutional, Christian, and proper manner, that would not commit or endanger the safety of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in whose hands they are deposited for safe-keeping and distribution. There was contemplated some difficulty in the funds of the Chartered Fund, but an equivalent could be made up in some way. There might, also, be some difficulty in a part of the property of the Book Concern, such as the real estate, but equivalent here, too, will answer the object.

\* W., January 30, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 13.

\* W., November 14th. Scraps, III, p. 564.

The General conference recommended to give the south a proportion of the Church funds. They never promised this, because it was never in their power. They recommended the measure to the annual conferences; the conferences refused to do it, in the exercise of their constitutional rights. The convention knew all this, and they had no cause to complain for the want of a decision, and that decision was against them. Up to this time the doctrine was not current in the south, that the ministerial funds could, or ought to be, distributed without the constitutional vote of the annual conferences.

The Georgia conference, at its session of January 21st, passed the two following resolutions in reference to the Book Concern:

"That we recommend to our preachers and members to continue their patronage to the Book Concern as heretofore, so long as the Agents continue to pay over to the southern and south-western conferences their annual dividends, and to pay the family expenses of the southern bishops, as by law provided for the support of the Episcopacy.

"That as the legislation and government of the General conference, as heretofore constituted, was the embarrassment to the spread of the Gospel, from which the south was compelled to seek relief in a separate organization, we have thought, and still think, it best for all concerned, in all respects, that the Book Concern should remain one common property of the whole Church, to be under the joint control and for the joint benefit of the whole Church, to be managed, and the profits divided in such manner as the Church, north and south, may agree."\*

The South Carolina conference took a similar view of the subject, and its editor considered a connection in the Book Concern as "the only possible bond of connection and fraternal intercourse with the south."

The first of the foregoing resolutions would immediately suspend the patronage of the Georgia conference to the Book Concern, because they propose to patronize it on two conditions which can not be fulfilled by the Book Agents. They require the Agents to pay dividends to the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and also to pay the family expenses of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and this would extend not only to Bishops Soule and Andrew, but to all the new bishops they should see fit to make next May. But the Book Agents could not make any such appropriations, as the dividends and appropriations can be made only to conferences and bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In this way the dividends and appropriations for the last year were made by the Book Agents. The dividends for the conferences were struck while they were all under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and these dividends continued only as long as they were conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The dividends at each conference, are appropriated to the superannuated, and other preachers, for the previous year, and have no relevancy to the ensuing year. Hence, all the dividends to conferences, during the past year, were made to them as conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and only as long as they were such. But at their last sessions, the southern confer-

ences ceased to be conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and their dividends extended only to that point of time, and ceased forever, without a special change of the constitution of the Church, by the three-fourths vote of the annual conferences, and the two-thirds vote of the General conference. The same applies precisely to the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The appropriations to them, also, must cease at the point of time when they ceased to be bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or when they became an official part of a new Church. The appropriations at the north-western conferences were made to the bishops only as bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and not to bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Perhaps there is no other department of the Church in which it would be more difficult to maintain a union of the Methodist Episcopal Church with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, than in the book establishments. The south have their periodical presses entirely beyond the control of the Book Concern and of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The principal periodical presses of the Methodist Episcopal Church are closely connected with the two branches of the Book Concern, and a joint control of the new and old Churches could only be secured by muzzling the presses of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in regard to one of the most important moral questions in the world. And how far expurgatory and prohibitory rules might be required in reference to our general catalogue, the history of the past and the passing events give pretty clear indications. The periodical press of the Methodist Episcopal Church would be in a strange position, indeed, under the guidance of agents, editors, and book committees, one half of whom would be the chosen representatives of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. No such arrangement could ever be entered into by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church must conduct her Book Concern and all the branches of it, too, under the control of agents, editors, and book committees, chosen by herself, and accountable to her constituted authorities for the proper discharge of their duties. Sooner than do differently she would agree to lose or give away the last dollar of all that capital of the Book Concern. The only probable plan would be that the south, having their own periodical presses, might receive their books from the Book Concern as heretofore, but at cost prices, leaving the Methodist Episcopal Church to do the whole business of management.

In a letter, dated April 7, 1846, Rev. Allen Wiley took the following survey of the Book Concern:

He regretted much that he ever voted for the plan of separation. In the case of the Canada conference, the political jealousies furnished the reason for separation; while, in the case of the south, the inflammatory speeches, and the ultra action of southern preachers, created the necessity for southern secession. When the Canada claim was set up, Bishop Emory, Peter Akers, Ignatius A. Few, of Georgia, and W. Winans, of Mississippi, took the ground that any division of the Book Concern capital would entirely destroy its permanency. Bishop Soule took the same ground at the Indiana conference, in a speech before that body. The General conference, at Cincinnati, decided that the divi-

\* W., February, 13, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 179.

sion of the Book Concern capital was unconstitutional, and to this Mr. Lord, the representative of the British conference, agreed. The southern conferences have seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, without just cause, and with less reason than the Canada conference, so that they have no constitutional or legal claim to the principal or profits of the Book Concern, or the dividends of the Chartered Fund.

Mr. Wiley thought that the south had a claim on the Book Concern and Chartered Fund in equity, because they have helped to make them what they are. But there seems to be no way of meeting this claim without jeopardizing the whole Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church, except to let the south have the profits of all the books sold by them. A joint Book Concern is out of the question, because no book agent or editor at the north could cooperate with an extreme southerner, with all the dominant feelings of a slaveholder. The Book Concern can not be a bond of union; for "how can two walk together except they be agreed?" And to pay the south dividends can not be entertained. And such are the views of the preachers generally in the west. Thus far Mr. Wiley.\*

The plain state of the matter is this:

(1.) The funds were placed in the hands of the Methodist Episcopal Church for specified objects; and both justice and fidelity to a solemn trust require there should be no perversion of the funds.

(2.) The south has seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, therefore, can have no claims on the funds any more than other seceders.

(3.) The south have already used these funds, in the support of their presses in producing unscriptural division in the Church.

5. The position of many in the south who were unwilling to enter into the Southern Church, was both difficult and delicate; and the relation in which the Methodist Episcopal Church stands to its members furnished no ordinary difficulty to adjust. The idea of the plan was, that the stress of circumstances in the south might be such as to render their separation a matter of necessity; but when it was manifest that the absolute necessity never existed, and the difficulty, or necessity, that did exist was induced by the leaders of the measure, so that it became a voluntary secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church without just cause, the case was materially altered. Many, on this account, were unwilling to unite with the new Church. The Methodist Episcopal Church, too, was now bound, as heretofore, to send her ministry to all her members everywhere, especially as the plan now became a means to promote division and strife by the south, in the place of a peace measure, as it was originally intended. Such was the general sentiment in the north.

The following, from the pen of Dr. Bond, dated July 16th, will place this matter in its just light:

"But as the General conference had no right to separate any part or portion of the Church from her connection, so neither had it a right to confer this power on the annual conferences. The General conference can not transfer its own powers, much less can it grant powers

which it does not itself possess. The powers, then, under which sixteen annual conferences have professed to act, by their delegates, in the Louisville convention, are assumed powers, not derived nor derivable from the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, therefore, their acts are not binding upon any who do not voluntarily and individually submit to them. Those who do not so submit still remain in the relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church in which they stood before the Louisville convention. At least no act of that convention could make any change in these relations.

"Under such circumstances, we exhort all who can not heartily approve of the separation, and unite with the new connection, formed by the Louisville convention—no matter where they reside—to abide in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in humble dependence on the God of our fathers; and assured of the sympathy of their brethren in that Church where they have heretofore found spiritual food. Our private advices already teach us to estimate what some of our good brethren will be called to suffer by such a course. We know that persecutions and trials, grievous to be borne, await them. To have one's 'name cast out as evil,' was one of the original conditions of Christian fellowship, and perhaps the primitive Christians endured epithets almost as odious as that of 'abolitionist,' which, in the south, is so freely applied to all who would abide in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Under such circumstances, our brethren have nothing to do but to 'stand still, and see the salvation of God;' to stand still, in the very place and position in which they found the grace of repentance and pardon, and in which they have been preserved 'from the evils which are in the world.' Let them 'wash their hands in innocency,' bearing meekly the cross which is laid upon them, in the assurance that the promise of God shall be fulfilled to them: 'When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up.' 'There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.'

"To the members of annual conferences represented in the Louisville convention, who do not concur in the doings of that convention, and who wish to preserve their original relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church, we say, you are not separated from this Church, and can not be so separated but by your own acts, individually. Meet the conferences to which you are attached, at the time and place agreed upon and appointed, while these conferences were yet in the connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and sit with such conferences, till, by some official proceeding, the majority shall recognize a change of their relation. This will probably happen very early in the session, as the Minutes must open with the style of the body. If, by a vote of the body, any minute shall be sanctioned, recognizing it as an annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, calmly and kindly protest and retire, disclaiming in your protest any connection with, or ecclesiastical relation to, said Methodist Episcopal Church, South; but avowing your purpose to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

"After retiring, you can organize your confer-

\* W., April 24th. Scraps, IV, p. 439.

ence under your proper denomination, if there be a presiding elder among you, and will have a right to claim your dividend from the Book Concern and Chartered Fund. All this, we think, is clearly provided for, even by the second resolution of 'the committee of nine,' which says, '*That ministers, local and traveling, of every grade and office in the Methodist Episcopal Church, may, as they prefer, remain in that Church, or, without blame, attach themselves to the Church, South.*' But, if there be no presiding elder present, it may be necessary, in order to proceed legally, to adjourn to some time and place; or, leaving the time to be fixed by the bishop, notify one of the general superintendents of your proceedings and your purposes, and request his attendance.

"With respect to Churches or societies in the conferences which have seceded, who do not concur in the separation, their rights, as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, can not be impaired by the proceedings of annual or General conferences. They may receive preachers sent to them by the Church which they prefer, and should signify their wishes accordingly; and we hope all who are satisfied with the Discipline as it is will do so; notwithstanding that the Louisville convention adopted our Discipline as it is. Every body knows that the Discipline, as it is, is very objectionable to a large portion of southern preachers, and that it was adopted with a view to reconcile some of the south-western conferences, which were incurably averse to any alteration. When the new connection shall go into operation, the annual conferences thus reconciled will find themselves in a helpless minority, and must submit to the changes contemplated.

"The estimate of advantages and disadvantages in a change of their relation is very easily made by our brethren in the south, if they will but separate from the calculation all extrinsic and foreign matters, now so industriously brought into the controversy in order to blind the eyes of the people. They are told that all the north are ultra-abolitionists, and will never be satisfied till all slaveholders, whatever be the circumstances in which they hold the relation, shall be expelled from the Church, and, therefore, the question is not one of fact, but of time; if they do not leave the Church willingly now, they will be unwillingly forced out hereafter. But no reasonable man can believe this. The north has given no ground for this assumption; and it is not fair to take it into account in the reasons for and against separation."<sup>\*</sup>

Drs. Bangs and Olin took a somewhat different view of the subject, and supported their position in the papers, especially Dr. Bangs.† Dr. Bond responded with great force.‡ The Methodist Episcopal Church now very generally settled down in these views. Our bishops felt themselves bound to follow the provisions of the plan; but the bishops of the south paid no attention to it, but broke it whenever they had an opportunity. The adherents to the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the time being, were beyond the reach of the authorities of the Church, and they had much to endure till relief came in 1848.¶ In North Carolina there was dissatisfaction. So also in Holston, and indeed in most places of the south.

6. The subject of reunion was occasionally hinted at, and some propositions were presented, stating some conditions respecting it, but it received little favor from any quarter. The Rev. M. Hill, in *Zion's Herald*, wrote as many as seven elaborate numbers against it, commencing February 11th, and ending April 8, 1846. Mr. Hill seems to have had no formal opponent on this subject. He charges Drs. Bond and Bangs for favoring the plan; but neither of them took any pains to explain or rebut. Indeed, there were very few who had any hope of reunion, though many earnestly desired it. Yet there were scarcely any in the north or south who were willing to have it on such conditions as it could be had.\*

7. The south seemed especially zealous to invade the territory of the Ohio conference. They succeeded in forming a Church in Cincinnati, without any hinderance from the Methodist Episcopal Church or the community. In the Virginia portion of the Ohio conference, they could and did take different measures. They got up a mob in Parkersburg, and for a time succeeded to drive away the preacher. They endeavored to suppress the *Western Christian Advocate* also. Preachers were sent into these parts, though in violation of the plan. Some particulars here may be necessary.

The Rev. James Quinn traveled the circuit including Parkersburg in the year 1800. Ten years after, it was in his district as presiding elder. Through the zeal of preachers connected with Ohio, Parkersburg was attended, and a flourishing Church was established there. In reference to recent events and the expulsion of the preacher, Mr. Dillon, the venerable Quinn wrote, in the *Western Advocate* of February 20th, a communication, of which the following is an extract:

"The heart of the old missionary is made glad in those recollections, while he sorrows, even to tears, over the late and present desolations.

"O Parkersburg! who would have thought, thirty-five years ago, that the time would come when thou wouldst rise up and thrust out those ministers that were sent unto thee by Him who saith, '*He that receiveth whomsoever I send, receiveth me; and he that receiveth me, receiveth him that sent me.*' Strange, passing strange, not indeed that Judge Lynch should be ready to lend a hand for every evil work; but the aristocratic, nullifying doctrine, or principle, from the north and south both, that '*minorities*' are not to be controlled by or submit to '*majorities*,' had reached Parkersburg, and men of wealth and influence took their stand, and led in the affair. Well, the 'servant of God must not strive, but be gentle toward them that oppose themselves.' The preachers, in this case, were not called to 'resist unto blood, striving against sin;' but they did well to resist with a Christian spirit, in such manner as to leave the responsibility on the Church, to be settled when all shall appear before the judgment seat of Christ. The Methodist Episcopal Church has not changed her economy. Her doctrine and Discipline are the same. When we hear that in China men buy and sell their own wives, we say, '*Horrid wretches!*' but here, in *republican*, yea, *Christian America*, *by a legalized system*, men buy and sell the wives and children of other men, and yet they

\* C., July 16, 1845, Vol. XIX, p. 194, col. 2. W., July 26th. *Scraps*, III, p. 108.

† C., September 17th. *Scraps*, III, p. 318.

‡ C., October 1st. *Scraps*, III, p. 361.

¶ C., April 8, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, p. 359.

\* Z., February 11th to April 8, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, pp. 148-167.



are good Christians, and fit to be deacons, elders, bishops! Now, the Methodist Episcopal Church has always said that this is a wicked thing, that ought to be *extirpated*, not by coercion—as some in the north would have it—but by a course of regular legislation, so as to secure the interest of both master and slave. And this is her position now; and as it is antislavery, so it is also conservative in its character; and a time may come when those who occupy this ground will be regarded, both by the north and south, as the best friends of the Church and the republic. The old missionary rejoices to learn that those who could not in conscience leave the Church of their choice, have circuit privileges, and worship as and where they can. Let all live and pray for a better state of things. Satan, for a season, may sift as wheat, but if the Church pray, and her faith fail not, the floor will be purged, and the wheat garnered. JAMES QUINN.

“January 28, 1846.”\*

The Rev. John Stewart, presiding elder of the Kanawha district, in an article dated February 28th, and in another in April, gave a correct view of the state of things within his charge. In his first letter,† he showed that the Kanawha district should be left without disturbance, in the Methodist Episcopal Church; because, 1. The plan protected it from the intrusion of a southern ministry. 2. The district was represented at conference as choosing to retain their present relation, and it had as a whole rejected the overtures for a southern connection. 3. The views of the people on the subject of slavery, as set forth in the Discipline, are congenial with the true sympathies, real interests, and even the political tendencies of western Virginia.

In a second article, Mr. Stewart states that the southern periodicals, and a few men of southern affinities, were attempting to alienate the members from their beloved Church by representing that the Church, South, was the same with the Methodist Episcopal Church; that the Methodist Episcopal Church was, or would be, an abolition Church; the Ohio conference expelled Bishop Soule from the chair; the preachers of Ohio are abolitionists, and sundry other things.‡

In violation of the plan, in March, 1846, Bishop Andrew sent preachers into the Kanawha district, crossing the boundary and organizing minorities of societies in every place where they could find adherents, by effecting secessions from the Methodist Episcopal Church, though five-sixths of the members were opposed to the measure, and have remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church to this day.¶

Under date of January 30, 1846, Mr. G. Neale, junior, of Parkersburg, wrote, for the Richmond Advocate, an inflammable letter against the editor of the Western Advocate,§ as the columns of the Richmond Advocate were now principally employed to effect invasions on the borders. This letter seems to have been the watchword and precursor of what followed; namely, the condemnation of the Western Christian Advocate.

In a letter from “Observer,” or Rev. Isaac Dillon, dated Parkersburg, March 28, 1846, we have the following account of this occurrence:

Mr. Dillon states that, “with the mail convey-

ing this, you will receive a number of the Parkersburg Gazette, containing in full the ‘presentment,’ by the Grand Jury for the Superior Court of Wood county, Virginia, of the Western Christian Advocate, as ‘an incendiary publication, printed with intent of advising, enticing, or persuading persons of color, within this Commonwealth, to make INSURRECTION,’ etc.

“It is due to yourself and the public, to know a few facts connected with this strange work.

“The Western Christian Advocate and its editor have been, for some time, objects of the bitter hatred of many of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and their confederates, of this place, a fair specimen of which may be seen in an article, not worthy to be noticed except for this illustration, written by the soul of their society, and published in the Richmond Advocate of March 19th. For a number of weeks I have heard the Western Christian Advocate threatened with arrest, as ‘an abolition publication,’ and each number has been carefully scanned for evidence of the charge. It was supposed the Rev. G. W. Walker’s piece, opposing the joint management of the Book Concern, etc., afforded sufficient proof, especially in that paragraph where he quotes from the Bible, ‘Undo the heavy burdens, break every yoke, and let the oppressed go free,’ and that number was accordingly submitted to the examination of the officer of the law. If nothing more to their purpose had been published in the paper than that article, no doubt the same effort would have been made to stop its circulation, and perhaps attended with the same result. The preliminary steps, indeed, were taken for its suppression, when the number of February 20th came to hand, containing Rev. James Quinn’s article, under the caption of ‘Parkersburg,’ and your notice of Dr. Longstreet’s ‘Letters on Slavery,’ etc. These articles were considered as containing all the evidence for which they searched, and sealed the fate of our papers. In utter disregard of your explanations, it was almost shouted, ‘Dr. Elliott has come out boldly, and avows himself an “abolitionist of terrible dimensions,”’ when, in fact, it was Dr. Longstreet who gave you that appellation. That part of your editorial, in which you say, ‘we would not be without the title of abolitionist from Dr. Longstreet for any earthly consideration,’ etc., was read before the Court and Grand Jury, by Gen. J. J. Jackson, Prosecuting Attorney, accompanied by hostile remarks. Judge M’Comas, in charging the jury, made what he considered a Scriptural argument in favor of the *divine right* of slavery, instructed the jury to form their judgment, not from Rev. James Quinn’s article, but from the editorial exclusively; yet made such observations as had a strong tendency to impress the jurors that his judgment was in favor of suppressing the paper. On retiring, the jury, by a vote of sixteen out of twenty, made the accompanying presentment; and that so speedily that some of the jurors had not time or opportunity to read over the statute, etc., on which account they did not vote.

“The deed, however, is done; and from that day the numbers of the Western Christian Advocate, arriving at any post-office in this county, are sentenced ‘to be burned in the presence of a magistrate,’ according to the penalty ‘of the statute in such case made and provided.’ And to read, or even receive by any public or private conveyance, the Advocate, is ‘deemed’ an act of ‘felony;’ and the person ‘convicted thereof shall

\* W., February 20, 1846. Scraps, IV, pp. 211, 333.

† W., March 20th. Scraps, IV, p. 274.

‡ W., April 24th. Scraps, IV, p. 441.

§ W., March 13th. Scraps, IV, p. 340.

¶ R., March 19th. Scraps, IV, p. 276.

be punished by imprisonment in the penitentiary of this commonwealth, for a term not less than two years nor more than five years.'

From the Parkersburg Gazette.

"THE WESTERN CHRISTIAN ADVOCATE.

"At the present term of the Circuit Superior Court for this county, the Grand Jury made the following presentment, which we publish for the benefit of our citizens, many of whom, till very recently, were ignorant of the statute upon which it is founded.

"VIRGINIA, WOOD COUNTY, TO WIT: The Grand Jurors for the commonwealth of Virginia, and for the body of the county of Wood, upon their oaths present: that the *Western Christian Advocate*, a public newspaper published in the city of Cincinnati, and state of Ohio, by C. Elliott, editor, is edited by the said C. Elliott, and that the said C. Elliott has avowed himself as an abolitionist in the editorial columns of said paper; and the jurors aforesaid, upon their oaths aforesaid, do further present, that the said *Christian Advocate* is an incendiary paper, within the meaning of the second section of the act of the 23d March, 1836, to suppress the 'circulation of incendiary publications, and for other purposes;' and the jurors aforesaid do further present, that the said paper, published as aforesaid, inculcates doctrines denying the rights of masters in their slaves, denouncing slaveholders as man-stealers, and calculated to lead to insurrection and rebellion on the part of the slaves; and the jurors aforesaid do further present, that the said paper, through the public mails, is weekly received at the post-office in Parkersburg and other post-offices in said county, directed to divers citizens of said county, who are subscribers to said paper, and by said subscribers has been duly received and circulated, in violation of the act aforesaid; but the jurors aforesaid, do further find, and present, that they are not satisfied that the several postmasters in said county, who distribute said paper, or the subscribers who receive and circulate the same, have done so knowingly, or with an intention to violate the provision of said act, and therefore the jurors aforesaid have refused prosecuting any of said postmasters, or the subscribers who receive and circulate said paper, for the felony created by said act; but the jurors aforesaid, deeply impressed with the evil and dangerous tendency of said paper, feel it to be their duty to warn and admonish their fellow-citizens of their duties in the premises, and of the dangers consequent on a further violation of said act, and desire this presentment may be entered on the minutes of the court. Signed,

"W. S. GARDNER, Foreman."

"The statute of March 23, 1836, alluded to in the above presentment, recites, that 'whereas attempts have been recently made, by certain abolition or antislavery societies and evil-disposed persons, being and residing in some of the non-slaveholding states, to interfere with the relations existing between master and slave, in this state, and to excite in our colored population a spirit of insubordination, rebellion, and insurrection, by distributing among them, through the agency of the United States mail, and other means, certain incendiary books, pamphlets, or other writings of an inflammatory and mischievous character and tendency—for remedy whereof, and to provide against the dangers thence arising, it is enacted, that any member of an abolition society, or agent of such society, who shall come into this state, and shall here main-

tain, by speaking or writing, that the owners of slaves have no right in the same, or advocate or devise the abolition of slavery, shall be deemed guilty of a high misdemeanor, and fined in a sum of not less than fifty nor more than two hundred dollars.' The second section makes it a felonious offense to write or print any book, pamphlet, or other writing, with intent of advising, enticing, or persuading persons of color within this commonwealth to rebel, or denying the right of masters to property in their slaves, and inculcating the duty of resistance to such right, or shall, with intent to aid the persons aforesaid knowingly to circulate, or cause to be circulated, any such book, pamphlet, or other writing, and shall, if a slave or other colored person, be punished with stripes not exceeding thirty-nine, and transported and sold beyond the limits of the United States, and if a free white person, be punished by imprisonment in the penitentiary for a term of not less than two, nor more than five years. The third section makes it the duty of every postmaster within the limits of the state, under the penalty of not less than fifty, nor more than two hundred dollars, whenever any book, pamphlet, or other writing, of the character described, shall have been received at his office, to give immediate notice to some justice of the peace, who shall inquire into the circumstances of the case, and have such book, pamphlet, or other writing, burned in his presence; and if it shall appear to such justice, that the person to whom it was sent, subscribed, or agreed to receive the same, knowing its character and tendency, with intent to circulate the same, and thereby aid the purposes of the abolition antislavery societies, such justice shall commit such person to jail, to be dealt with according to law.

"The consequence of the presentment by the Grand Jury, will be to suppress the circulation of the *Western Christian Advocate* in this county; and to make those who knowingly receive and circulate the same hereafter, liable to a prosecution under the statute.\*"

The foregoing is a clear and full account of this affair. C. Elliott was not the publisher, but the editor of the paper; yet the jurors, upon oath, declare it is published and edited by C. Elliott; that it is an incendiary paper; that it denies the legal right of masters to their slaves, and teaches insurrection, not one of which is true.

The indictment was noticed by the editors of the *Richmond* and *Nashville Advocates*, as a thing which they regretted, but which was to be expected from the nature of the case,† and the editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* received the just treatment due to his editorial course.

The affair was condemned in decided terms by the northern press.‡ Letters of approbation, furnishing large lists of new subscribers, were poured in from all quarters in the north, approving, in the most substantial manner, the course of the editor.¶

The attempt was made with little success to suppress the *Western Christian Advocate* in other portions of western Virginia. For a while

\* W., April 10th. *Scraps*, IV, pp. 382-388.

† R., April 23d. *Scraps*, IV, p. 437. N., April 17th. *Scraps*, IV, pp. 419, 479.

‡ C., April 29th. *Scraps*, IV, pp. 389, 461. P., April 29th. *Scraps*, IV, 388, 464.

¶ W., April 10th. *Scraps*, IV, p. 388; also pp. 390, 445, 446, 483.

there was some success, but the result there was in the end a more extended circulation, and the promotion or preservation of the cause which the suppression of the paper was designed to subserve. It is just to say, that this proscription was not according to the true mind of western Virginia; but it was the work of a few, instigated by the course of the southern papers, and the leaders of the secession, who had much at heart to alienate all Virginia from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

8. Notwithstanding the endeavors put forth by the leaders of the secession, in passing off the new Church as a southern portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as distinguished from what they misnamed "the Methodist Episcopal Church, north," as well as the misrepresentation that the Methodist Episcopal Church would now be an abolition Church, there was much restiveness in the south, especially in western Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, after the session of the convention.

Just after the convention closed, the Wytheville Whig affirms that a very large majority of the members in that district are unwilling to go into the Church, South, "preferring to occupy the position they have ever occupied, and to sustain those relations in which for years they have lived comfortably and happy." The Abingdon Virginian said: "We regret to know that a very large portion of the Methodists in south-western Virginia, ministers as well as laymen, are opposed to the separation—in Wytheville, particularly, Tazewell, Russell, and Scott, hundreds of Methodists are with the north."\*

The Pittsburg Advocate expressed the opinion: "We think there can not be the slightest doubt, that could the untrammelled voice of the Methodist public in the south be heard, free from all the pressure of public opinion in regard to slavery, it would be nearly unanimous against division." In a letter published in the Little Rock (Arkansas) Gazette, dated Batesville, June 2d, it is stated "there is much talk here among the Methodists, touching the action of the Louisville convention. I believe I speak in reasonable bounds when I say, that not one Methodist here, whether preacher or layman, out of every ten, favors a secession."<sup>†</sup>

We were well informed at the time from sources that may be relied on, that the great body of our members in Kentucky, Missouri, north Arkansas, and western Virginia, were very much opposed to the doings of the convention, and to their severance from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The efforts of the acting seceders were untiring; and as is often the case in secessions, there was too little scruple in regard to the means and measures selected to accomplish the work of violent disruption. We have good reason to believe that the greater number of those, in the territory mentioned above, who united with the new Church, did it for the sake of peace; not that there was any necessity for them to do so except to prevent a rupture between them and their leading preachers, who were determined on secession, and had previously committed themselves on this subject.<sup>‡</sup>

Even where the Church voted by a majority to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, this was no protection, as the southern bishops sent preachers to minorities, without scruple; or every

practicable means was used to change votes, and secure majorities by subsequent action: of this Maysville is an example. The whole number of members on the Church books was two hundred and fifty-nine. Of these one hundred and forty-one sign their names to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The number uniting with the new Church was one hundred and nine. There were nine who made no decision, or who had moved away. Hence, a majority of thirty-two were for the old Church; yet the southern bishops sent them a preacher, and they possessed themselves of the meeting-house.\*

9. It is well known that the Methodist Episcopal Church had all along cultivated religion among the colored people with great success, and with very little hinderance from their masters, or from the public. Their object was purely a religious one—the salvation of their souls. It is due to acknowledge that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, continued these missionary labors, with usual success. Dr. Capers, in July, 1845, presented an address to the southern conferences, on this subject, in which he urges them with great earnestness and eloquence, to support and extend the colored missions.<sup>†</sup>

The Rev. E. M. Pendleton, a local preacher, writes from Sparta, Georgia, August 28, 1845, urging missions, not only among the plantation negroes, but among the house slaves in every place. He narrates his own success in this good work, his forming Sunday schools, and he urges all local preachers to engage in this important service.<sup>‡</sup>

The Rev. T. P. C. Shelman, of Alabama, very urgently pleads the cause of instructing the slaves.<sup>§</sup>

The report of the South Carolina conference, which sat in December, 1845, concludes in the following truly-animating and evangelical strains: "A great and effectual door is now opened before us, through which a ready access may be had, without let or hinderance, to the vast multitudes of colored people living within the bounds of our own conference. Shall we enter it? Shall we draw back? Shall we hesitate? The God of salvation bids us go, enter it! The Redeemer of sinners commands us, go! The Holy Ghost anointing us for the work, whispers, go! The love of Christ constraining us, echoes the word, go! The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, repeats the command, go! And as ministers of the Gospel, filled with the gushing benevolence of Bible Christianity, we most cheerfully respond, we will go! In the name of the Lord of hosts, we will set up our banners. And we wish no higher honor, no greater eulogy, no finer epitaph, than to have it inscribed upon our tombs, after the last battle of life is fought, and the victory won: '*Here lies a missionary to the blacks, who died at his post.*'"<sup>||</sup>

All the facts connected with the labors of the Methodist Episcopal Church, among the southern slaves, go to say that the southern public were not jealous of the Methodist Episcopal Church in reference to slavery, especially their labors among the slaves. And at this day it is equally true, that neither insurrection nor insubordination among the slaves, through the labors of the Methodist Episcopal Church, is feared by any one.

\* W., October 24th. Scraps, III, p. 489.

† S., July 18th. Scraps, III, pp. 91-94.

‡ S. September 12th. Scraps, III, p. 314.

§ S., Scraps, III, p. 643.

|| S., December 20th. Scraps, III, p. 716.

\* P., July 9th. Scraps, III, p. 36.

† W., July 11th. Scraps, III, p. 62.

‡ W., July 9th and October 22d. Scraps, III, pp. 49, 488.

The missionary report of the South Carolina conference, which sat in December, 1844, declared that the missionaries to the colored people had enjoyed "the continued confidence of the public, and particularly of those immediately connected with this interesting part of their work."\* No bad influence, up to that time, had been experienced in consequence of the action of the General conference. In short, we must believe that none did exist except in the imagination of a discontented minority, and such as has been influenced by them.

But it has been asserted that an injurious influence would arise, had it not been prevented by the insubordination of the south. This is denied, for the following reasons:

(1.) The southern public has in no capacity, either constitutional, legislative, or executive, ever required that one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church should be a slaveholder. There was therefore no ground on which to predicate such public opinion as has been asserted.

(2.) The action referred to can apply to no one, except Bishop Andrew, and to him only in the office of general superintendent. As such he belonged to the north as much as to the south—not to the public in either, but to the Church in the north and south jointly.

(3.) No man in the north or south could refuse to submit to the action of the General conference but Bishop Andrew alone; because it required nothing of any one else.†

10. In regard to the character of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as differing from the Methodist Episcopal Church, according to the developments made, a few remarks may here be offered. It has been stated already that the new Church, not only in regard to slavery, but in other respects, diverged from the first landmarks of American Methodism. We may now just mention in regard to the Episcopacy, as to its powers and source.

But the principal variation was in regard to slavery. The old rules and principles were retained in the Discipline in the letter and form; but the letter even was considered as an obsolete form, of no force or authority, either in principle or practice; while the principles of the Discipline were denounced with unsparing severity. The Church, South, may be said to have had an antislavery, or, if you will, an abolition Discipline, while they denounced and disowned all its principles.

Beside their leading men contended for slavery as a Bible institution, as right in itself, and even much better than service in the north and in Europe. Dr. Bascom, in his Review, was the prominent champion for the institution. Copying after the pro-slavery men of Britain, he contended that our slavery was much better than the state of the white laborer at the north. Like all such, he counted upon nothing but food, raiment, and lodging or the like; never considering that the slave has no father; that marriage and all its holy influences are unknown to the slave code; that parents are separated from children, and children from parents; that the door of knowledge and of elevation is shut against the slave. Mr. Calhoun indorsed Dr. Bascom's book, and the indorsement is its condemnation in the eyes of the civilized and religious world. We must refer to the book, as we

need not give specimens of the pro-slavery character of a work which has received the unqualified imprimatur of Mr. Calhoun. This oracle has spoken and decided the point. And all the southern editors, conferences, and magnates have fallen in with the decision; yet, doubtless, there are many who would demur were there room. Indeed, a member of the Kentucky conference, in three numbers, reviewed Dr. Bascom's book, and convicted it of error by proofs and arguments altogether unanswerable.\*

Dr. L. Pierce, under date of June 5, 1845, in the Southern Advocate, of June 13th, declares: "In reference to the doctrine held by the north and south on the subject of slavery, I am *entirely* southern. I have long believed the Church, in her legislative rights and duties, stood in precisely the same relation to slavery that she does to the tariff, or to any other purely-political institution. I utterly deny, in view of the example of Christ and his apostles, that the Church has any right to express an opinion in her purely-spiritual character, the only one in which, as a Church, she can be properly known, upon the institution of slavery."† The error of Dr. Pierce was that, in slavery, he did not distinguish between what pertains to the control of Cæsar, and what pertains to the control of the Church. Both these are distinct. Each is supreme, under God, in its own department, and neither should encroach on the other.

Dr. Longstreet's pamphlet became a sort of text-book. A Charleston paper lauded it highly, when it appeared, and gave an outline of its contents in an editorial of a column and a half. The editor of the Richmond Advocate, in his paper of November 20th, on quoting the editorial of the Charleston paper, said, "We have read the pamphlet with great pleasure, and can appreciate the character of the terms in which it is here presented to the public mind. Apart from its place in our Church controversy, it is a valuable addition to the department of Biblical criticism to which it belongs; and will still increase the well-earned and extensive reputation of its already distinguished author."

The editor of the Southern Christian Advocate, under date of November 21st, gave the following notice:

"*Judge Longstreet's Letters.*—We hereby give notice, that a full supply of this popular work will be furnished at the meetings of the South Carolina and Georgia conferences."

The views of Dr. Longstreet met with general approbation in the south, and furnished a development of the sentiments of leading southern men on slavery. The Judge, at an early period of the controversy, pleaded stoutly to erase every thing against slavery out of the Discipline. This was the established purpose of the prime movers of the southern scheme. This did not take with the more northern conferences.

The editor of the South-Western Christian Advocate follows in the wake of his cotemporaries.

Since the foregoing marks of high approbation have been manifested in favor of Dr. Longstreet's theory of *jure divino* slavery, or slavery sanctioned by divine right, he has come forward in a long article, in the Southern Christian Advocate of December 26th, in answer to

\* C., February 12, 1845, copied from the S.  
† W., August 1, 1845. Scraps, III, p. 161.

\* W. Also, P., July 2, 1845. Scraps, III, pp. 1-6.  
† S., June 13th. W., June 27th. Scraps, II, p. 777.

Dr. Durbin's letter to him, and maintains his doctrine with great confidence. We will give a few extracts from Dr. Longstreet's letter. He says, addressing Dr. Durbin:

"You call slavery an evil, and you think the Discipline does well in not going farther to remove it than it has done, seeing that had it gone farther it would have destroyed the Church in the south. The Discipline declares slavery to be an evil, and enacts that no slaveholder, who can emancipate his slaves by the laws of his state, and they enjoy freedom in the state, shall be a preacher in the Methodist Episcopal Church. And you set the seal of your approbation to all this. I had just said that the rules of the Discipline, on this head, went farther than Christ and his apostles had gone—and I now repeat it. You denied it, *not in terms*, but in words and actions equally significant. A brother and myself had referred to the Scriptures to prove that slavery was no sin. You denied that, *not in terms*, but in questions and exclamations much more forcible and equally positive. Now, under these circumstances, what was I to understand from the passage just quoted, but that 'slavery is forbidden by the word of God?' Christ and his apostles looked upon it in the light in which our Church views it as a matter of Church discipline, sufficient in itself to exclude a slaveholder from the ministry. But sinful as it is, it may become so involved with the civil polity of a country, that an attempt by the Church to absolve herself from it, would be followed by evils more intolerable than slavery itself. The duty of the Church, therefore, is to look to the necessities of the case, and to admit slavery within her pale only where necessity requires it. This our Church has done, and in doing so, she has acted 'wisely.' It has made slavery a disqualification for the ministry in all cases where it does not exist by necessity. Now I confess, without a blush for my ignorance, that I can see nothing in all this which imports in the slightest degree, that you do not consider slavery a sin in the abstract. If it be not, what right has the Church to affix pains and penalties to it, or to put it under terms? Mere political evils, you surely can not believe a proper subject of Church jurisdiction to this extent. When did Christ or his apostles ever rebuke a man for holding slaves? Where have they said that a slaveholder shall not preach, where the civil law will allow him to free his slaves? In truth, kind sir, I perceived nothing in your conduct, or your language in the General conference, to distinguish you from the most rabid abolitionist in that body, but in the means by which you would reach your respective ends, and the rebuke which you gave the abolitionists. You made common cause with them in the onset upon Bishop Andrew. You expressed equal abhorrence of slavery in the Episcopacy. You desired him to intermit his official duties till he rid himself of connection with slavery. You maintained the *power* of the conference to displace him for this connection. On one side of you were the discontents of the abolitionists, on the other the discontents of the slaveholders; and you went for appeasing the former. You were told that if Bishop Andrew kept his office, he would not be received as a presiding officer in some of the northern conferences. You were told if you passed the resolution you were pressing, you would not only disturb the peace of the Church, but sever the Church for-

ever; and you chose the last alternative. As to your rebuke of the abolitionists, under these circumstances—a rebuke by the way not of their principles, but of a desperate use of them—it seemed to me like the rebuke of a father, who says to his son, 'My son, cock-fighting is a cruel, wicked practice, you had better not pursue it,' and then presents him a pair of gaffs. You warn against extremities, and give the instrument of death."

If we interpret Dr. Longstreet according to his doctrine, that slavery is no sin, we must consider him as teaching and believing that there is nothing wrong or sinful in slaveholding, the annulment of marriage, man-stealing, making human beings mere chattels, slave-trading or trafficking for gain, preventing God's intelligent creatures from reading his word, oppression, wrong, injustice, and a long list of others, too numerous and appalling to mention. These, and such other things, we must charge on Dr. Longstreet as holding to be no sins. But he would not admit these things to be so, nor can he believe that these glaring sins are no sins; yet they are inseparable parts of slavery; and if slavery be no sin these enormities are not sins.\*

The whole matter of difficulty in its origin is simply this, a minority in the Methodist Episcopal Church, against the will of the majority and the established Discipline of the Church, contended for *slavery* in the Episcopacy. It was a contest for *slavery* on the part of the south. The minority could not oppose the action of the General conference in the case of a slaveholding general superintendency, without contending for the increase and spread of slavery. The minority, as well as the majority, were bound by the long-established Discipline of the Church to contend and labor for the "extirpation" of "the great evil of slavery" from the Church. But in the place of doing this, they labored for the extension of slavery commensurate with the extent of the general superintendency of the Church. Their published and professed sentiments were, "we declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery." But in works they declare themselves free from any conviction of the evil of slavery. They contended, through the Episcopacy, for the spread of slavery over the north as well as over the south. They have made their set speeches for it, published books in support of its principle and practice, and organized themselves into a pro-slavery Church. Having departed from sound principles, they declare that the Church has no more to do with slavery than with the tariff.†

11. In regard to the plan of separation, the following may be put down as the common opinion, into which the facts in the case have brought the mind of the Church.

(1.) The plan, either *ab initio* or *de jure*, or in its relations, connections, or consequences, is unconstitutional; because it involved several things that were unquestionably unconstitutional, such as trials of members, appeals, and the appropriation of funds, which required the exercise of constitutional powers to authorize their disbursement; namely, the two-third vote of the General conference, and the three-fourth vote of the annual conferences.

\* W., February 20th. Scraps, IV, p. 209.

† Dr. Akers on "The New Church Pro-slavery." W., August 3, 1845. Scraps, 111, p. 202.

(2.) The plan was never confirmed or established. It was recommended to the annual conferences, but not confirmed by them.

(3.) The special necessity for it was not found in fact. And had the constitutional votes been given, the want of the reason for it would render it of no authority.

(4.) The principal conditions of it, so far as the south are concerned, have been violated, and are in process of violation. We give the following instances of that violation, both doctrinally, executively, officially, and practically:

*First.* An important part of the plan was never complied with on the part of the south; namely, the majorities of the votes of Church members in the border conferences of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, were never taken in any fair or ecclesiastical manner; and without this the plan did not meet the case. Where are the majorities of these conferences, districts, stations, and societies reported? They are not to be found.

*Second.* The Louisville convention taught the violation of the plan, in authorizing and instructing their bishops to cross the line into the bounds of the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa conferences, and form new conferences out of parts of them, or attach parts of them to the new Church.

*Third.* Bishop Soule, as the executive officer or bishop of the convention and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, issued his circular, published in the Western Christian Advocate in October, 1845, calling on the societies, circuits, and stations, in the non-protesting conferences, to decide, by vote, which Church they would belong to; thus recognizing the infraction of the plan, as taught and enjoined by the convention.

*Fourth.* The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have, in various acts of their administration, sanctioned practical and notorious infractions of the plan. The following instances are in point, the precursors of many more. In Cincinnati; this, with them, was not a border charge, a range of charges lying between the new pretended charge and the river, and it was not the majority of a charge, nor even a minority of one, but the collection of a new charge drummed up for the express purpose; and yet Bishop Andrew sanctioned it officially; and all of their editors, correspondents, etc., give it their public sanction; although it is known many of them, in their private judgment, believe it is unauthorized according to the plan. In the Kanawha district, Ohio conference, they have sent preachers, by the authority of Bishop Andrew, to interior societies, and even these mostly minorities, there being none on the borders to go with them. Other places are about to be occupied all along the line.

Our bishops, we believe, as consistent and

honest men, have kept within the provisions of the plan, as far as it was intended to regulate the Methodist Episcopal Church, even if the south had complied with all its requirements. They have in no case sent preachers over the line, nor even on it, except where there were majorities. And they have not authorized presiding elders to do differently. And we are not aware that any of the presiding elders have done differently in any one instance. The case of the Methodist Episcopal Church in St. Louis, occupied by brother Akers, can not be called an exception to the remark, because there is pretty plain proof, that the steps by which the Churches in St. Louis have been transferred to the south, have no countenance from the plan, even interpreting it in its most favorable light. Some ultra-abolitionists in some places in the west, were disposed to annoy some of our brethren and the Church with the charge of being pro-slavery. But the great body of abolitionists were not disposed to ask from the Church any thing more than her ecclesiastical course in ecclesiastical matters; and, in the case of slavery, to treat it only in its moral character; leaving to citizens its civil relations, in which alone men, as citizens, act. It is inconsistent for the Church to adopt any system, interfering with the civil character of slavery. The kingdom of Christ is not of this world. "Render to Cæsar, the things that are Cæsar's; and to God, the things that are God's." It is for the Church to separate from the Church all sinful slaveholding, and none other. And although it is true that the system of slavery, as it exists in the United States, is a sinful system, and necessarily so, and will be so while it exists, as there must be sinful conduct somewhere, in originating, continuing, or perpetuating slavery, yet it is a mistake that every slaveholder is therefore a sinner. Nothing is further from the truth and the morals of the Gospel. How can an heir be made a sinner, because some one wills him slaves? The consequent conduct of the heir is to prove whether he acts sinfully or not. And there are other cases, too, in which men may become slaveholders with equal innocence. So the Methodist Episcopal Church holds. Nor does this furnish any excuse to those, who, under the plea of mercy to the slaves, buy and sell, and use them for gain, and even buy and sell the grace of God in them. The Church is not in fault for these, except so far as she permits them to infract the morals of Christianity by a want of discipline, or the want of exercising it, both of which amount to the same thing. But a course of more than sixty years proves that the Methodist Episcopal Church knows the difference between the rights of the Church and of Cæsar; between morals and civil matters; between the citizen and the Church member.\*

\* W., March 6, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 309.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII.

## THE PETERSBURG GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. THE conference met in Petersburg, Virginia, on Friday, May 1, 1846. Bishop Soule was present, but he did not participate in the proceedings, because, as he said, he had not yet united with the new Church. Rev. J. Early was called to the chair, in the absence of Bishop Andrew, and Rev. T. N. Ralston was chosen secretary, and Rev. T. O. Summers assistant. On Saturday, May 2d, Bishop Andrew arrived and took his seat as president of the conference. Bishop Soule then addressed the conference as follows, as reported in the *Richmond Advocate*:

"I wish to occupy the attention of the conference a few moments—and but a few moments—as I have no disposition to consume the time of the body.

"I consider this body, as now organized, as constituting the full and complete organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as provided for in the plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844. I consider myself, therefore, as standing before the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, fully organized, under all the responsibilities of that Church, with full powers to transact all business appertaining to a General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. I consider this organization as having *originated* in the declaration of the delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding states, to the General conference of 1844. I consider it to have progressed in the Protest of the minority in the same conference, and to have been carried out by the action of every annual conference in its official sanction of the Protest, and by the appointment of delegates to the Louisville convention; and, also, in the approval of every important action of their delegates, by all the annual conferences held since the convention. And now that you have met and organized, the work is fully done. Such are my views of this subject. Such were my views at Louisville, and these were the grounds on which I then declined a formal adherence to the Church, South. Under the act of separation you are fully organized, and I am now free to do what I then declared it my purpose to do. I have been a close observer of the different stages of this important matter. I have watched its progress carefully. And I am satisfied that every act is in strict accordance with the plan of separation of the General conference of 1844. Every thing is completely covered by its provisions.

"I have remarked, with great satisfaction, the great harmony that prevailed upon this subject in all the annual conferences represented in this body. I know of no similar case. I doubt whether ecclesiastical history furnishes any thing like it. For all this we are debtors to a merciful and superintending Providence. To God be all the glory for it!

"My last tour was along the borders, where, owing to the efforts and statements of northern papers, much difficulty was supposed to exist. In this visitation I was disappointed—pleasingly disappointed. Difficulties were threatened, and sought to be produced by the misrepresentations of northern brethren. But the societies have en-

tered into the southern organization, and there is now harmony. I rejoice in this state of things.

"It may not be improper for me to state my own opinion as to the Episcopacy of the Church. I have experienced no change in my views for many years that I have been in the ministry. Circumstances seem, at least, to require some statements from me upon this subject. My name, as you are all aware, has been very freely used. I have been represented throughout this country, and it may be in Europe, too, in the columns of the *Christian Advocate and Journal*, as holding very strange and very high notions of the Episcopacy, and of episcopal powers. It has been declared that I hold views of these subjects materially different from those of my venerable predecessors in office. The declarations upon this subject have been very general. No particular point of difference between my views and theirs has been stated. I am aware of the difficulty of replying to a general charge of this nature. But though difficult, it is not impossible. I may meet it by a general statement, which I deem it important to make to this conference. I was long and intimately acquainted with Bishop Asbury. I venerate his memory. There is no man for whose opinions I cherish a more sincere regard. My correspondence with him, for many years, was free. With Bishop McKendree I was intimately acquainted. I had as full a knowledge of their views as any other man. Now, I assure you, if I entertain views of these subjects different from theirs—if I am higher in my notions of Episcopacy and episcopal powers than they were—it is unknown to myself. I have no sense of possessing, upon these points, convictions different from theirs. I believe the statement to be a sheer fabrication; whether designed for mere effect, or not, I can not say.

"The views I now hold of these subjects, I have long held, and have regarded them, and do still regard them as identical with those of my venerable predecessors in office. That I differ with many in this day I do not doubt. I wish to say to you—and I speak without disguise—I do not accord with the doctrines of the General conference of 1844 upon the subject of the Episcopacy. I can not do so. And if their views were those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, I could not enter its fellowship. I once resigned my election on this ground. On that ground I would resign it again. It is the great principle involved in the system given to us by our fathers. Let it be preserved and perpetuated. Let me fall at any time. But let this precious deposit not fall in my hands. I consider it essential to the accomplishment of the great work lying before us, as a Church, in spreading holiness over these lands.

"Now, in conclusion, I have to say to this body—and I conceive it has not been proper for me previously to act in this matter—I come now to fulfill the promise made at the Louisville convention. The plan of separation recognizes the right of ministers of every grade of office in the Church to adhere to the Church, South, and to

do so 'without blame.' Ministers, as members of annual conferences, have had the opportunity of adhering, and have done so. But I am not responsible to an annual conference. This is my place to adhere, and I come now to do it. Under the provision, therefore, of the plan of separation, I now give in my adhesion to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In respect to myself—if I were a layman, or a minister, or a bishop—I am ready to serve you to the best of my ability.\*"

After the delivery of the foregoing address, Dr. Bascom moved that the Bishop furnish the language in which he united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and that a committee be appointed to respond by a suitable resolution.

On Tuesday, May 5th, Bishop Soule, from the substance of his remarks on Saturday last, gave the closing paragraph as follows, in which he declared his proposal to unite with the new Church:

*"And now, acting in strict regard to the plan of separation, and under the solemn conviction of duty, I formally declare my adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and if the conference receive me in my present relation to the Church, I am ready to serve them, according to the best of my ability. In conclusion, I indulge the joyful assurance that although separated from our northern brethren by a distinct conference jurisdiction, we shall never cease to treat them as 'brethren beloved,' and cultivate those principles and affections which constitute the essential unity of the Church of Christ.*

"JOSHUA SOULE."†

On Thursday, the 7th, Dr. Bascom, from the committee appointed to draft a resolution responsive to the declaration of Bishop Soule, made the following report, which was adopted:

"The committee appointed to draft a response to the communication from Bishop Soule, report the following for the adoption by the conference:

*"Whereas, the Rev. Joshua Soule, D. D., senior bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, had addressed a communication to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, now in session in Petersburg, bearing date the 2d instant, in which he formally declares his adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in accordance with the right secured to him by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at its last session, in 1844;*

*"Therefore, resolved by the delegates of the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in General conference assembled, That fully agreeing with Bishop Soule, as it regards his right of action in the premises of the General conference of 1844, we cheerfully and unanimously recognize him as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with all the constitutional rights and privileges pertaining to his office as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.*

H. B. BASCOM,  
"W. WINANS.

*"Petersburg, Virginia, May 6, 1846."‡*

There is one strange anomaly in the foregoing. Bishop Soule is received into the new Church "with all the constitutional rights and privileges pertaining to his office as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church." It is hard to conceive how he could possess all the rights and privileges of a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at the same time be "recognized as

a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

2. The Maysville Church, in Kentucky, received the official attention of the conference, as we have seen a majority of the members decided to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Nevertheless, it was occupied by the new Church, the property seized, which produced a lawsuit. The members of Maysville, in the new Church, petitioned the General conference for relief, and a committee was appointed, May 4th, to consider their case.\* On the 9th Mr. M'Ferrin, the chairman, presented a report concluding with a resolution, calling on the annual conferences to collect \$100 each, to incur the expenses of the Maysville suit. It was adopted.†

3. As the leading papers of the Methodist Episcopal Church had declared and proved that the southern organization was a secession, the allegation was deeply resented by the members of the General conference. Accordingly, on May 4th, Rev. William Winans, A. L. P. Green, and F. E. Pitts, by order and in behalf of the southern delegates, published a card in the papers, in which they denounced "the leading papers" as guilty of clamor and vilification. They quoted the hospitalities they received from individuals in Wheeling, Pittsburg, Philadelphia, Newark, New York, Baltimore, and Washington City, where they were received as brethren, as proofs that these northern editors were mistaken, or rather slanderous, and these hospitalities were the testimonies of the case, condemning the editors—of course, editors Bond and Elliott. They did not consider that Methodist Protestants, Baptists, Presbyterians would have been received in the same manner. But the evidences of fact were such now as to place the south in the relation of a secession; and the southern delegates were in haste to show to their discontended brethren in the south that they were not what the northern editors and correspondents proved them to be. Had the real character of the new Church, as a secession proper, been before the southern public, the southern Methodists could not be induced to form parts of a secession Church. The card was intended to stop the sentiment now entering into the south—that the new organization was a secession. And the argument was, they had preached in our pulpits, were hospitably entertained, and, therefore, could not be seceders. The card, now a necessary measure, had its effect, in connection with a constant endeavor to proclaim no secession, as well as to exclude from the south the arguments and facts which proved it.‡

4. The property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in southern papers and Book Depository, occupied the attention of the conference, in connection with a new Book Concern for themselves. On Monday, May 4th, Dr. Paine presented the following resolution, which was adopted:

*"Resolved, That the Committee on Finance be directed to consider the subject of periodicals, and to report what jurisdiction this conference has over those papers established by the Methodist Episcopal Church, within our bounds; also, whether it is expedient to continue all of them, and whether it is proper to appoint or elect editors at this General conference."||*

On Monday, May 18th, Dr. Smith, from the

\* W., May 15th. Scraps, IV, p. 726.

† W., May 22d. Scraps, IV, p. 736.

‡ S., May 15th. Scraps, IV, p. 588. Also, P., May 20th. Scraps, IV, p. 618.

|| W., May 15th. Scraps, IV, p. 727.

\* R., copied in W., May 15, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 536.

† W., May 15th. Scraps, IV, p. 727.

‡ S., May 15, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 588.



Finance Committee, made a report, No. 4, as follows:

"(1.) Three commissioners, to be appointed according to the 'plan of separation,' adopted by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1844, to act in concert with the commissioners appointed by the said Methodist Episcopal Church, to estimate the amount due to the south, according to the plan of separation, and to adjust and settle all matters pertaining to the division of the Church property and funds, as provided for by the said plan, with full powers to carry into effect the whole arrangement with regard to said division.

"(2.) That the commissioners of the south shall forthwith notify the commissioners and Book Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of their appointment, and of their readiness to adjust and settle the matters, and should no settlement be effected before the session of the General conference, in 1848, said commissioners shall have power and authority, on behalf of the General conference, south, to attend the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to settle and adjust all questions involving property or funds, which may be pending between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"(3.) Should the commissioners, if appointed by this General conference, after proper effort, fail to effect a settlement, then they shall be, and are hereby authorized to take such measures as may best secure the just and equitable claims of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the property and funds aforesaid.

"(4.) That ——— be authorized to act as the agent, in conformity to the plan of separation, to receive and hold in trust all property, of every description, which may be paid to him by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"(5.) Should a settlement take place before 1850, the agent shall pay over to the Book Agents of the south all available funds, to be divided equally between the Book Agents. The said Agents to receive, in trust, all property committed to their care."

Commissioners and Book Agents to report to the next General conference for the south. Report ordered to lie on the table for the present.

Dr. Smith, from the same committee, presented report No. 5, which may be classed under the same general head of the plan of separation. It is as follows:

"(1.) *Resolved*, That the Richmond Christian Advocate, Southern Christian Advocate, South-Western Christian Advocate, and the Depository at Charleston are part and parcel of the property which, according to the plan of separation, adopted by the General conference of 1844, should be taken into the estimate of the Church property when the division of said property should take place between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That our Book Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, be, and the same are hereby required to take charge of the books, notes, accounts, presses, etc., of said journals, and of the Depository at Charleston, estimate the whole, and report the same to the next General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and hold the same subject to a division, according to the plan of separation, whenever the Methodist Episcopal Church shall divide with us the Book Concern, and our own interest in the 'Chartered Fund,' according to the

plan of separation adopted by the General conference in 1844.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That by virtue of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to which editors of said papers have adhered, according to the plan of separation adopted by the General conference in 1844, their office as editors of said papers is vacated."

This was also ordered on the table for the present.\*

On Saturday, May 23d, the report of the Committee on Finance in relation to periodicals was taken up by items.

The first item was laid on the table, and the second and third adopted, as follows:

"*Resolved*, That the Book Agent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, be, and the same is hereby required to take charge of the books, notes, accounts, presses, etc., of said papers, and the Depository, at Charleston, estimate the whole, and report the same to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and hold the same subject to a division according to the 'plan of separation,' whenever the Methodist Episcopal Church shall divide with us the Book Concern and our interest in the Chartered Fund, according to the 'plan of separation' adopted by the General conference in 1844.

"*Resolved*, That, by virtue of the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to which the editors of said papers have adhered, according to the 'plan of separation,' adopted by the General conference in 1844, their office as editors of said papers is vacated."

Mr. Evans offered a series of resolutions, regulating the terms of the papers, showing how the editorial chairs shall be filled in case of vacancy, and christening the papers—the paper at Nashville is called "The Nashville Christian Advocate," the paper at Richmond, "The Richmond Christian Advocate," and the paper at Charleston, "The Southern Christian Advocate." For the papers at Nashville and Charleston there shall be an editor and an assistant editor, and for the paper at Richmond an editor, who shall be members of such annual conferences as they may select, their salaries to be fixed by a publishing committee, and paid out of the proceeds of the offices.

The conference proceeded to the election of officers created by recent action of the body.†

From the above it appears that, though the conference professed to be governed by the plan, they proceeded to confiscate the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and transfer it to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, before any change in the 6th Restrictive Article was obtained. The offices of the southern editors were also vacated by a vote of the conference, thus setting aside appointments made by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, without any pretense from the plan of separation. The same persons were reappointed, too, showing the act to have been intended to imply *authority* above and beyond any thing found in what they have been fond to call a *treaty*, or *compact*. Surely, nothing was then left of the famous plan of separation. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, breaks it to pieces, without the least ceremony, in transferring, without authority, the southern papers and Depository from the

\* W., June 6th. Scraps, IV, pp. 743-753.

† W., June 6th. Scraps, IV, p. 565.

Methodist Episcopal Church to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

5. In regard to payment of dividends to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the Agents at New York, under date of May 1st, addressed the General conference, informing them that, after due advice from the Book Committee, they resolved to pay no more dividends to the bishops and conferences which united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, but that they invested the amount that would be the portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church in funds, subject to the disposal of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1848. The letter was submitted to the Committee on Finance.\*

On Saturday, May 9th, the Finance Committee made a long and captious report, which was unanimously adopted, and a copy transmitted to New York.† The report affirms that their superannuated preachers, widows, etc., were entitled to the dividends by the highest and most obligatory claims of justice. They affirmed that the decision of the Agents was not sustained by the plan; because, 1. It was not certain that the annual conferences had refused to concur. 2. The conferences in the south were to receive dividends till the capital should be distributed. 3. The plan considered the claim of the south a just one. The report proceeds, in severe language, to charge the Agents and the Methodist Episcopal Church with injustice for withholding the dividends.

As to their first argument, it amounts to nothing, because they were bound to distribute to the annual conferences and bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church alone, and to none others, till there would be a change of the Restriction; and as this change was not made, they could not, as honest men, make any such appropriation.

In regard to the second argument, neither the capital nor the proceeds could be distributed without a change in the 6th Restriction.

On the subject of *equity*, the report seems to be no more than an appeal for popular effect only, wholly irrelevant to the subject, as the Book Agents possessed no discretion in the matter, and could not distribute to conferences and bishops not of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

6. The General conference found it prudent to take strong measures to relieve their bishops from the just allegations brought against their public administrations in the columns of the New York and Cincinnati Advocates. Accordingly, on Tuesday, May 5th, Dr. Bascom offered the following resolution, which was unanimously adopted:

“Resolved, That the Committee on Episcopacy be instructed to institute special inquiry into the character and grounds of the charge, so repeatedly preferred by the editors and correspondents of the Western Christian Advocate, and the Christian Advocate and Journal, against Bishops Soule and Andrew, to the effect that they have, in numerous instances, not only constructively infringed, but grossly violated, both the spirit and the letter of the General conference ‘plan of separation,’ in appointing ministers to border charges, stations, or societies, where the people, or members of the

Church, had not adhered south, by a vote of the majority, as directed by the General conference, and that said Committee report the result of such inquiry to this conference during its present session.”\*

The Rev. Dr. Wightman, on May 21st, in behalf of the Committee on Episcopacy, made a report on the foregoing resolution, offered by Dr. Bascom on the 5th. The report was adopted.

The report asserted, but did not furnish proof, that there was no violation of the plan in St. Louis or St. Charles district, Cincinnati, Maysville, Kanawha, nor Eastville. On the contrary, there was documentary evidence that the administration of their bishops was agreeable to the plan.

The Committee then affirm that the plan “gives a plain permissive *grant* of occupancy to the Southern Church along the border northwardly, till the dividing line is satisfactorily settled and determined by the formal adherence, north of a definite line, of societies and stations. This ascertained, then the societies and stations lying beyond that line become interior charges, which are to be left undisturbed by the southern ministry. But the line of division never becomes fixed till such an act of formal adherence north takes place. That act alone is made by the aforesaid rule, the condition of protection against the advance of the southern boundary, and *vice versa*.”

The report also teaches that when a conference decides to go north or south, this “renders it unnecessary for the societies here referred to to take formal action, if they agree in sentiment with the annual conference. If, however, they do not thus agree, the confessional act does not bind them. They may take action as societies or as charges, that is, circuits, and adhering to the other Church, they transfer the boundary line to the next tier of societies adjoining, who thus become a line of border societies, who may, by a similar action, transmit the border relation. . . . to those immediately beyond them. Thus the line is movable northwardly or southwardly till a line of societies or circuits is formed who coincide in their affinities and election with those of the annual conference, and thus it becomes fixed. Then all beyond is considered the field of interior charges.”

The report, too, contends that circuits, as well as societies, may decide the matter of adhesion.

They then say the episcopal administration has strictly conformed to these principles. They indorse the correctness of Bishop Soule’s instructions respecting border societies; they particularly indorse, in detail, the legality of Soule Chapel in Cincinnati. Editors Bond and Elliott are then denounced without stint. The Illinois and Ohio conferences, because they gave no vote of adhesion, are placed beyond the provisions of the plan; two presiding elders of these conferences are charged with invading southern territory. Finally, after all these accusations, denials, and misstatements, the following resolution was adopted unanimously, it is said:

“Resolved, That, after a full and patient examination of the particulars of the episcopal administration of the southern bishops, in relation to the plan of separation, the General con-

\* W., May 15th. Scraps, IV, p. 727.

† W., May 22d. Scraps, IV, p. 735.

\* W., May 16th. Scraps, IV, p. 728.

ference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, consider the charges so repeatedly made by the editors and correspondents of the Western Christian Advocate, and the Christian Advocate and Journal, against Bishops Soule and Andrew, as entirely groundless; and that, on the contrary, the administration aforesaid has been strictly conformed to the rule set forth by the authority of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in its legislation on this subject in 1844.\*

We place the report in our documents.†

Dr. Bond, in noticing this report, says, "It is long and elaborately drawn up, and justifies the southern bishops, and condemns the Doctors, of course. We humbly submit that we have not had a fair trial, having had no notice of the intended proceedings against us, or opportunity of defense. Will the honorable court please grant us a new trial? If not, we will take an appeal to a superior judicatory—the whole Church. Properly examined, the arguments of the report will vanish into thin air."‡

7. The revision of the Discipline was a subject of considerable difficulty to the conference. It had been arowed, over and over again, by the leaders of the southern movement, that no change should be made in the Discipline. Nevertheless, the convention over, the new Church formed, and the northern border men of Kentucky being in a bare majority, many and serious changes were contemplated and proposed. When Dr. Wightman made his report, May 6th, on revising the Discipline, the printing of it was strongly opposed; and "the majority decided that the contemplated alterations shall not be known at present officially." Mr. Boyle said that he had no doubt that Dr. Elliott and Dr. Bond had agents here who were taking notes, and who would furnish to each this report if printed. The motion for printing did not carry, so that we can not say precisely what the alterations proposed were.‡

On the 11th, on a motion to consider a change of Discipline passed last week, great anxiety was manifested on the subject of change.

Mr. Parsons said "he came from a border conference, where innovations on any part of the Discipline of the Church would be censured. He had told his people that no change not rendered necessary by the division of the Church would be made."

Mr. Campbell said, "It has been said that the conference was under pledge not to make any important changes in the Discipline, yet it was known that many great changes had already been reported by the Missionary Committee; and the report of the Committee of Revisals, made this very day, and made the order for Wednesday, contained the recommendation for many alterations."

Mr. Lee "did not consider this conference bound hand and foot to the Louisville convention proceedings. This conference is now assembled to take those proceedings as a basis of action. The report made this day by the Committee on Revisals is in no sense like that by which we have heretofore been governed. It is an entire new structure—remodeled—rebuilt."§

On the 18th the subject of revising the Discipline was again discussed; but, though many were for changes, the majority thought it best to let the Discipline alone for the present, with the view of conciliating the west and south-west.\*

8. Notwithstanding the studied effort toward any discussion on the subject of slavery, as if ordained by fate, it was, nevertheless, introduced. On Monday, the 18th, it was introduced, and it was proposed to add annotations to the tenth section.

On Tuesday, May 19th, the Rev. John Early, having the floor at the adjournment, moved that the conference take up the unfinished business of last evening—the consideration of the proposition to append annotations to the tenth section of Discipline. The conference agreeing so to do, a protracted debate ensued.

It was not the north against the south, but the extreme south against the west and north-west. The south consider the continuance of the tenth section in the Discipline very much in the way of efforts to preach the Gospel to the slaves, while those from the west and north-west, and some from the south, are strongly opposed to any change whatever. Both parties admit that difficulties present themselves; that evils are on either hand; and that the most prudent course is to avoid the greater.

Many of the most prominent men on both sides gave their opinions. Many motions were offered, and in various forms, to put off the direct question, whether the article under consideration should be explained by notes or not.

It was evident that a very large majority were determined that no innovation should be made; and finally the main question was taken, when it was resolved not to admit the annotations; consequently the section remains as it was.

Bishop Andrew, who had come in during this debate, then rose, and, although very feeble, addressed the conference. He said, in substance, that since the question had been settled, he would make a few remarks. He regretted the discussion that had just terminated. He could fully appreciate the views which influenced the committee that reported the annotations—indeed, he had been consulted by the committee, and did not object to the explanatory notes. He had no doubt, however, from what he had heard, that the passage of them might create difficulties. It was a matter of regret to him that there was so much desire for a system of change. Changes might be sometimes necessary; but at this particular juncture, when we came up with a full knowledge of the action of all the annual conferences, with the action of the Louisville convention before us, showing that no change was contemplated, it would be extremely hazardous to attempt any change now, except that which becomes necessary for the Southern Church.

He—Bishop Andrew—had declared, wherever his official duties had called him, *that no changes would be made*—none, in his opinion, were required. He could say, with his brother Winans, that he wished the tenth section did not form a part of the Discipline, yet he thought very little difficulty would be found in the

\* R., May 21st. Scraps, IV, pp. 524-527.

† Document, No. 70.

‡ C., June 3d. Scraps, IV, p. 570.

§ W., May 22d. Scraps, IV, p. 729.

¶ W., May 22d. Scraps, IV, p. 738.

\* W., May 29th. Scraps, IV, p. 749.

south; but, if removed or changed, the borders might suffer. The south-west say that no change is desired by them; and, although there might be some at the south who would prefer its being expunged, he was persuaded they did not desire to do an act that would afflict another portion of the Church, South. He most fervently prayed that God would direct all their movements, and that the south would continue united as a band of brethren. Sacrifices must and will be made for the attainment of the one great object, union and brotherly affection. He had been placed in the most peculiar and afflicting situation in parting with his northern friends; yes, in parting from his northern friends. But neither heaven nor earth could require more from the south than she was willing to give for the sake of the peace of the Church.\*

The tenth section, however, passed through a fiery ordeal. When it was found dangerous to expunge it, commentary upon it was proposed, and urged very earnestly, as necessary to the more southern states; but even this was too hazardous an experiment in the present temper of the Holston, Kentucky, and Missouri conferences. The opponents of the change pleaded the pledge given by the Louisville convention, that the Discipline would be continued as it was. During the debate, Dr. Boring proposed as a substitute for the report of the committee, the following declaration, which he afterward withdrew:

*“Resolved, That slavery, as it exists in the United States, being a civil institution, as set forth in the plan of organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is not a proper subject of ecclesiastical legislation.”*

The sentiment of the resolution was manifestly the general one maintained by the conference.

The conference seems to have been reconciled to the continuance of the tenth section, by the opinion of Dr. Winans; that, although the “original legislation of our fathers on the subject of slavery was wrong in itself, and entailed evil on the Church, the rules proposed to be altered were innocuous in the south, and could do no harm. He thought it inexpedient to make any change in respect to slavery.” So, after all, the cause of secession was confessedly the refusal of the Methodist Episcopal Church to admit slavery into the Episcopacy; for, with full power to do so, no change is made in the Discipline of the new Church.

9. The infraction of the plan, in the doings of the conference, became so much a matter of course that there was no hesitancy in persisting in this course, in any act of the conference.

The administration of the southern bishops was approved by the conference, so that the breach of the plan by the executive received the legislative sanction in full.

In fixing the boundaries of conferences they occupied portions of the Baltimore and Ohio conferences, though the plan could never allow of any interference, on the part of the south, with the territory of these or any other conference north of the protesting conferences which formed the new Church.

In defining the bounds of Kentucky conference, it comprises “Soule Chapel, Cincinnati, and all that part of Western Virginia which has, or may, adhere south.” The Virginia conference comprises Eastville circuit, which was included in the Philadelphia conference.\* The Westmoreland circuit, though in the bounds of the Baltimore conference, was made a part of the Virginia conference by the act of the General conference.† Indeed, the provisions of the plan were regarded by the south as dispensable at pleasure.

## CHAPTER XXXIX.

### REVIEW OF PETERSBURG GENERAL CONFERENCE.

1. In the foregoing chapter we have given, with but little comment, the proceedings of the Petersburg conference, as far as they concerned the Church difficulties. We will now arrange, under proper heads, what we have to say on these proceedings, and such general remarks as are pertinent to their character.

2. The first thing that strikes us most forcibly in the new organization is, the new order of things in the Episcopacy of the Church, South. We apply the term *new* to it, as there are several elements in its composition which had no being in April, 1844, unless in the minds of a few individuals. Some of these may pass away as speedily as they came into being, such as the prelate element, the new mode of succession, the almost uncountability of the new chief ministers, and other elements. Whether these new prerogatives will live long or short would be difficult to say; nor will we, at present, take time to inquire. There is one entirely new addition to the southern Episco-

pacy, which seems to have been in full vigor at its very birth; we mean the qualification of slaveholding on a large scale. Previous to this recent move, the Methodist Episcopal Church, by its acts, disapproved and rejected, as proper incumbents for the Episcopacy, all slaveholders, no matter how they became slaveholders. Now, a new order of things is to take place in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as the *example* of the chief ministers, backed with the *official decision* of the Church, will give a new and powerful sanction, or rather authority and moral approbation to slaveholding in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

(1.) Our first observation is, that non-slaveholders in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are excluded from the highest office in the Church. The non-slaveholders in the new Church, as far as the highest office is concerned, must rank, in this exclusion, with the

\* W., June 5th. Scraps, IV, p. 559.

\* W., May 22d. Scraps, IV, p. 547.

† W., May 22d. Scraps, IV, p. 742; also, pp. 568, 612, 738.

non-slaveholders, or abolitionists. If they are too poor to have slaves, then they are to be numbered with the "white negroes." If they have held slaves, and have set them free, then they must be mustered with the antislavery men or the abolitionists; and all antislavery men, in the view of the far southern slaveholders, are not a whit better than the veriest abolitionists.\*

(2.) The small slaveholding preachers of the new Church have also passed under the ostracism of the large holders of human property in Georgia, South Carolina, Alabama, Louisiana, Mississippi, etc. Dr. Bascom, who holds a few slaves—we presume in order to set them free—had peculiar claims on the southern Episcopacy; not by his wish, but by the selection of the south. He was their candidate in 1844; he composed their celebrated Protest; he wrote a book to support the cause of the south; he prepared their principal report at their convention; in short, he was their literary drudge; he was selected for bishop, we learn, by common consent, in Kentucky, Missouri, and other places. But, at the close of two ballotings, he was found in the minority; and the far south sways the election.

(3.) The action of the southern General conference, in selecting Drs. Capers and Paine for the Episcopacy, speaks in favor of placing, in the most influential position in the Church, slaveholders on the large scale. Nor can it form an objection to this policy, that Bishop Soule was then no slaveholder; because he has rendered such eminent services in protecting a slaveholding Episcopacy, in defiance of the decision of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and has done more than any other man in organizing the first pro-slavery Church that ever existed in the world. Beside, he has since become a slaveholder, and is like his associates.

(4.) By the *example and influence* of the southern Episcopacy, Methodist preachers will have great inducements to become slaveholders, or to increase the number of those they already possess, whether by inheritance or purchase. It will be with them as Bishop Andrew, before he became a slaveholder, justly and cuttingly remarked in his published letters, "that many southern preachers raise more cotton to buy more negroes; and buy more negroes in order to raise more cotton." The young preacher, in the Southern Church, will naturally turn his attention in forming his matrimonial alliances to the families that will furnish the most suitable associates in reference to his future respectability. And should a preacher go to the barbacons, as the good brother from Georgia did in 1844, in Baltimore, and make his purchase, who can say he has done wrong, as the bishops of his Church have large numbers of slaves? And as to the mere *manner* of obtaining them, it is of small difference, as the legal or civil character of slavery is the only one now recognized by the Church, South; for the teachings of true Methodism, in regard to the *moralit*y, is an extrajudicial thing.

(5.) The influence of the new Episcopacy on the lay members of the Church, in promoting the evil of slaveholding, will be great. The men highest in office, and those distinguished for the reputation of sanctity, must, from their sway over the minds of common Christians,

greatly encourage them in doing as they do. What the bishop does, without the least blame, may be done by all, without censure or remorse of conscience. Here will be a new era in the conduct of lay members. Methodists, generally, have considered slavery as a system of moral wrong; and many thousands of them have set their slaves free. But when preachers became willing slaveholders, many of the members began to reconcile slavery in general as an innocent or necessary evil, which they could not or need not control. But now that three bishops out of four, in the Church, South, are large slaveholders, and the fourth one sanctions and upholds the slaveholding Episcopacy, a new and additional, and indeed complete approval of slaveholding must take place in the new Church. This is just as certain as that effect shall follow cause. And it is probable, that the leading Methodists of this Church will be more zealous defenders of slavery, than the members of any other Church in the south.

(6.) Finally, the influence of the new slaveholding Episcopacy on the southern public in general will be greatly to support slavery. Large slaveholders will receive, with open arms, the missionaries sent by the slaveholding bishops. Calhoun, M'Duffie, Governor Hammond, and the other great slaveholders, will be intoxicated with joy, in shaking hands with the new Episcopacy.

3. The Discipline, it is true, is not changed in words, but the doctrine on slavery is *entirely expunged or repealed*, to all intents and purposes, and is of no more force than if it never was in the Discipline.

The leading men in the extreme south, after the General conference of 1844, declared that the section on slavery ought to have no place in the Discipline. But as Kentucky and Missouri were to be gained, this was waived; and the General Rule and the section on slavery were to remain, at least for a time, although a dead letter. Indeed, pledges were given that the Discipline would not be touched; and, hence, those who still adhered to the Discipline were misled. But just look at the principles taught in the speeches on the subject, without a single voice to oppose, except on the ground of an unscriptural expediency. The following propositions are maintained by the speakers, without any protest:

(1.) *The subject of slavery is one which did not come under the cognizance of the Church.*

Mr. Boring's resolution is, that slavery, as it exists in these United States, being a civil institution, as set forth in the plan of organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is not a proper subject of ecclesiastical legislation. This is clearly the established doctrine of the new Church, as declared by all their leading men, and taught by the Louisville convention.

(2.) *That it was wrong to introduce the tenth section into the Discipline.*

Dr. Smith says: "Our forefathers did wrong in introducing the subject of slavery into the Discipline." Dr. Winans said: "He believed, most deliberately, that it was an evil hour in which the tenth section was introduced into the Discipline. The Methodist Episcopal Church had traveled out of its way to introduce it." Bishop Andrew said: "He could say, with his brother Winans, that he wished the tenth section did not form a part of the Discipline."

(3.) *The continuance of it in the Discipline does much harm.*

Dr. Smith said: "The tenth section is an ele-

\* W., June 5th. Scraps, IV, p. C30.

ment of strife." Dr. Winans said: "It had produced evil, and only evil."

(4.) *The section on slavery is a nullity in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.*

Dr. Winans said: "It is obsolete, inoperative; hence, to a great extent, harmless; consequently, not important to repeal it."

(5.) *The Discipline on slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is, to all intents and purposes, repealed.*

For as they teach that it was not a right subject for ecclesiastical legislation; that it was wrong to introduce it; that it does more harm than good; that it is a nullity in the Discipline, the conclusion is, that the tenth section in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is repealed to all intents and purposes.

(6.) *The section on slavery in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is retained, as a dead letter, by an unscriptural expediency, clearly forbidden in the word of God.*

Bishop Andrew says: "It would be extremely hazardous to attempt any change now." "If the tenth section be removed, the borders might suffer." "Sacrifices must and will be made for the attainment of the one great object, union and brotherly affection." Mr. Sullens said: "That they were in trouble in east Tennessee, and that he hoped they would not increase the trouble of that region by the change in the Discipline on the subject." Dr. Winans said: "It is not important to repeal it, as such repeal might bring on them the charge of a pro-slavery Church."

So "the borders might suffer;" "their union might suffer;" "the trouble already existing might be increased by a change;" "they might be called a pro-slavery Church," etc. These are the reasons. They are not drawn from Scripture, but they are such as, if followed out, would overthrow Christianity.

The foregoing propositions can be sustained by innumerable testimonies drawn from the declarations of leading southern men. And to retain the section on slavery in the Discipline, is at variance with their principles and their practice; and, indeed, their ultimate design. The high pro-slavery party have the dominance in the Church, South; and they will maintain it. Kentucky and Missouri can make only a feeble resistance, not amounting to any thing like a vigorous protest against the united far south. It is true, in order to urge the lay members of Kentucky and Missouri into the new Church, Messrs. Parsons and Boyle, and others, *inofficially*, and *without right or authority*, pledged that the Discipline should not be changed. But they had neither the right nor the power to do so. The South is under no pledge; and those who make pledges may fulfill them if they can. Yet they want nothing said about this slavery question, as it will be time enough to cut the tenth section out at a future time. Let the Church *interpret* the Discipline, and the doctrine on slavery will mean just nothing.

Still, with all their caution, the subject *did come up*, and it will come up unceasingly. There seems to be as much agitation on it at the conference at Petersburg, as at any General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church for the last thirty years, if we except what, in 1844, pertained to Bishop Andrew's case.

4. Innovation, when once commenced in principle, will have no bounds. The new Church began with innovation on Methodism. It determined to change the character of the Episcopacy. The minority assumes all the powers

of the majority, and even outdoes it. The innovators, at the close of the General conference of 1844, determined on their convention. This body laid the foundation, already excavated by novelty, in fresh innovations on the structure of Methodism. Two bishops, liable to ecclesiastical censure, engaged in the work. The leading men cried out at the top of their voice, let changes in sufficient number be made. But a large majority were opposed to many of these changes; and the majority, for the present, conceded, and permitted the minority to rule in this matter, as no change was particularly needful in regulations which the majority were resolved to consider as mere obsolete matters, which were obligatory on no one.

5. The separation or secession of Bishop Soule from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and his uniting with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are facts worthy of notice.

In the proceedings of the conference, we published the speech of Bishop Soule, in which he formally, as he says, "declares his adherence to the Methodist Church, South." We would call it, "his declaration of having, at the Louisville convention, formally withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, by renouncing its jurisdiction, and aiding, officially, in forming a new organization, and properly uniting with it."

We maintain that Bishop Soule, at the Louisville convention, withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and was incapable, after that period, of performing any official episcopal acts in that Church. The reasons are,

*First.* He was a member of the convention. He presided in its deliberations officially, and not as an honorary member. As president he signed its official acts, and was president of the Missionary Society of the new Church, and performed many other official acts which made him, to all intents and purposes, an official bishop of the new Church.

*Secondly.* Bishop Soule, as an official member of the convention, *renounced the jurisdiction* of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and therefore withdrew, separated, or seceded from it. How could he be a bishop, or even a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, after having renounced its jurisdiction?

*Thirdly.* He officially, or at least virtually and practically, joined the new Church. He officially aided in forming it, and performed every official act of an organizer of a new Church. At the convention in 1845, he said "that he would feel himself at liberty" to join the new Church at a future time. At the General conference of 1846, he says, referring to this same act at the convention, "that it was his *purpose* to unite with the new Church;" and that he then "fulfilled the *promise* he made at the Louisville convention." So then he *purposed* and *promised* at the convention, that he would unite with them; yet his evasive language was, "he would feel himself at liberty" to do so.

*Fourthly.* Ever since the convention, he acted as a member and bishop of the new Church. The following are instances: He presided in their conferences after their secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church; he stationed their preachers; he acted in concert with Bishop Andrew, etc. And all his acts, thus performed, are recognized as acts done in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and not as acts done in the Methodist Episcopal Church. So the official journals of the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, declare and pub-

lish. And the Petersburg conference recognize these same acts of Bishop Soule as done for and in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Beside, if Bishop Soule was bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church all this time, why did he leave without appointments those preachers of the Missouri and Kentucky conferences, who remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and refused to secede to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South? Can this question be answered?

The Bishop says, "that he could not serve as bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the views entertained of Episcopacy by the General conference of 1844." And yet, according to his recent declaration, he served under this Church from 1844 to 1846, two full years. This would be strange, indeed, had not so many strange things occurred in the history of Bishop Soule for a few years past.\*

6. As to the report of the Committee on Episcopacy, in regard to the editors of the New York and Cincinnati Advocates, we have some remarks to make. In regard to the *line of separation*, the report condemning the editors, omits that part of the plan which embraces "the thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states." Let any one read the plan, and he will see that it was designed only for the territory embraced in the *thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states*; and the line was to be on the *northern border* of these thirteen conferences. And this line might embrace all of these thirteen conferences in the new connection, or only a part of them, just as the lay members in the conferences, societies, and stations, lying in the thirteen protesting conferences, and no others, would decide. But should these decide to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the line must be south of them. The word conference, in the first article of the plan, is used in reference to the lay members within the bounds of an annual conference.

Indeed, the phraseology in the declaration of the fifty-one delegates, in the preamble to the plan, and in the plan itself, goes to say clearly that the new organization was to be confined to the thirteen conferences in the slaveholding states.

In the declaration of the delegates, made June 5th, we have the phrase, "The delegates of the conferences in the slaveholding states." And the evil complained of was one that would "render a continuance of the jurisdiction of this General conference inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states."†

In the preamble of the plan, we have these declarations: "The select committee of nine, to consider and report on the declaration of the delegates from the conferences of the slaveholding states;"‡ The committee *considered* and *reported* only on the declaration of the "thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states;" and of no other conferences, or parts of them. In the preamble, too, we have the following: "Fifty-one delegates of the body from thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states." We have, also, in the first article of the plan, "That, should the annual conferences, in the slaveholding states, find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed in regard to the northern boundary of such connection."

All the foregoing declarations refer clearly to the limits of the new, distinct, ecclesiastical connection; and from these we establish the following proposition:

*That the "plan of separation" applies only to the territory comprised in the thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states. as their boundaries were defined in 1844, and to no other territory.*

The proofs of this are the following, most clearly found in the words of the declaration, of the preamble to the plan, and of the plan itself:

(1.) The *number* of conferences is confined to *thirteen*. And the names of these are given, as follows:\* Virginia, Kentucky, Missouri, Holston, Georgia, North Carolina, Arkansas, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, South Carolina, Tennessee, and Memphis. On the behalf of these thirteen, and these only, the plan was made.

(2.) The *character* of these conferences, which gives them definite *location*, is plainly declared. They were to be conferences "in the slaveholding states;" and this territory can comprise no conferences in the free states, nor conferences where they are made up of both free and slave territory; and though the protesters, in the Protest, subsequently speak of "portions of the ministry and membership of several other conferences," this was not embraced in the original declaration, nor was it recognized in the plan, because the committee "considered and reported" only on the declaration from, or in behalf of, the thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states. The Rev. Jonathan Stamper, who belonged to the Illinois conference, signed the declaration; but all must admit that he did not do it on behalf of Illinois. Hence he is not counted in the plan. He and fifty-one others signed the declaration, but the *fifty-one* only are counted, and he is omitted in the number, because he was not from a conference in a slaveholding state.

(3.) The declaration, the preamble of the plan, and the plan itself, confine the prospective provision to the thirteen conferences alone, because these alone *called for*, or *asked for* the provisions of the plan. The General conference neither *considered* nor *reported* a plan for any others than the thirteen conferences. The "distinct ecclesiastical connection," "such connection," is confined by the plan (No. 1) to the annual conferences in the slaveholding states; and "the rule to be observed," for defining the "northern boundary" of it is clearly laid down, as not to exceed the limits of the thirteen conferences.

(4.) The "distinct ecclesiastical connection" was to have its "northern boundary" confined within its own limits, and to these alone. Hence, its northern boundary can not go further north than the conferences of Virginia, Holston, Kentucky, and Missouri, and never contemplated the territory north of these.

(5.) The plan had no reference to any part of conferences north of the conferences lying wholly in the slaveholding states. The reasons are, 1. Neither these conferences themselves, nor any one in their behalf, entered any protest or complaint of grievance. 2. The plan neither *considered* nor *reported* any provision for them. They were wholly, in terms, excluded from the provisions of the plan. 3. There was no *need*, either in expressed complaint or in fact, for any provision in behalf of these conferences. The Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, and Ohio

\* W., June 12th. Scraps, IV, p. 634.

† See Journal of 1844, p. 109. ‡ Id., p. 135.

\* See Journal of 1844, p. 109.

conferences, needed no such provision, nor did they ask for any; and, therefore, the plan is inapplicable to them, or to any parts of them.

The plain state of the matter, as to the territory embraced for the utmost limits of the "distinct ecclesiastical connection," or "such connection," "the southern Church," is the following: It was confined to the *thirteen* protesting conferences; it was to be confined to "conferences" wholly "in the slaveholding states;" and the *northern boundary* of such connection, at its utmost limits, was to be confined to the territory in these thirteen conferences in the slaveholding states; but its boundaries might be lessened, as the private members would decide by total majorities in the whole membership of a conference; or by a majority in any northern tier or successive tiers of societies or stations on the northern borders of the northern tier of conferences, and all within the territory of the thirteen conferences.

The rule, then, which gives direction to drawing the line, fixes this line, not within the limits of the non-protesting conferences, but either on the northern border of the thirteen conferences, or some line south of it. For instance: did the majorities of votes of lay members in the Virginia, Holston, Kentucky, and Missouri conferences decide in favor of remaining in the Methodist Episcopal Church, the border line would then lie on the south side of these conferences; and then all the societies and stations in these conferences would remain with them in the Methodist Episcopal Church. But should any one or more of these conferences decide, by a majority of private members, to "adhere to the Church, South," then the societies on the northern border could choose whether they would remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, or unite with the new Church.

The Committee on Episcopacy, of the Petersburg conference, and the conference itself, in unanimously adopting the report, misapply the first rule of the plan, as we have proved from the declaration, the plan, and the preamble to the plan. The thirteen conferences in the slaveholding states alone comprised the territory to which its provisions apply. Nor is the "whole law of the General conference" embraced in one article of the plan, consisting, as it does, of many articles, as well as a preamble which fixes definitely the application of the rule or rules in the body of the report. The rule applies to the conferences which are *mentioned descriptively*, as to *number, location, and northern boundary*, and referred to by name, from the preamble to the declaration, and in reference only to the conferences making this declaration. The committee considered and reported for no others; and their report, comprising the plan, referred to none others. There was no plan made for the Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa conferences. They asked no plan. They complained of no grievance. And in the few cases to which some in these bounds have manifested a wish or purpose to unite with the new Church, they have been induced to this by officious interference from a distance, rather than from any grievance under which they labored. The interpretation of the plan, in applying its first rule to the non-protesting conferences, shows how far the new Church has already progressed in error; but into which they were seduced by their practice. They first violated the provisions of the plan, and then, as is natural to all transgressors, they *interpreted* the

plan to justify their transgression of its provisions.

7. The border conferences, as we have proved above, do not embrace any of the non-protesting conferences, or any parts of them, as affected by the plan; or, in other words, border conferences do not comprise or refer to the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, or Iowa conference, or any conferences north of these. The border conferences are, Virginia, Holston, Kentucky, and Missouri. For the sake of convenience, we will mention the last two.

Now, according to the plan, "the following rule shall be observed in regard to the northern boundary of such connection," which is confined to "the thirteen conferences in the slaveholding states."

"All the societies, stations, and conferences adhering to the Church in the south, by a vote of the majority of the members [lay members] of said societies, stations, and conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the Southern Church." Here it is required that a majority of voters of the whole laity of a conference, by stations and by societies, as in circuits, without the interference or dictation of the preachers, must be had before the lay members could unite with the new Church. But if a conference did decide to go to the new Church, the societies on the northern verge, so far as they extend to majorities, have the privilege of remaining in the Methodist Episcopal Church. And this act refers to the private members only, as the ministers are distinguished from the laity. They were those over whom *pastoral care* could be exercised, who could be *organized into Churches or societies*: hence, no act of the preachers in a conference, General or annual, or in convention, can transfer a conference, society, or station of lay members from the Methodist Episcopal Church to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, without a majority of the votes of the lay members of such conference, station, or society; and these votes taken without the interference of preacher or preachers.

That the article, No. 1, of the plan refers to the laity as voting by conferences, societies, and stations, is further plain from the consideration that the article, No. 2, points out the privileges of the ministry in reference to their remaining in the Methodist Episcopal Church, or uniting with the new Church. It is as follows:

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

Thus, article No. 1 of the plan refers to the acts and privileges of the lay members, and article No. 2 points out the privileges of ministers under the plan.

From the foregoing, the following proposition is a clear and undeniable consequence:

*The Kentucky and Missouri conferences have not united with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the basis of the plan of separation.*

Before a conference could join the new Church on the basis of the plan, there must be a "vote of the majority of the members [lay members] of said societies, stations, and conferences." Every station is a society. Every circuit is made up of societies. Societies and stations, or, indeed, societies alone, make up the lay members of a conference. In each society, or



station, the vote should be taken; and we contend by yeas and nays, or, at least, by giving the definite numbers in minorities and majorities; and when these are all collected, the total majority and minority in a conference can be easily determined. Nor will it alter the case, as to the totals in the lay members of a conference, whether each society in a circuit be reported or the whole circuit, as the result will be the same. It will also be the same if they be reported in whole districts. But we contend that each society, or station, must vote separately by itself, however the numbers may be reported also by circuits and districts, in order to make up the aggregate of conferences.

We have not seen the *aggregate yeas and nays*, or the *aggregate numbers* of the Kentucky and Missouri, or of any other conference, by their *stations* and by their *societies*. Where are these yeas and nays of the private members of these two conferences? They have not been produced, and they can not, in our opinion, be produced; and that for this plain reason, they were never taken. The preachers, in their conferences, gave their yeas and nays; but the people, uninfluenced by the preachers, have not done it. Our conclusion, therefore, is fair and necessary, that the preachers of the Kentucky and Missouri conferences have not followed the plan in uniting with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The lay members have not, according to the plan, united with the new Church. And had not the plan been violated by the south in other respects, the Methodist Episcopal Church is bound to acknowledge and treat her members in Kentucky and Missouri as her true members, especially those who claim their unalienable privileges.\*

8. As to the administration of the southern bishops, which the Petersburg conference so fully justifies, we maintain that the Church, South, has both *officially taught* the breach of the plan, and *practically broken* it, administratively. We present this in two propositions, and furnish the proofs:

**PROPOSITION I.** *The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has officially taught the breach of the plan, by her convention, her bishops, her General conference, her editors, annual conferences, and leading ministers.*

(1.) *The Louisville convention has taught the breach of the plan.* On Monday, May 19, 1845, the convention, after Bishops Soule and Andrew had made their declarations of adherence, passed the following resolutions, namely:

"Resolved, That, should any portion of an annual conference, on the line of separation, not represented in this convention, adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, according to the 'plan of separation,' adopted at the late General conference, and elect delegates to the General conference of the Church in 1846, upon the basis of representation adopted by this convention, they shall be accredited as members of the General conference.

"Resolved, That, in the judgment of this convention, those societies and stations on the border, within the limits of conferences represented in this convention, be constructively understood as adhering to the south, unless they see proper to take action on the subject, and in all such cases we consider the pastor of the station, or society, the proper person to preside in the meeting."

We showed above that the plan was made only for the thirteen conferences in the slave-holding states. And, indeed, the convention, in its first resolution on organization, passed May 17, 1845,\* comprise only the thirteen annual conferences in their organization. The phraseology is, "It is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the annual conferences represented in this convention into a distinct ecclesiastical connection." And, again, "We, the delegates of said annual conferences, acting under the provisional 'plan of separation,' adopted by the General conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church *entirely dissolved*, and that said annual conferences shall be, and they hereby are, constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection, under the provisional plan aforesaid."

But while the convention, on the 17th of May, cautiously confine themselves to the plan, and to the thirteen annual conferences, on the 18th, just one day after, lest their work would be incomplete, they extend the provisions of the plan beyond its boundaries, and beat up for accessions to their scheme, by stepping over into the Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, and other conferences. And in all societies where no vote would be taken, these societies must be constructively understood as adhering to the south. This laid the foundation for the subsequent course of their preachers; namely, to prevent all voting of societies, and then place in the new Church all who did not vote. But the plan of the General conference required all the societies to vote. From the foregoing, it is plain that the convention taught to cross the line, and that societies not voting belong to them; the direct contrary of which is true, as all societies on the border, and in entire conferences, belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church, at least till they vote themselves out of it. Hence, the convention taught the infraction of the plan.

(2.) *The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, taught the infraction of the plan.* We refer to Bishop Soule's letter of August 4, 1845, and published in the Western Christian Advocate of August 22, 1845. The other bishops acquiesced in this, and their General conference sanctioned the decision.

(3.) *The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have taught the infraction of the plan.* For proof of this we need go no further than the famous report on the Episcopacy, in which they sanctioned the breach of it as taught by the bishops and the convention.

(4.) *The editors, annual conferences, and leading members of the new Church teach the infraction of the plan.* It were useless to make quotations on this point, as the many selections on the subject that appeared, from time to time, in the Western Christian Advocate prove this beyond doubt.

**PROPOSITION II.** *The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have actually or practically broken the plan.*

Of this we have several cases at this date.

(1.) *The Kanawha district.* Here, in this district, on the entire border between the district and the Holston and Kentucky conferences, there does not adhere, by a majority of votes, a single society to the Methodist Episcopal

\* W., June 26, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 641.

\* W., May 23, 1845.

Church, South. The line is unbroken from end to end. The distance of the Little Kanawha circuit from this border is nearly one hundred and fifty miles. For direct proof of this, see *Western Advocate* of the 19th of May, which contains an official statement from the quarterly meeting conference, which can be relied on, and which we need not republish. In Parkersburg, out of two hundred and one members, one hundred and twelve remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church. We refer to the various articles in the *Western Advocate* on this subject. Bishop Soule positively refused to send Parkersburg a preacher, we learn, but Bishop Andrew went the whole length of infraction. All the territory of this district is without the limits of the plan.

(2.) *Cincinnati* is another case of breach, and so glaring that no further proof is necessary, except to refer to the official account of it by Rev. M. Marlay.\*

(3.) *Westmoreland circuit, Baltimore conference.* The General conference authorized the occupancy of this circuit, although it is north of the line contemplated by the plan.

(4.) *Eastville circuit, Philadelphia conference.* This is another instance in which the plan is greatly violated.

As to the cases of St. Louis and Maysville, it has been heretofore fully shown, from sources that admit not of doubt, that in both these places the privileges of our members, according to the most rigid interpretation of the plan, placed them within the pale of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It were useless to quote from the various vouchers published.

By this anomalous report of the southern General conference, we see that the conference took upon them to decide officially on the official doings of Bishop Soule, from May, 1844, to May, 1846—two years—while he was, according to his profession, and their concession, a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The conference, it seems, commenced trying the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and had the sentence of condemnation embraced in the report; but this was given up, as it was a little *too ultra* to try Bishops Hamline and Morris.

9. As to the state of the plan in May, 1846, the following brief outline will express it with sufficient clearness:

(1.) The plan is viewed by many as unconstitutional, *ab initio*, or *per se*, and such that the General conference had no authority to make.

In our opinion, the General conference did not make it, except to *recommend* or *present* it to the annual conferences for *confirmation*, and to the people for their *reception* or *rejection*, by majority votes of the lay members in conferences and societies.

(2.) The *common*, and, indeed, we may say, the almost *undivided opinion* of the Methodist Episcopal Church is, that the plan, in its relations, connections, or consequences, is unconstitutional; because it involved several things that were unquestionably unconstitutional, such as trials of members, appeals, and the appropriation of funds, as none of these could be changed, except by such votes as require the exercise of constitutional powers; that is, the two-third vote of the General conference, and the three-fourth vote of the annual conferences.

(3.) The plan was never confirmed. It was recommended to the annual conferences, but not confirmed by them.

(4.) The special necessity for it was not found in fact; and had the constitutional votes been given, the want of the reason for it would render it of no authority.

(5.) The principal conditions of it have been violated by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and are in process of violation.

The instances we have already given are sufficient. These acts were committed without provocation or cause from the authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, whether bishops, presiding elders, or pastors, as it is notorious that no practical acts of infraction have been resorted to by any of the officaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was only when the reason for the separation was not found, when doctrines subversive of the plan were taught by the south, or when practical infractions of the plan took place, that the officaries and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church contended that the Church can not be held to expressed or implied stipulations on her part, when the other party, both doctrinally and practically, refused to comply with the corresponding stipulations on their part. Nothing but *reciprocal* acts can avail in such cases.

10. We furnish the following list of exceptions to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as matters stand at the conclusion of the Petersburg General conference.

(1.) The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is no legitimate division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, nor any part of it, on correct Methodist or Scriptural principles.

(2.) The plan of the General conference, to regulate their treatment of the southern separatists, or seceders, does not *authorize*, *sanction*, or *justify* the separation, withdrawal, or secession, in its present form.

(3.) The present secession is not *authorized* or *sanctioned* by the last General conference. The conference *assented* to their withdrawal from the Church, as she would assent to the withdrawal of a member, or members; and promised they would be treated in a certain way, if they could give a certain *reason* for the thing, which they did not do; and if they would do it in a *certain way*, which they also failed to do.

(4.) The new Church possesses many elements of schism, or which leads to schism.

*In the doings of a minority.* While professing adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, the minority carried their acts to an extent that will be an element of schism in any body; and it will yet divide themselves, unless retracted.

*In measures.* By agitation of the press, unfounded charges against the Church, the proceedings of the convention, and of their General conference.

*In executive administration.* Bishop Andrew is supported in contumacy. Bishop Soule is upheld in disregarding the acts of his colleagues, and the acts of the General conference.

*In the true reason of their conduct.* This is to continue and protect slavery. The separation is not on doctrines, nor on Church polity, but to support a wrong system. It is, therefore, the worst of all separations, or secessions.

(5.) The new Church is *pro-slavery*.

(6.) In the manner of accomplishing the organization, it is of *revolutionary tendency*.

\* W., June 26, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, p. 646.

(7.) Itinerancy, or an effective pastorship, can not long exist in vigorous action under a slaveholding ministry, such as theirs is likely to be.

(8.) The Southern Church, by their proslavery principles and action, in time, will be shut out from access to the slaves and colored people of the south.

These are our filed objections to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. We are satisfied that the southern movement, in its present altered form, is now a very different thing from what at first it professed to be, and was presented to the General conference of 1844.

11. If the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, be acknowledged by the Methodist Episcopal Church as she wishes, and for the accomplishment of which she has appointed a delegate in the General conference of 1848, the Methodist Episcopal Church must, as we conceive, recognize the following principles and measures, and many others of a kindred nature:

(1.) A minority, after employing all the legitimate privileges of a minority by vote, debate, and protest, may proceed to counteract the doings of the majority, and subvert the entire polity of the Church; and all this under the plea of being still a legitimate part of the Church, and of acting under her sanction and authority.

(2.) One cardinal reason may be alleged as the cause of the separation, while another may be the true cause for the movement. For instance, the plea of necessity may be urged when no necessity exists, in order to prepare the way for accomplishing the object of disruption.

(3.) A bishop under censure, disability, or restraint, may despise or act in defiance of the supreme authority of the Church.

(4.) Another bishop may call into the field the offending bishop, and persuade, yea, authorize him to spurn the decision of the supreme authority, and to disregard the official decisions of the bench of bishops.

(5.) A bishop may, after renouncing the authority of the Church, claim the right to act officially for the renounced Church; nay, even

to act officially *against* it, even to the subversion of its polity, and the disruption of its parts.

(6.) A minority, with or without one or more disaffected bishops, may proceed to act in defiance of the acts of the Church, in forming a legitimate branch of the same Church out of its ruins; and this, too, on the authority of the Church which they have thus disrupted.

(7.) Almost any measures or instrumentalities may be employed in forming the new organization. Editors of the party may publish misrepresentations anonymously; they may vilify the bishops, and all the officials of the Church, editorially or by their correspondents, and the names of the vilifiers may be concealed.

(8.) The civil power has supreme authority to control ecclesiastical matters; or the Church, in ecclesiastical matters, must submit to the decision of the civil power or be guilty of treason.

(9.) The Episcopacy is to be elevated into a prelacy.

(10.) Slavery, as established by law in the United States, is sanctioned by the Bible.

These are some of the principles and measures which must be acknowledged by the Methodist Episcopal Church as the price of fellowship with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and as a reward for subverting herself from her foundations. For if the Southern Church be acknowledged as she wishes, then the Methodist Episcopal Church must recognize the foregoing principles and measures, and others of a kindred nature. And if these be acknowledged, then she must be disrupted by unending revolutions, till her name and being be blotted out of existence, except in the annals of history. If the Methodist Episcopal Church can make all these large concessions as an oblation to slaveholding and secession, the consequences will be told without the aid of prophecy.\*

The foregoing views are given as they were penned at the close of the Petersburg General conference. And the views since that time furnish nothing which could change the state of things. The foregoing objections remain to this day in all their force.

## CHAPTER XL.

### BISHOP SOULE'S LETTERS TO EDITOR OF WESTERN ADVOCATE—SECESSION OF BISHOP SOULE PROVED.

1. On the 12th of June, 1846, and some subsequent numbers, the editor of the Western Christian Advocate reviewed, very plainly, the acts of the convention, and of Bishop Soule with them, as will be seen in the preceding chapter of this work. This review gave uncommon umbrage to Bishop Soule and the south in general. The following sentence gave special offense to the Bishop: "But Bishop Soule has withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, under grave charges, or liable to them. Charges, we learn, were officially laid in against him previous to the convention." The Bishop wrote five letters "To the Rev. Charles Elliott, D. D., editor of the Western Christian Advocate, Cincinnati," and published them in the Nashville Advocate of August 7th, 14th, 28th. Some notice of these letters will be necessary in order to show their historical importance.\*

2. Some notice of the contents of the letters will be proper.

The first letter is filled with strictures in reference to the charges mentioned in our review, and an account of an interview with the editor, expostulating with him on his course.

The second and third letters contain what the Bishop calls documents. The second letter has a notice from Bishops Hedding and Waugh, dated New York, May 27, 1845, requesting Bishop Soule to be present at a meeting of the bishops in New York, on July 2d, at 8 o'clock, A. M. The notice, therefore, was thirty-five days previous to the called meeting. The third letter has a letter from the board of bishops, dated New York, July 3, 1845, giving Bishop Soule an account of the decisions of the bishops, in which it was declared that Bishops Janes and Morris would not attend the southern conferences.

\* For the letters see W., December 4, 1846.

\* W., July 3d. Scraps, IV, p. 684.

The substance of this letter has been given already in these pages.

The fourth letter contains complaints in consequence of our assertion that Bishop Soule had withdrawn, or seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, accompanied with much vituperation of language. This letter, also, contains a copy of Bishop Soule's letter of August 4, 1845, in which he lays down the plan of proceeding by the borders. The fifth letter consists of extracts from the private correspondence of Bishop Morris, which Bishop Soule interpreted as speaking in his favor.

The Bishop professes, in these letters, to have adhered all along to the provisions of the plan; that he had not withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but had been acting as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church from 1844, up to May, 1846. We will now present some of our observations on these letters, from our review of them of December 4, 1846, embracing several points as follows, namely: On the charges against Bishop Soule—his withdrawal from the Church—his recognition by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

3. In regard to the charges concerning which the Bishop complains, it is proper to state that brother Finley drew up charges against Bishop Soule about the last of April, 1845. The charge was "improper conduct," with several specifications. On consulting with Rev. David Young, the charges were never presented, because, in consequence of the presidency of Bishop Soule in the convention, he was considered as no longer of the Methodist Episcopal Church, having, with his associates, renounced its jurisdiction. The charges, therefore, were never presented. We have now a copy of these charges before us, and the specifications referred to—his calling Bishop Andrew to work, his disregarding the decision of the bishops, in aiding and abetting a secession from the Church, and in using language bordering on the profane in declaring that his principles were as firm as the throne of God. Indeed, Mr. Cartwright prepared similar charges in the fall of the same year, and was deterred from prosecuting them only from the consideration that Bishop Soule had ceased to consider himself as belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, as he did not attend the Illinois conference, where the charges would have met him, and would have been prosecuted. The truth is, such has been the course of Bishop Soule that the accusations against him, or rather his acts of maladministration, were in the mouths of every one; and it is surprising that he dreamed of any thing else than that the statements concerning his deeds would be noticed and animadverted on. And we can see no good reason, had he remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church, why he should escape accountability any more than any other officer of the Church. Both private members and preachers, for sowing dissensions or disobedience to the order and Discipline of the Church, after admonition, and persistence in their course, are to be treated as offenders, and expelled from the Church; and the light in which such conduct is viewed and treated by the Church, places them, in regard to Church censure, in the ranks of immoral persons, whether they are otherwise guilty of any direct immoral acts or not. And had Bishop Soule not renounced the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he ought, after admonition, to be *suspended*, as in cases of similar transgressors, from all official privileges in the Church, till next General conference. And

the acts that call for such a decision, are as injurious to the Church as any other acts whatever, and the authors of them can be placed in no other category, as to Church censure, than in that of persons guilty of immorality, or whose conduct can not be borne with. And in this manner the Scriptures teach, "Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them. For they that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Romans xvi, 17, 18. And however, for a time, persons high in authority may screen themselves, under regulations made when the Church never dreamed that any of her bishops should turn out to be subverters of Church order, or, as the apostle says, "cause divisions and offenses," the moral sense of all good men will view acts of schismatic conduct as inseparable from great moral wrong, in consequence, or in design, or in some unaccountable perverseness in those who are the actors. No body of men, associated together, can allow of such conduct as Bishop Soule has pursued, without the utter subversion of their very organized existence.

4. In regard to the withdrawal of Bishop Soule, our position is, that at the Louisville convention he withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church, or ceased to belong to it, and was incapable, after that period, of performing any official episcopal acts in that Church. The proofs of this are the following:

(1.) He was a member of the convention. He presided in its deliberations officially, and not as an honorary member. On page 207 of the "History of the Organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," we have it on record that he officially signed the official Minutes of the convention, in connection with the official secretaries, in the words following: "Joshua Soule, chairman, Thomas O. Summers, secretary, and Thomas N. Ralston, assistant secretary, Louisville, Kentucky, May 19, 1845." And this act of chairmanship was no other than an official presidency of the convention; for the Bishop, in his speech of adherence to the convention, and, as we maintain, to the new Church, speaks of the request of his "PRESIDING OVER THE CONVENTION," and "PRESIDENTIAL DUTIES." And in his speech at the conclusion of the convention, and on many other occasions, he approved of the doings of the convention, without exception; and as fully received them, and was governed by them from the close of the convention to the session of the Petersburg conference, as he has done since the session of that conference. Thus Bishop Soule acted as an official member of the convention, and is personally and officially bound by all the official acts of the convention.

(2.) Bishop Soule, at the time of the convention and afterward, officiated as president of the new Church. The organization of the Parent Missionary Society, under the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, took place on Tuesday, the 20th of May, 1845. The third article of the constitution, which describes the qualifications of the officers of the society, declares: "They [that is the officers] shall be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and be annually elected by the society." On the same day in which the society was organized, Bishop Soule was elected president.\*

\* N., May 30, 1845.

(3.) Beside, the report of the committee on Episcopacy at the Petersburg conference, was unanimously adopted. This report, speaking of the episcopal administration of the southern Bishops—Soule and Andrew—approves of the administration of these two bishops from May, 1844, to May, 1846. Surely, they must mean their administration in and for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. So that Bishop Soule's own General conference decides against him.

(4.) Bishop Soule, as an official member of the convention, *renounced the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church*; and, therefore, withdrew, separated, or seceded from it. How could he be a bishop, or even an elder, deacon, preacher, or private member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, after having renounced its jurisdiction? Was ever the like known in the world that a man who had renounced the jurisdiction, or, in other words, the rightful authority of any Church, comprising its laws, regulations, and entire economy, should still be considered a member of the renounced Church? It is true Bishop Soule and the conventionists use the phraseology, "The jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church," and not the jurisdiction of the Church. If, by the jurisdiction of the General conference, they mean any thing else than the jurisdiction of the Church, such an exposition is a mere evasion.

(5.) Bishop Soule, officially, or, which is the same, virtually, and practically, joined the new Church at the convention. He officially aided in forming it, and performed every official act of an organizer of a new Church. At the convention he said, "I shall feel myself fully authorized, by the plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844, to unite myself with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." At the Petersburg conference he says, referring to this same act at the convention, "That it was his purpose to unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South;" and that he then "fulfilled the promise he had made at the convention." So he *purposed* and *promised* at the convention that he would unite with the new Church. And though he said at the convention he would feel himself *authorized* to unite with the new Church at the next conference, this was, in truth, nothing more nor less than an *actual* and *formal* union, with a *pledge* consisting of *purpose* in his own mind, and a *promise* to them that this purpose would be formally fulfilled at the time proposed, and till that time practically carried out. We place this down as nothing else than an actual, official union on the part of Bishop Soule with the new Church; and so, in all practical and official ways, Bishop Soule so understood it, and so the southern preachers both understood and received it. And this union with the new Church is no other than a withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(6.) Ever since the convention, Bishop Soule has acted as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The following are instances: He presided in their conferences after their secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church—he stationed their preachers—he ordained their elders and deacons—he acted in concert with Bishop Andrew, etc. All these acts, and others of like sort, thus performed, are recognized as acts done in and for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and not as acts done in the Methodist Episcopal Church. So the official journals of the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, declare

and publish. And the Petersburg conference recognize these same acts of Bishop Soule as done for and in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. All the official doings of Bishop Soule, from the convention of May, 1845, to the Petersburg conference of 1846, are acts done in and for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. And as he could not act for both Churches at the same time, his official union with the Church, South, expressed by his own official acts, as above stated, constitute a formal and official withdrawal, secession, separation, or renunciation of the Methodist Episcopal Church. If any man can believe the contrary, let him believe it.

(7.) The plain conclusion from the foregoing is, that Bishop Soule formally withdrew from or ceased to belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Louisville convention. For, inasmuch as he acted as the acknowledged head of that body, and approved of its doings, with the promise and purpose of being formally one with them in May, 1846, and officially and practically one with them till that time, whatever the convention enacted he was bound to adopt. As a member of the convention he renounced the entire jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprising its whole Discipline, which includes its doctrines, General Rules, Church order; he, therefore, renounced submission and accountability to its General conference—he disowned its Episcopacy, its annual conferences, quarterly conferences, modes of trying bishops, elders, deacons, preachers, and private members, etc. Bishop Soule *purposed* and *promised* to belong to another Church, and became an *integral part* of another Church beside the Methodist Episcopal Church. He acted officially for this new Church at and after the convention. And he did not act officially for the Methodist Episcopal Church; but, on the contrary, acted against this Church, and attempted to thrust himself into the presidency of her conferences.

But it now remains, while we are on this point, to show some of the absurdities of Bishop Soule's course, in professing to be a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, after he had renounced its authority, and joined another Church, and acted officially for the new Church.

*First.* It is supremely absurd, that a bishop in one Church would be allowed to exercise his episcopal office in another Church. If he professes attachment to the one, how can he, with any consistency, be the official actor in another? As well might the moderator of a Presbyterian General Assembly assume to himself jurisdiction in the Methodist Episcopal Church, as Bishop Soule. The moderator never acknowledged the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and Bishop Soule renounced it. Both are precisely on the same footing. To mention such an anomaly in the religious world is its confutation. If this were admitted, nothing but confusion would fill the Christian world.

*Second.* As bishop of one Church, he acted for another. Let this be continued, and what confusion will it bring into all sober ecclesiastical order and Church records? In ordaining, the candidate is ordained in one Church, and acts for another. In drawing up parchments, endless confusion will prevail. The Church would, by this process, become a mere mob, where all were usurpers, and no one endowed with definite authority.

*Third.* But look at this *double assumption* in

another light. Its shows its Popish paternity, or near relationship, in many respects. The promoters of double power, of spiritual and temporal, proved it by quoting, "Behold, two swords."

*Fourth.* His course is a daring act of attempted subversion of the Methodist Episcopal Church. With a profession of belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, Bishop Soule would rest within her walls, and by this means aid her enemies and subverters in razing to the foundations the groundwork of the Church, after the overturning of her walls.

*Fifth.* Look at another strange thing in this movement. According to the plan, even had it been ratified, it provides that the "ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in no wise attempt to organize Churches or societies within the limits of the Church, South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein." Bishop Soule professed to be a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and yet he exercises in the Church, South, not only pastoral oversight, but he also organizes Churches and societies, and performs every act that a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, could pretend to do. But this, too, must be authorized by the plan, although in direct contravention to its provisions. If Bishop Soule was a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church at the session of the Missouri conference, in 1845, why did he leave without appointments those preachers of the conference who remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at the same time stationed those preachers who had *seceded* or withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and united with another Church?

5. In regard to the reception of Bishop Soule by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we have all along maintained that since the convention, Bishop Soule had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and such should be his designation on the Minutes. And the thing was so plain that the editors of our ensuing Minutes did leave off his name. The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, however, still considered Bishop Soule as one of their body, even after the convention, till he would declare himself united with the new Church by presiding in their conferences, or by such other official acts or declarations as would decide more fully his course, in the absence of any manly, open, and candid avowal from his own mouth or pen. Here is the precise difference between us and the bishops of our Church. They looked for a more open declaration from Bishop Soule after the convention, before they would pronounce him withdrawn. We thought we had enough to form our opinion and make our declaration, and argue the good cause of the Methodist Episcopal Church, without a single word more.

Accordingly, our bishops, in pursuance of their honest and charitable opinion concerning Bishop Soule, kindly invited him to meet them, expecting no doubt that, by this means, they would have an opportunity of knowing which Church he would choose to belong to. And this is all that is contained in their notice dated May 27, 1845, which is one of the "documents," concerning which we have heard so much, but means no more than as we have stated above.

But the other "document," dated July 3, 1845, and signed by Bishops Hedding and

Janes, as chairman and secretary of the episcopal board, is a triumphant vindication of our position, and is direct proof against the position of Bishop Soule, and leaves him not one inch of ground to stand on. This document is entirely on our side of the question, and at irreconcilable variance with the practice and the pleas of Bishop Soule. According to this it will be seen that our bishops decided, that as bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church they were *amenable* to their General conference, and would not be justified in acting for the new Church as Bishop Soule had done. From the two papers it appears:

(1.) That our bishops would not consider themselves justified in presiding in conferences represented in the Louisville convention.

(2.) Their reasons for this are, that the convention decided that the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church over the conferences represented in the convention was entirely dissolved, and that they formed themselves into a new and distinct Church. That is, our bishops could not preside in conferences where the jurisdiction of our Church was rejected, and another jurisdiction created and acknowledged; and that, for the same reason, Bishop Soule could not preside in these conferences, as a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(3.) That bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, acting under the authority of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and amenable to the General conference of that Church, could not preside in conferences represented in the Louisville convention.

(4.) That the plan of episcopal visitation agreed on at the close of the last General conference was annulled, and another plan made.

(5.) The bishops took no action relative to Bishop Soule's course, leaving it with himself to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, by presiding in her conferences, or to unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by presiding in her conferences; and should he see fit to withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church, by presiding in the southern conferences, they wisely provided for the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the services of Bishop Morris.

But Bishop Soule wades through the decisions of the bishops, and sets them aside with as little ceremony as he did their decisions when he called Bishop Andrew to work, and afterward spurned the provisions of the plan. Our bishops thought it would be *unjustifiable* in any or all the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to preside in conferences represented in the convention.

In short, if we consider the official decision of the bishops, as published in the Western Christian Advocate of July 18, 1845, and also the letter to Bishop Soule, both of which bear the same date of July 3, 1845, we must conclude, that the bishops considered the act of presiding in the conferences represented in the convention, as a withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church; and that, therefore, after Bishop Soule had presided in these conferences, he was considered by our bishops as no longer one of their colleagues.

Since the presidency of Bishop Soule in the conferences represented in the Louisville convention, by the two documents under consideration, our bishops disown Bishop Soule as one of their colleagues. But still he persists, in as determined opposition to their decision as to

the editorial course of the editor of the Western Christian Advocate, to claim the prerogative of bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Furthermore, in the "Minutes of the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from May to December, 1845, New York: published by G. Lane, and C. B. Tippet, for the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the conference office, 200 Mulberry-street; J. Collord, Printer, 1846," the list of "Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church," has not the names of Joshua Soule and James O. Andrew, in the number of bishops. The Minutes are furnished by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and we infer the names of Joshua Soule and James O. Andrew were omitted by our bishops from the list of bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, because our bishops considered them as withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, or that they were no longer bishops of this Church.

6. In regard to the plan, its extent and boundaries, a few words may be said. Bishop Soule, in his fourth letter, quotes a "document" of his own making, dated August 4, 1845, and published a few weeks after in Western Advocate. In this Bishop Soule contends to occupy territory never embraced under the provisions of the plan, in whole or in part; for instance, the territory in the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburg, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa conferences; not one inch of which was ever contemplated or provided for in the plan.

In the Western Christian Advocate of June 26, 1846, we proved from unquestionable authority the following propositions:

"That the plan of separation applies only to the territory comprised in the thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states, as their boundaries were defined previous to, and

at, the beginning of the General conference of 1844; and to no other territory."

"That the northern boundary of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its utmost limits, was to be confined to the territory in these thirteen conferences in the slaveholding states; and the rule fixes the line, not within the limits of the non-protesting conferences, but either on the northern border of the thirteen conferences, or some line south of this."

"That the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, HAS OFFICIALLY TAUGHT the breach of the plan, by her convention, her bishops, her General conference, her editors, annual conferences, and leading ministers."

"That the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have actually broken the plan in the Kanawha district, Cincinnati, and several other places."

"That neither the bishops nor presiding elders of the Methodist Episcopal Church, have violated the plan in any one instance; but they have scrupulously carried out the official decisions on this subject by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

Bishop Soule was guided solely by his own law and not by the plan, or the decisions of our board of bishops. Hence, after our bishops, in 1845, had supplied the Cincinnati stations, Bishop Andrew appointed preachers to a Southern Church in Cincinnati, which had no previous existence in the Methodist Episcopal Church, but was formed expressly for the south. The Kanawha district, too, Bishop Hamline, in 1845, supplied with preachers. But Bishop Andrew shortly after sent southern preachers. In September, of 1846, Bishop Morris supplied fully the same district. Just three weeks after, Bishop Soule formed a new district within the Kanawha district, and supplied it with preachers, thus putting the finishing stroke on the plan.

## CHAPTER XLI.

### SOUTHERN BISHOPS VS. OUR BISHOPS.

1. ALTHOUGH Bishop Soule's letters addressed to the editor of the Western Advocate, as presented in the preceding chapter, singled out the editor as his opponent, the principal source of disturbance was that the administration of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church were in opposition to that of the southern bishops. The southern bishops, as we have seen, paid no regard to the plan, while our bishops observed scrupulously all its provisions. Thus, every-where on the border the southern bishops were sending preachers to minorities, and interior societies, while our bishops did no such thing. But such were the misinterpretations of this state of things, and the evil influence of it on the interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that her bishops, after a delay of several months, were compelled to declare their sentiments and course anew on this subject.

2. Accordingly, in pursuance of previous arrangement, the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in Philadelphia, on Wednesday, March 3, 1847. The following is their

own authentic publication of their proceedings:

"Philadelphia, Wednesday, March 3.

"Agreeably to previous arrangement, all the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church met in the Fifth-Street Church in this city.

"Bishop Hedding presided.

"Prayer by Bishop Waugh.

"Edmund S. Janes was appointed secretary.

"EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF WEDNESDAY.

"Bishop Hedding presented for consideration several subjects connected with our administration, relative to border work under the plan of separation, adopted by the last General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, when it was,

"(1.) Resolved, That the plan of separation aforesaid provides for taking the votes by conferences, stations, and societies, and not by circuits, in fixing their Church relations.

"(2.) Resolved, That, in our administration under said plan of separation, we consider the period of taking the vote of conferences, sta-

tions, and societies, is limited: for conferences to the time of their next session after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and for stations and societies to the time of the first session of their respective annual conferences subsequent to said organization.

"EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THURSDAY.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That in our administration we will, under the plan of separation aforesaid, consider the first vote regularly and fairly taken after the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by any border station or society south of the line of separation, as final in fixing its relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church, or to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"(4.) *Resolved, therefore*, That we can send no preacher to any station or society south of the line of separation which, subsequent to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has once received a preacher from said Church, without remonstrance from a majority of its members.

"(5.) *Resolved, also*, That when a border station or society north of the line of separation has once received a preacher from the Methodist Episcopal Church—subsequent to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South—without remonstrance from the majority of said station or society, it fixes finally the Church relation of said station or society to the Methodist Episcopal Church, even if it were to be admitted that the 'plan of separation' allows stations and societies north of said line to vote on the subject of Church relationship.

"(6.) *Whereas*, the Discipline says, 'Virginia conference shall be bounded on the east by the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean,' and 'Philadelphia conference shall include the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia'—the Chesapeake Bay, an arm of the ocean, being between them—therefore,

"*Resolved*, That in our administration we will regard the 'Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia' as not being 'border' work in the sense of the 'plan of separation.'

"(7.) *Resolved*, That, from the information before us, after mature consultation, we agree in the opinion that the Kanawha district, Ohio conference, under the 'plan of separation,' belongs to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that we will govern our administration accordingly.

"EXTRACTS FROM THE MINUTES OF THURSDAY AFTERNOON.

"(8.) *Resolved*, That our administration within the bounds of King George, Westmoreland, Lancaster, and Warrenton circuits, Baltimore conference, be governed by the principle laid down in our first resolution, and that we feel obliged to furnish preachers to said circuits as heretofore, if it be practicable.

"(9.) *Resolved*, That, as our immediate duties do not require us to speak publicly of other parts of our border work, where difficulties exist, we deem it unnecessary to make known our opinions concerning them at present.

"(10.) *Resolved*, That the extracts selected from the journal for publication be signed by the secretary, and forwarded to the Christian Advocate and Journal.

"As per order, EDMUND S. JANES, *Sec'y.*"

The decisions of the bishops created quite a sensation in the south. Dr. Lee considered the bishops all wrong.\* The editor of the Southern Advocate complained that the bishops infringed the plan by such statements, as well as by their administration.† The editor of the Pittsburg Advocate took his regular middle course in reference to the whole subject, though he congratulated himself that he had not, like Drs. Bond and Elliott, decided against the validity of the plan.‡ Rev. Leo Rosser, of the Virginia conference, in two long articles in the Richmond Advocate, opposed with all his might the doings of our bishops.¶ Rev. A. L. P. Green was exceedingly urgent that the southern bishops would confer with our bishops and adjust the matter.§ But we may ask here two questions: How could Bishop Soule and his associates ask our bishops to confer with them, when they had, ever since May, 1844, acted for themselves, in defiance of the official decisions of the Methodist Episcopal Church? And we may also ask, how could the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church ask for cooperation from the southern bishops, inasmuch as the convention, the southern General conference, and the southern bishops had already committed themselves in principle and practice in the breach of the plan?

And, indeed, the decisions and administration of our bishops declared the nullification of the plan to as great an extent as Drs. Bond and Elliott did. Our bishops felt themselves bound to administer according to it, *as far as practicable*, while it was in being, or up to 1848. Yet their administration now was such, in consequence of the breach of it by the south, that the plan received the sentence of future nullity by their administration. So Dr. Wightman declared. He said, "To all practical intents and purposes, the measures decided on can not fail to upset and nullify the whole deed. Thus it is evident that a collision between the administration of the two connections is unavoidable." Then he calls on the southern bishops to remonstrate publicly against the measures of the Methodist Episcopal Church.¶ Indeed, Bishop Capers already did more than remonstrate. Under date of March 22, 1847, he *decided* in favor of his southern course of the breach of the plan, originating with the convention, and continued by Bishop Andrew up to the present time, as we shall see when we survey this letter of Bishop Capers.

3. Bishop Capers, under date of March 22, 1847, writes a long letter to Rev. S. T. Moorman, presiding elder of Charlotteville district, in which he gives a new interpretation of the plan. He says, accompanied with much elaboration, that the line, according to the plan, is that between the free and slave states, or, in other words, Mason and Dixon's line. Still he prefaces his letter with, "What have we to do with war, border war! It is all of the devil, first and last; a war in which he that fights hardest serves Satan best."\*\* We place extracts of this letter in the documents.††

It is enough to state the fact that Bishop Capers gave such an interpretation to the plan,

\* R., April 1, 1847. Scrap, V, p. 349.

† S., April 9, 1847. Scrap, V, p. 363.

‡ P., April 14th. Scrap, V, p. 370.

¶ R., April 22, 1847. Scrap, V, pp. 427-443.

§ N., April 23, 1847. Scrap, V, p. 416.

¶ S., April 9, 1847. Scrap, V, p. 363.

\*\* S., April 2, 1847. Scrap, V, 355-360.

†† Document, No. 71.



without taking up time to show its manifest absurdity. Dr. Bond reviewed it, however, to great purpose.\*

4. Bishop Soule, on the 16th of April, 1847, publishes a long letter in the Nashville Advocate, giving an interpretation to the plan in accordance with the southern practice, and at variance with the decisions of our bishops.† We will make some extracts from this, and offer some observations. He gives three distinct theories in regard to the import of the plan, and they are as follows:

"*First.* It is the opinion of some—to how great an extent it prevails I know not—that the resolution of the General conference, providing for the adherence of border stations and societies north and south, by majorities, has exclusive reference to stations and societies within the geographical limits of the conferences in the southern organization; and, consequently, can not apply to any station or society within the disciplinary bounds of the northern conferences.

"*Second.* Others, and probably a far greater number, are of the opinion that the provisions of the act embrace border stations and societies equally on both sides of the conference boundaries, and secure the right of discretionary election to both. But they believe that the provision of the act is exclusively applicable to such stations and societies as are *immediately* on the line dividing the conferences.

"*Third.* Different from both these, others are of the opinion that the resolution of the conference is more extensive, adapting its provisions to such circumstances and exigencies as a *sound calculation* might anticipate, and a *prudent policy* provide for. These understand the first resolution of the 'plan of separation' as providing for the boundary of 'a distinct ecclesiastical connection,' in case the annual conferences in the slaveholding states should find it necessary to unite in such a connection; and, consequently, that the boundary between the northern and southern jurisdiction, *in the sense of the General conference*, was contingent, depending, for its confirmation, upon the decision of the conferences in the slaveholding states, with respect to the formation of a southern 'connection.' It is further the opinion of this third class, that, in settling the boundary between the north and south, it was the *intention* of the General conference not to fix *geographical lines* as the boundary, but to adopt a '*rule*' of regulation relative to the line of division, in accommodation to circumstances, which a *prudent foresight* could hardly fail to anticipate, in case the southern 'ecclesiastical connection' should be formed."

Bishop Soule thinks there are but few who hold to the first theory. We believe there are few in the Methodist Episcopal Church who believe differently. And we further say, according to the exact showing of the plan, and the doings of the General conference, there is no room for a different opinion; and the two other interpretations of the Bishop, especially the last, which is also his own, have no foundation in the plan. Hence the recourse of the Bishop to other principles of interpretation, beside the plain, grammatical sense of the words, and the connection in which they stand. Notice how Bishop Soule, while zealous for the *law* and the *letter* of it, brings in other principles of a latitudinarian expediency, to do away both the spirit and the

letter of the instrument. He has recourse to a "*sound calculation*"—"a *prudent policy*"—"the *intention* of the General conference"—"a *prudent foresight.*" By such methods as these, Bishop Soule, Bishop Capers, and the other southern leaders, explain away the letter and spirit of the plan, and make it go on all fours to serve their purposes. But in the great heat of interpretation, the two southern bishops disagree in their interpretation of the plan.

Bishop Capers claims all the slaveholding states for the south, in direct violation of the plan, as we have heretofore fully shown from the document itself; and we are sure no other interpretation can consistently be given it. But then he kindly awards the free states to the Methodist Episcopal Church. But Bishop Soule is not satisfied with such a gloss—he would claim Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Ohio, Pittsburg, Baltimore, and Philadelphia conferences; or as much of them as he could induce to unite with the new Church.

But Bishops Capers and Soule, in their letters, speak long and loud for *peace*. No one has any faith in such professions of *peace*.

As matters now stand, since the decisions of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church have been promulgated, and the decisions of Bishops Soule and Capers conflicting with each other, and with the decisions of our bishops, it is hard to say whether the plan means any thing at all, if southern interpretations are taken into the account.\*

5. Bishop Soule published, in the Nashville Advocate of May 7, 1847, a letter to the Rev. Wesley Montgomery, presiding elder of Guyandotte district, Kentucky conference, dated Nashville, April 30, 1847, in which he endeavors to interpret away the decisions of our bishops, and give such instructions as will serve to obtain as much territory as possible. The letter of Bishop Soule is very long; we must, therefore, content ourselves with noticing its prominent points.†

Our first remark on Bishop Soule's letter, is in reference to his attempt to nullify the official decision of our bishops, by endeavoring to detract from it all official authority. He first suggests two meanings which may attach to the decision of our bishops; namely, whether they acted "in their *official capacity*, as *judges of questions of law*;" or "*prudentially*, to harmonize their administration, amid conflicting opinions and acknowledged difficulties." He settles down in the latter sentiment; and thus sets at naught their decisions. For if their action be only a matter of *prudence*, without any regard to principle, then Bishop Soule's *ex cathedra* decision must entirely counteract the unofficial decision of our bishops; and the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church must be put down as inconsistent. But he gives four reasons for his interpretation.

As to his first, "that the resolutions of our bishops are too indefinite and hypothetical for a judicial decision," nothing is more untrue. These decisions unequivocally say that Bishop Soule and his colleagues have infringed the plan, in sending preachers into several places within the bounds of the Ohio, Baltimore, and Philadelphia conferences. Nothing is more free from indefiniteness and hypothesis than this very decision. Another thing is clear as the sun—that the Louisville convention and the Petersburg General conference, by authorizing infrac-

\* C., April 21st. Scraps, V, pp. 398-402.

† N., April 16, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 384.

\* W., April 7, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 471.

† See the letter in N., May 7th. Scraps, V, p. 467.

tions of the plan, were condemned by our bishops in so doing.

As to his second remark, whether the decision of our bishops is at fault, in not deciding whether the provisions of the plan had any application to societies and stations within the bounds of the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Pittsburgh, and the Ohio conferences, we remark that no such decision would be of the least value. The provisions of the plan clearly and unequivocally apply only to the territories of the protesting conferences, wholly in the slaveholding states, and had no relevancy to any conferences in the free states, or to any conferences made up of free and slave territory. The plain, grammatical construction of the plan shows that every inch of the non-protesting conferences occupied by the south is a glaring infraction of the plan. And why should our bishops go to explain that which was as clear as noonday?

As to the third reason of Bishop Soule, or what he calls the *new* mode of action by our bishops, we remark that there are *new circumstances* now in being, which did not exist when the New York meeting was held. There have been whole series of *new measures* employed by the southern actors; namely, General conference, annual conference, editors, bishops, etc.; and a mere circumstantial regulation, adopted by the new circumstances of the case, is not to be wondered at, but is a matter of course.

As to the fourth complaint, that our bishops did not consult the southern bishops before they decided, we reply: this shows their wisdom, their peaceable character, and other good qualities. It would be unwise to consult men after they had given so many proofs already of their utter disregard for the official decisions of our bishops, while both were bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But, now, to consult bishops of another Church, how the affairs of the Methodist Episcopal Church are to be managed, would be strange indeed. It would be like a man of peaceable temper, consulting the invader of his rights and property how he could preserve his rights, and secure his property from the very invader who encroaches on both. Beside, how could our bishops have a peaceable or pleasant interview with the southern bishops, employed as they were in constant acts of encroachments on the Methodist Episcopal Church? Finally, Bishop Soule ought to be the last to make such a complaint. Did he consult our bishops, when he contravened their decisions, in calling Bishop Andrew to work, and in many other acts pursuant to that overt measure? No such thing.

Another remark is proper here. Bishop Soule treats our bishops as if they were mere children, or even indiscreet novices. Our bishops meet, decide, and carry out this decision in their administration, in reference to the occupancy and supply of their regular work, in stationing preachers within the bounds of those conferences, whose boundaries are unequivocally fixed in our Discipline; and yet all this is unofficial in his view. Beside, he ascribes to them a shuffling course, in supposing, or rather believing they acted, not from principle, or from any fixed judgment of their own, but "*prudentially*," to harmonize their administration, amid conflicting opinions and acknowledged difficulties.\* We rejoice that our bishops are men of a very different temper and principles from those which this shifting policy would suppose.

As to *minorities*, Bishop Soule more than intimates that they had better be supplied by those whom they prefer. He says: "I should think it far better for such minorities, being on the borders, to receive preachers from the Church to which they desire to adhere, provided they believe themselves able to support them." Indeed, this has been the *practice*, as far as we can learn, in all, or nearly all the places occupied by the new Church within the bounds of the Ohio, Baltimore, and Philadelphia conferences. And this plan was pursued every-where by Bishop Soule's wise *policy*; for policy is potent. It may be made constitution, law, and every thing else, when a spirit of innovation becomes dominant.

It is true, this should be done *peaceably*. By all means. Yea, peaceably, with a mob to carry on the peaceable work. The Western Christian Advocate must be prohibited by southern influence, very peaceable to be sure, but under the control of the mob of the Southern Church, which drove the Rev. Mr. Dillon from his pastoral charge. All this must be done peaceably, as it would be wrong to compel the mob, by resistance to their will, to do the thing by force, when it should be done by a peaceable submission at the mouth of the cannon, or at the point of the bowie-knife.

But we forbear. The Rubicon is passed. The barriers are all broken down. Our bishops keep within the rigid letter of the plan. The southern bishops despise and trample on every provision in it. All the territory of the slaveholding states, in the bounds of the Ohio, Pittsburgh, Baltimore, and Philadelphia conferences, is already occupied by the south, in purpose; and that, too, by the official decision of Bishop Capers, according to the plan. Measures are in process to carry out this, with as little delay as possible; and as much of the free states as can be transferred, is to be added. The spirit of conquest is now at work; namely, "keep the slave territory in its proper state, and chain all the free territory that can be annexed to the slavery dominion." Where this can not be done by majorities of societies, it can be done by minorities.

Bishop Soule spoke of "official journals and annual conferences," meaning editors Boud and Elliott, and the Ohio, North Ohio, and Illinois conferences. But in the issue it was found that the General conference, in 1848, found no other possible mode of adjusting matters than as these editors substantially taught. And the other northern conferences never materially differed from the conferences mentioned above.

In regard to the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they were not moved from their Christian course by all the letters that Bishops Soule, Capers, and Andrew could write.

The missiles of the southern leaders, calculated to place them and some editors in an unpleasant antagonism, signally failed. For a time there was some difference of opinion between the editors alluded to and the bishops; but the stubborn facts of the events, when fairly brought out, left no room for either difference or dispute, as the proceedings at Pittsburg General conference fully showed.\*

\* W., May 21, 1847. Scrape, IV, pp. 499-502.

## CHAPTER XLII.

## THE BORDERS—INFRACTIONS—THE PLAN.

1. In the chapter before the last we have seen with what pertinacity Bishop Soule claimed to be a constitutional bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from May, 1845, to May, 1846, while he acted officially in all respects for another Church, as well as injuriously against the Methodist Episcopal Church. Our review of his course, as a part of the history of the times, presents, in our opinion, this subject in its proper light. In our last chapter we have seen, from the published official letters of Bishops Soule and Capers, that the southern bishops and Church proceeded practically, as well as doctrinally, to infract the provisions of the plan; even allowing it had received the votes of the annual conferences, confirming it. We will now proceed to show, historically, as matters of fact, the actual infractions, ranging the cases occurring or attempted under the several annual conferences in which the occurrences took place. These conferences are the Philadelphia, Baltimore, Ohio, and Missouri. We may here remark, that no portions of these conferences could be severed from the Methodist Episcopal Church, according to the plan, and there can not, therefore, be the least plea for the encroachments made on them, on the plea that the plan justified it.

2. We will commence with the Philadelphia conference, and take each of the places where the infractions have been made into special consideration.

Northampton circuit is one of those invaded by the south. It is named after a county on the Eastern Shore of Virginia. Two societies of this circuit, claiming to be border societies, though the Chesapeake Bay, thirty-five miles wide, divides it from the Virginia conference, voted by a numerical majority of one or two, to unite with the new Church. Bishop Andrew sent them a preacher from the Virginia conference. On Saturday and Sabbath, April 17 and 18, 1846, Rev. John Early held his second quarterly meeting at Capeville, for this circuit. After the sacrament of the Lord's supper, as Mr. Brickhouse, who was present, writes, under date of April 24th, Mr. Early lectured the people on the division of the Church.\* He pointed out the danger to the south of admitting northern preachers to their pulpits; that they were abolitionists, and would sow dangerous opinions among the slaves. And this was said in reference to the preachers of the Philadelphia conference, who were never accused, or even suspected, for a period of over sixty years, of teaching any thing but what tended to peace and harmony. The effect of this speech, on the baser sort, was to prepare and excite them to mob violence; while the sober and peaceable citizens were of a different mind.

Accordingly, on Sunday, 12th of July, "the Rev. Mr. Gray, preacher in charge of Northampton circuit, when about to commence the morning services in the Salem church, was assailed by

a mob, seized in the pulpit, and forcibly taken out of the pulpit and church. On Monday he went to Eastville, the seat of justice for the county, the court being then in session; he was met then and there by the mob, and driven away from the seat of justice, without redress or protection. He left the county, his life being considered in danger if he remained. The alleged cause for this violence was, that he was a northern preacher."\*

In pursuance of previous notice, a public meeting was held at the court-house of Accomac county, August 31, 1846, "to take into consideration the serious evils to be apprehended from the adherents of the Methodists of this county to the Philadelphia conference, and to urge upon them the necessity of their connecting themselves with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." The president of the meeting, the Hon. George P. Scarborough, remonstrating with the Methodists, upon their present position, "impressing upon them the dangers which may result to the safety of the people, and calling upon them, as pious, intelligent men, to sever their connection from the Philadelphia, and attach themselves to the Virginia conference."

In the report of the committee adopted by the meeting, a brief survey of the steps in the Church controversy is given, and the Methodists of Accomac are entreated to unite with the new Church. The committee express their deep regret, that all the Methodist societies of Accomac, with a solitary exception, still continue to the Methodist Episcopal Church. This they say is calculated to exert an alarming influence on their slaves. The subject has long since reached their ears; they already look on the Methodist Episcopal Church as their friends, and upon those in favor of the Church, South, as their enemies. A spirit of dissatisfaction is the result of such a state of things; and the transition from this feeling to that fanatical spirit which excited the Southampton insurrection, is too easy not to be justly appreciated. The Methodists of the county are actuated by good motives in the course they are pursuing. They compose a large and highly-respectable class of citizens, are as patriotic, and as devoted to the cause of peace and the welfare of society, as any other portion of the people; nevertheless, the inevitable tendency of their present position is of the most dangerous and alarming character. The committee, then, "respectfully ask the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this county, to take it into consideration, and to restore peace and a feeling of security to this community, by severing their connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, north, and uniting with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." A committee was then appointed to prepare an address to the people and the Methodist societies in Accomac, in conformity with these views.†

\* C., June 17, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 678; also, August 5, 1846, Vol. XX, p. 206, col. 6; and C., November 13, 1846. Scraps, V, p. 120. C., May 5, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 455.

\* C., August 5, 1846, Vol. XX, p. 206, col. 6; also, C., May 5, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 455.

† R., September 24, 1846. Scraps, V, pp. 84-87.

Dr. Lee, in publishing the report in his paper, goes all lengths in eulogizing the principles and measures of the report. In his paper,\* containing this report, he has an article headed, "The workings of public opinion," in which he says: "The reflecting people of the slaveholding states will ultimately arrive at the same conclusions as to the jurisdiction of an abolitionist Church over their neighbors and slaves. It is an enormity that enlightened public sentiment *can not* and *will not* tolerate. Light is all that is wanted to bring the whole population of every slaveholding state to the conviction that they can not coalesce with abolitionism, either in the ministry or membership of the Church; and they dare not subject themselves to the ecclesiastical oversight and jurisdiction of those who maintain and propagate its principles." He then proceeds to unmeasured eulogies on the principles of the committee. The proceedings are temperate in his view. "With the present race of Methodists, Methodism must die out of Accomac if they now persist in their adherence to a Church so justly chargeable with abolitionism."

The citizens of Accomac, composing the meeting, assume to think for others, and compel them to receive creeds, and to submit to ecclesiastical authority, without any regard to conscientious scruples or views. It is, to all intents, arbitrary dictation, threatened by the open violence of a mob, in a neighboring county, acting with the same views and prejudices. On the absurdity and wickedness of the course mentioned above we need not dwell. The matter was ably exposed at the time by Dr. Bond, in two powerful articles.†

The comments of Dr. Lee on the proceedings of the meeting at Accomac were illiberal and dangerous—perhaps more so than the most ultra views of the ultra-abolitionists. The Rev. G. M. Keese, on November 7, 1846, wrote an article for the Richmond Advocate, showing the dangerous tendency of the views of Mr. Lee; but these could not find a place in its columns. The article was, however, published in the New York Advocate.‡ Mr. Keese says, "When the men of this world, and those high in *civil authority*, undertake to call public meetings to lecture professors of religion upon the subject of their Church relations, it is time for every man's heart to be stirred who appreciates the liberties secured by the blood of our ancestors, and intends to hand them down to posterity." He then proceeds to state that the ostensible object of Mr. Lee's editorials is two-fold: "First. To excite the fears of those Methodists residing in slaveholding districts, who maintain their adhesion to the Methodist Episcopal Church; and, *Secondly*. So to agitate the community in the midst of which they live as to render their social, as well as ecclesiastical, relations unpleasant. This you strive to accomplish by multiplied appeals to the *passions*, and references to that subject upon which a southern community is more excitable than upon any other. It is true, you disclaim any intention to excite, but the *facts* are against you." And, in confirmation of the assertion, he quotes Mr. Lee's own words.

Mr. Lee had said, in his eulogy on the report of the committee, "It is the duty of all who have the spirit of Christ to win their sinful

neighbors to the fellowship of Christ. They can not do this if they remain in, or enter into, associations, or engage in enterprises, that bring them in open conflict with the interests, prejudices, opinions, and feelings of those with whom you live; therefore they must enter into associations, and engage in enterprises, that conform to the interests, prejudices, passions, and opinions of their ungodly neighbors." To this Mr. Keese replies in these words:

"Hear, O, heavens! Give ear, O, earth! This is the logic, this is the morality, this is the teaching of southern Methodism, as sent out to the world by one of its officials! It is not the morality of the Bible—it is not the Methodism taught us by our fathers! No: as far from it as Christ from Belial. And you further tell us that, unless this be done, Methodism must become extinct with this generation. May it go down quick into oblivion, if its perpetuity is to be purchased at so dear a sacrifice! Christianity knows nothing of such dastardly policy. She assumes the position her Author has assigned her, and maintains it. She erects her standard, and labors to bring public opinion up to it, and never inclines it to gain the applause of earth." He then remarks, under date of November 7, 1846, "Not quite two years ago I took occasion to remark to several members of the conference, that if pro-slavery views increased in the same ratio for ten succeeding years as they had done for the one preceding, there would be regular slave-traders in the conference; and I am informed, by a member of the conference, that this thing actually exists." In conclusion, he charges on Mr. Lee, and others with him, efforts to exclude from the people of the south those papers which maintained the proper position of the Methodist Episcopal Church.\*

The meeting convened in Accomac county, with Judge Scarborough at their head, did publish their pamphlet, containing an "Address to the People of the county of Accomac," comprising the principles of their report. Dr. Bond, in five successive numbers of his Advocate,‡ reviewed the pamphlet, addressing his articles "To the Hon. Judge Scarborough, of Accomac county, Virginia." No more able production than this issued from the press. Dr. Bond maintained the consistency of the course of the General conference in reference to Bishop Andrew and Mr. Harding, and triumphantly exposed the unsound principles and false reasoning of the pamphlet.

On November 29, 1846, Rev. Mr. Hargis, of the Philadelphia conference, was mobbed at Guilford, Accomac county, while preaching on the holy Sabbath, by those who professed to be in the interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as stated in the New York Advocate, by one who was present.‡

Bishop Capers, under date of March 22, 1847, addressed a letter to Rev. Samuel T. Moorman, presiding elder of Charlottesville district.¶ The Bishop said, "What have we to do with war, border war! It is all of the devil;" and, with many other things, maintained that "state lines, and not conference lines," were meant by the plan. This letter gave further

\* C., November 25, 1846. Scraps, V, p. 134.

† C., January 20 and 27, and February 3, 10, and 17, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 222-246.

‡ C., February 24, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 285.

§ S., April 2, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 355.

\* R., September 24, 1846. Scraps, V, p. 63.

† C., November 11 and 18, 1846. Scraps, V, pp. 104-110.

‡ C., November 25, 1846. Scraps, V, p. 134.

encouragement to breaches of the plan, especially as the Bishop now converts it into a DEED of separation; and in its tendency it was well calculated to encourage the mobs. Dr. Bond reviewed it with great plainness and force, exhibiting its fallacies and new positions.\*

The opponents of the Methodist Episcopal Church did not stop here. At the court of Accomac county, on the 29th of March, 1847, the grand jury returned into court with a presentment against the "New York Christian Advocate and Journal," because "it advises, and is calculated and intended to persuade, persons of color, within this commonwealth, to make insurrection or rebel, and denies the right of masters to property in their slaves, and inculcates the duty of resistance to such right, contrary to the statute in such cases made and provided." The presentment was sent to all the postmasters in the county.† The jury, in their indiscreet haste, misnamed the paper, calling it the "New York Christian Advocate and Journal," in the place of the Christian Advocate and Journal. After all, the presentment did not amount to much; for the public never heard much of this farce after the first ebullition of fanaticism had settled down so as to leave room for the exercise of common sense. The southern papers pass the matter over with no note of disapprobation. The editor of the Nashville Advocate barely says, "What the result will be we can not know before the time."‡ The Richmond Advocate said, "Dr. Bond, we doubt not, is in trouble. His paper has been presented, by the grand jury of Accomac county, Virginia, as incendiary and dangerous publication, and its circulation prohibited. Postmasters in the county are not permitted, under penalty of the law, to give it out from their offices."||

The Philadelphia conference sent a conciliatory pastoral address to the societies in Accomac and Southampton circuits. They state that the bishops, in their resolution, passed March 4th, previous, declare that the Philadelphia conference is not a border conference in the sense of the plan of separation; that the charge of abolitionism against the conference is without foundation; and they refer to the action of their last session as proof.§ We give the entire address in the documents.¶

In the month of May, 1847, attempts were made by a mob to drive away the preacher, but without success, as the Church members were firm to their purpose, and, withal, more numerous than their persecutors, so that the assailants failed of success.\*\* In the month of June they had a quarterly meeting on Accomac circuit, which was held without molestation, and with great profit.†† Such was the state of things before Dr. William A. Smith made his inflammatory speech in Northampton, in July, 1847.‡‡ Since that the persecution burned more fiercely, and one of the preachers was advised by the brethren to leave his circuit.|||| Dr. Smith, in his lecture, represented the Methodist Episcopal Church as abolition, or, as the

term was used, incendiaries, revolutionists, and traitors; while he could not but know that much of the action of the Church was in opposition to all such measures, as well as to the ultra measures of Dr. Smith himself, and those of his school, who headed the southern secession.

3. We now proceed to the invasion of the Baltimore conference by the authority of the Petersburg General conference, and by the subsequent administration of the southern bishops, presiding elders, preachers in charge, and lay members.

The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1846, as we have already shown, formally voted authority to the Virginia annual conference to send preachers to the Westmoreland circuit, within the bounds of the Baltimore annual conference. Since the rising of the Petersburg General conference, the Virginia conference, acting on the resolution of the General conference, sent preachers not only to Westmoreland, but also to three other neighboring circuits in the Baltimore conference; namely, King George, Lancaster, and Warrenton. The Baltimore conference, at its session a few months previous, pledged itself, in its pastoral address, not to withdraw its jurisdiction from these circuits. The proceedings at Northampton, Accomac, Cincinnati, and Parkersburg, convinced the Baltimore brethren that there was but little respect for the plan by the southern bishops and preachers when enlargement of their territory was in question.\* The Baltimore conference sent one preacher to Warrenton, and discontinued the names of King George, Lancaster, and Westmoreland, and substituted the name of *Northern Neck*, and sent three preachers on this circuit, which comprised all the parts of the former circuits which remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church; while the Virginia preachers took pastoral charge of the seceders.† The Virginia conference occupied any territory they could obtain, whether of minorities or majorities, border or interior.

The Baltimore conference, at its session held at Fell's Point, Baltimore, in 1848, adopted a report on memorials, dated March 22, 1848, which is an able paper, independent, Christian, and peaceable, though firm. Stafford Court-house, Brooks's School-house, and Walnut Branch, petitioned the conference to be set off to the south. The committee state that no part of the Baltimore conference, according to the plan, could be attached to the new Church; and, as the object of it was one of peace, it ought not to be used as an instrument of contention and warfare. In other hands than the south the plan might be effectual, but it has been wielded as a weapon of strife and division. The report then states, "That disorganizing influences have been scattered along the southern border of our territory, from the region beyond the Rappahannock—influences of authority, such as could not only give countenance, but pledge aid and protection, though the strife engendered should involve the whole work in confusion and disorder. The fraternal regards of Christians have all been forgotten or sacrificed in the repeated aggressions upon our societies which have lately transpired. It is high time that we announce to our people and

\* C., April 21, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 398.

† C., April 21, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 402, 476, 487.

‡ N., May 7, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 478.

§ R., May 13, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 487.

¶ C., April 14th. Scraps, V, p. 374; and 24th. Scraps, V, p. 376. ¶ Document, No. 72.

\*\* C., May 19, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 490.

†† C., November 3, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 683.

‡‡ C., October 6, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 830-834.

|||| C., November 3, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 683.

\* C., January 13, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 208.

† R., April 1, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 352; C., April 7, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 361.

the world that, while we, through our Episcopacy, carefully confine ourselves to a strict construction of the plan, which will not admit an incursion into southern territory, the Church, South, through its Episcopacy, has, in more than one instance, thrown down every safeguard, and embroiled, or sought to embroil, almost every society from the Chesapeake to the Blue Ridge, from the Blue Ridge to the Alleghanies."

The three following resolutions were adopted, as giving their meaning of the plan and its provisions:

"(1.) *Resolved, by the Baltimore annual conference, in conference assembled,* That the line of separation between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as provided for by the plan, is immovably fixed upon the northern boundary of the thirteen protesting conferences, as it existed at the time the plan was formed; and charges that were interior then remain so at the present time.

"(2.) *Resolved, etc.,* That Leesburg, Stafford Court-house, Ebenezer, and Brooks's School-house, in Stafford circuit; Rectortown and Salem, in Loudon circuit, Potomac district; Harrisonburg, in Rockingham district; Elk Run, in East Rockingham circuit, Rockingham district; as well as all other appointments not bordering on the line, as defined in the above report, are interior charges in the sense of the plan of separation; and, therefore, their connection with the Virginia, or any other conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is revolutionary, to all intents and purposes, and imposes on us the necessity of a firm and steady resistance.

"(3.) *Resolved, etc.,* That the aggressions recently made on the southern territory of our conference, by ministers of the Virginia conference, are without legal authority; and we do, therefore, most solemnly protest against them as in violation of the provisions of the plan of separation, and derogatory to the friendly relations that should always exist between different denominations of Christians."\* We will place the entire report on record.†

4. The Ohio conference became as obnoxious to the south as the Baltimore or Philadelphia conferences. This conference rejected the participation of Bishop Soule in its presidency; was inflexible in adhering to original principles, and uncompromising in reference to southern principles and measures.

The true state of the Kanawha district is fully presented, by a report of a committee of the Kanawha circuit, by a resolution of the quarterly conference, May 30, 1846. The vote was unanimous to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, with the exception of one member. The Kanawha district begins at the mouth of Big Sandy river, ascends it forty-five miles, thence along the south-east extremities of Logan, Cole River, and Fayette circuits, and none others, as they touch the Kentucky and Holston conferences. In all this distance not a single society adheres to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by a majority of votes. The line is unbroken from end to end. The distance of the Little Kanawha circuit from this border is near *one hundred and fifty miles*. Between this circuit and the border

there are five circuits adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church by majorities, except Ripley, in the center of the district, which was inveigled by the preacher, who seceded to the south. Parkersburg reported to the Ohio conference, in 1845, two hundred and one white members; one hundred and twelve of these remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, giving it a majority of twenty-three over those who seceded to the south. At the session of the Kentucky conference, in 1845, Bishop Soule sent no preachers into the Kanawha district, believing the plan did not allow this; but Bishop Andrew sent them preachers, as they called for them, from minorities or majorities, from borders or interior charges. The quarterly conference of the Kanawha circuit, with other resolutions, declared,

"That we are deeply pained and mortified that the name of Methodism has been so stained by the unchristian, and the immoral means used, or sanctioned, by some of the adherents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, among us, to effect their ambitious project of pulling down the Methodist Episcopal Church to build up a pro-slavery Church; and we can not hereafter have fellowship with those of them known by us to have been engaged in this business, either actively or approvingly, till we have evidence of their contrition and reformation."\*

In the fall of 1847 Bishop Soule formed the Guyandotte district, principally in the bounds of the Ohio conference and the Kanawha district. It is believed by the Rev. D. Reed, presiding elder of the district, that the Bishop was greatly imposed upon, as what were represented to be majorities were minorities. But the Bishop had a right good will to do the thing at any rate, as the case of Cincinnati shows. As a specimen of the mode sometimes pursued, the Rev. Mr. Black put the question thus: "Will you stay with us, or will you go with the abolitionists?" This, of course, carried very readily.†

The Rev. W. G. Montgomery, the southern presiding elder on the Guyandotte district, wrote several letters, in February and March, in the Richmond Advocate, proclaiming glorious things for the south.‡ Bishop Soule wrote to Mr. Montgomery a very encouraging letter, dated April 30, 1847, expressed in such terms as would throw no obstacle in any practicable measures in promoting the interests of the Southern Church. This letter will be noticed elsewhere.¶

Thus the Kanawha district, contrary to the report on the declaration, was invaded, by all practicable means, by the south. It is not worth while to occupy our space with Cincinnati, as this case is palpably at variance with all the provisions of the plan.

5. The state of things in Kentucky in regard to the report on the declaration will call for some attention.

As the case of Maysville has been one of both importance and notoriety, it may be considered. Before the Louisville convention, the whole number of members in Maysville on the church-books was 256. Of this number 141 wished to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church. With the hue and cry of abolitionist, the agents

\* W., June 19, 1846. Scraps, IV, p. 676.

† W., February 12, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 277, 413.

‡ R., February 18, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 283, 288, 206.

¶ N., May 7, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 467.

\* W., April 19, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 224-226.

† Document, No. 73. Scraps, VI, p. 224.

of the south, on the 31st of August, 1845, prevailed on one hundred and nine to join the Church, South. On the day on which the vote was taken, only ninety-seven made their appearance for the old Church, as they thought they had already done all that was necessary to be done to retain their membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church. With all the mustering of the south, the old Church had a majority of twenty-six members. Mr. Armstrong waited on Bishop Hamline, at Cincinnati, at the meeting of the Ohio conference, and presented him with the names and numbers of those who went south, and those who remained. Bishop Hamline asked for more formality in the proceedings, and before this could be obtained the conference adjourned. The document passed into the hands of the Rev. M. Marlay, who, finding it correct, sent them the Rev. W. H. Lawder as their preacher. We examined narrowly the documents, and know the statement is correct, and Mr. Armstrong published the account in the *Western Advocate*.\* The Maysville Church property case will be considered in connection with the property question, as it respects churches and parsonages. We will just say here that the minority who went south, by various stratagems succeeded in wresting the Church property out of the hands of the majority and using it themselves.

In Kentucky, in general, the Methodists were thrown from their proper position by the leaders in the secession, though under the plea that it was no secession. Yet there were several places which could not be induced to leave, as Maysville, Augusta, a large minority in Covington. There were minorities almost every-where who refused to go; and in many places the majorities themselves, who joined the new Church, were far from being cordial in the exercise of their reluctant choice.

6. A few words, too, must be given in reference to Missouri.

Although St. Louis had fully resolved to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, yet, through the influence of the southern leaders, the new Church was established there, and took possession of all the Church property. Notwithstanding all this, the Methodist Episcopal Church, when we visited that city, in October, 1846, had, perhaps, a majority of members, as the following statistics will show, taken on the spot by ourself:

Two English White Churches.....	200
Two German Churches.....	284
Two Colored Churches.....	180
Total.....	664

The bishops, in the fall of 1845, were very incorrectly informed in regard to St. Louis; for had they had the true state of things before them, St. Louis, we must believe, would have been supplied by our Church. Bishop Hamline, at the Illinois conference, in 1846, was fully aware that the brethren in St. Louis had been wronged, through the unfair measures of the southern leaders; but he thought it not best, all things considered, to provide otherwise than to leave the matter with Dr. Akers, then presiding elder in Illinois. Mr. Akers provided for them as best he could, till, in 1848, they enjoyed again their full privileges.

In Missouri there were multitudes of the Methodist Episcopal Church in a sad dilemma.

They had been wronged out of their rights under the administration of Bishop Soule, and the southern measures employed to frustrate them. Big Creek mission was attached to Iowa conference. In Hannibal a church was preserved and supplied temporarily. Selma circuit was supplied by Dr. Akers. Sarcoxie circuit was recognized. A circuit was supplied by Rev. L. Waugh. A portion of Girardeau district was supplied by the presiding elder, Mr. Henry. There remained a sufficient number of members and preachers in Missouri to preserve the Methodist Episcopal Church. This is manifest from the fact that this has actually been done.\*

Bishop Morris was blamed by some because he did not, in the fall of 1845, do something for these scattered sheep. But the whole was so confused, and the Southern Church having taken advantage of their circumstances, that it was impossible to apply any proper remedy. All that could be done was to let events have their course; leave the presiding elder to do the best he could till the General conference of 1848.

In Hannibal, just before the convention, one hundred and thirty-one members—a large majority of the Church—sent in a remonstrance to the convention against division. This was unheeded. The southern preachers took possession of the charge, and seventy members requested the privilege of temporary membership, for peace' sake, till they could be supplied with their own ministry. These were pronounced to be seceders. A meeting was then called; the seventy members were refused votes; so that the south, in this way, had a majority. Such is the statement of the Rev. W. S. M'Murry, under date of July 28, 1847.†

7. In Arkansas—especially in the northern part of the state—there were many who were so attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church as to refuse to unite with the new Church; they, therefore, endeavored to provide for themselves as well as they could. In July, 1846, the Washington circuit declared themselves members of the old Church, and took measures to have ministerial supplies from local preachers, and thus preserved their circuit organization till 1848.‡ The Rev. T. Norwood, an intelligent local preacher in this circuit, wrote several very forcible letters against the secession and slavery, which appeared in the *Western Advocate*|| from time to time, from 1846 to 1848. Mr. Norwood charged the mischief of the times on the aristocracy of slaveholding in the preachers of the Church. A conference, too, was publicly asked for Missouri and Arkansas.§ And such was the state of affairs in consequence of the destruction of the plan by the south, that all the adherents in Missouri and Arkansas were greatly encouraged, under the certainty of relief by the General conference of 1848.

Previous to 1848 the following was penned, in reference to the foregoing events:

As to the plan itself, the artificial and circumstantial authority which it attained, seems to be rapidly verging toward its original want of authority. It was never a law or regulation of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was recommended as such in one house, but failed in passing through the other. The General confer-

\* W., November 13, 1846. *Scraps*, V, pp. 116, 128.

† W., September 17, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 634.

‡ W., July 17, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, p. 692.

§ W., July 17, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, p. 668; also, V, pp. 345, 633; also, VI, pp. 36, 41.

¶ W., January 14, 1848. *Scraps*, VI, p. 36.

\* W., August 13, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 596.

ence recommended it, but the annual conferences refused to confirm it. Hence, it never had the force of a law of the Church. At any rate, the southern powers, from the least to the greatest, have been unremittingly employed for nearly three years to render it null, in all manner of ways. Before it had an existence, except as a merely *proposed plan*, they acted on it as on a

chartered right; and yet, afterward, it would, to an uninterested observer, seem as if they had nothing else to do but to render it, in all respects, a dead letter, even as far as it had a prospective life. Hence the next General conference, as a matter of course, pronounced it a nullity. They did not *repeal* it, inasmuch as it never has been a law.

## CHAPTER XLIII.

### PROPERTY QUESTION—BOOK CONCERN.

1. As the question of property as it regards the Book Concern has been one of considerable difficulty, and has been the occasion of much controversy in the papers, we will devote to it a chapter, which will embrace all important matter concerning it, from May, 1846, to May, 1848.

The General conference of Petersburg, in May, 1846, appointed H. B. Baecom, A. L. P. Green, and S. A. Latta plenary commissioners, to adjust and settle all questions involving property and funds between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. These commissioners met in Cincinnati, August 25, 1846, and addressed a letter to Rev. Messrs. Bangs, Peck, Finley, commissioners, and Rev. Messrs. Lane and Tippett, Agents, calling on them to have a joint meeting and adjust the whole matter, so as to divide the funds of the Book Concern with the least possible delay.

The southern commissioners say that they see no just reason why the negotiation respecting the division of property should not proceed without delay; and as no decision should be given unless the annual conferences had authorized the change of the sixth Restriction, they persist on a meeting to ascertain whether this change has not been authorized. They say, however, "From all the information in our possession, we see no reason why we should not act upon the assumption that the proposed change in the Restrictive Rule has been authorized." They then argue that the change by the annual conferences must have taken place; though in default even of this they contend that the division of property should take place. They say, "The proposed change in the Restrictive Rule was regarded by all who favored the plan of separation in the General conference of 1844, merely as means to an end. The end aimed at was an equitable division of the Church property, and the more certainly and securely to effect this within the established forms of law and order, the change in question was proposed. Such change, however, or the want of it, can not possibly affect, in any form, the question of right, or the true issue in a legal process, should it be found necessary to institute such process. They conclude by asking the Book Agents and commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church to call upon the secretaries of their conferences for the official votes, and that they would call for the same from their own conferences.\*

The long address of the southern commissioners was incumbered with abstractions and circuitous argumentation, in connection with the

points given above. This, as well as the absurdity of their claim, may be the reason why none of the Agents or commissioners, except brother Finley, made any reply. Mr. Finley, however, in an article dated November 2, 1846, answered them in the *Western Advocate* with great clearness and force; so that by his answer he manifestly dissipated the clouds of involvement in which the southern commissioners had enshrouded their unfounded claim. Mr. Finley said that as a commissioner he would have nothing to do with the negotiation, for the following reasons:

"(1.) The annual conferences refused to authorize a division, by their vote against the alteration of the Restrictive Article in our Discipline, which put an effectual veto on any authority vested in the commissioners. I would have as much authority to divide the property of any other firm without their consent, as I would to divide the property of the Book Concern.

"(2.) The General conference gave the commissioners no authority to collect the votes of the different annual conferences, and decide whether there was a sufficiency of votes to alter the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church or not; therefore, any decision which they might make would be illegal, and not binding on the General conference.

"(3.) The secretaries of the several annual conferences are not bound by any rule to give the vote; and some of them dare not do it without the consent of their conferences, as they are not allowed to permit any thing to be taken from the record till authorized.

"(4.) The south have not complied with the conditions on which such a division was to be made. Provided the annual conferences had agreed to alter the sixth Restrictive Article, they did not find the *necessity* of their secession or withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"That necessity was to be found in the following manner: 1. By a vote of all the preachers in the annual conferences. 2. But more especially by the vote of all the members of all the societies in circuits and stations in a conference; and this was never done. But their leaving the Methodist Episcopal Church and setting up another sect, was effected by the dictation of the pro-slavery preachers. Hence the commissioners have no power or authority to act in the case. These gentlemen seem to think that, by some method not explained by them, the annual conferences have authorized an alteration of the constitution. This must certainly have been a new revelation since the Louisville convention; for then it was acknowledged that the proposi-

\* N., December 11, 1846. *Scraps*, V, pp. 179-181.



tion was lost; and the southern papers so published it, and even charged the conferences with putting their hands into their pockets and taking their money. I only wish to say that, so far as I am concerned, I will have nothing to do in this matter, unless I am authorized by the next General conference, and by all the annual conferences in a three-fourth vote; and I think there is no probability at all of that taking place.\*

2. The southern conferences, which met after the decision of the southern commissioners, followed in suit, and adopted and published doctrines in accordance with their claims and allegations. We mention, particularly, the Kentucky, Tennessee, Virginia, and Holston conferences. We will select, especially, the proceedings of the Kentucky conference, as the others, for the most part, adopted their views with little variation.

In the action of the Kentucky conference, there are the following misstatements of facts, by which the whole is changed from its true state to a false one:

(1.) "That the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church did *authorize* the establishment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."

The General conference gave no authority to do this thing. The entire responsibility was left with the south. Our General conference, by the plan, showed how they would treat the separatists, or seceders, did they separate for a certain reason; but the General conference pretended to give no authority to do this, but, indeed, disclaimed it.

(2.) "That it did stipulate and pledge, equitably, to divide the common Church property with the new Church."

The General conference did not stipulate or pledge any such thing. In regard to the proceeds of the Book Concern, the conference *recommended* to the annual conferences the change that would provide for the partition; and the annual conferences *rejected* the recommendation; so that the General conference neither stipulated nor pledged to divide these proceeds, knowing well they had no power thus to pledge or stipulate. In regard to other property than that of the Book Concern, the General conference disclaimed all competency, as this property belonged to the people; and with it they knew they could not, and they would not interfere.

(3.) "That the necessity alleged did exist." We have often proved that the necessity never existed.

(4.) "That the Methodist Episcopal Church was divided at the last General conference."

This is not true. The south separated or seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church; and the Methodist Episcopal Church remains till this day an undivided body.

(5.) "The deed of separation." This fantasy owes its origin to Bishop Caspers.

(6.) "The northern General conference"—"the General conference of the north"—"the Church, north."

These are false titles, by which the official name of the Methodist Episcopal Church is refused to her, and thus a new name given to her, in view of disfranchising her of her vested rights and character. This is one of the grossest acts that can be conceived of; and the crime of such deeds, in other cases, would be called felonious.

Other gross errors could be detected in the action of the Kentucky conference, such as the following: that the Methodist Episcopal Church has misinterpreted and perverted the plan, and violated its provisions; and that the authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have interpreted justly the plan, and have observed its provisions.\*

It would be a task indeed to enumerate the dangerous and misleading principles contained in the four reports. That of the Kentucky conference, given above, must suffice for the present.

3. In August, 1847, the Rev. W. H. Raper, a preacher of high standing, contended, in the Western Advocate, that the south should have awarded to them a proportion of the Book Concern. He argued that the General conference of 1844 designed this; that the annual conferences, as such, were the owners of the funds, and each conference had a right to its share; that this right was founded in natural justice; that it was wrong for Christian people to dispute about money; that the laity in general were in favor of a division, and though the sixth Restriction was the legal mode, some way beside could be found to make the distribution; though the south was a secession, and in the wrong; †

The views of Mr. Raper, most worthy as the man was, were considered by most brethren in the north as leaning too much to the south, and hazardous to the Church. He was promptly met by Rev. James B. Finley, G. W. Walker, Wm. Herr, and a layman. ‡

Mr. Finley contended that, according to the Discipline, the south had no right by law to this property; nor had they any in equity, because the object of the institution was to spread knowledge, and was a self-supporting system. Those that bought books had their remuneration, and there was no provision to divide with seceders. He remarks, "1. There is no provision made in the constitution or laws of our Church, for the annual conferences, or the General conference, to divide the stock for any purpose. 2. The proceeds are to be most sacredly applied to the poor pensioners of our own Church; many of our most faithful, useful, and laborious ministers have relied on this source for help, when worn out in the work. 3. There never was any real cause or necessity for a secession in the south, only to gratify some ambitious men. 4. The object of their leaving the Methodist Episcopal Church was solely to maintain the "great evil of slavery," and to justify themselves and others in making chattels of human beings, and raising them for market, separating husband and wife, and parents and children, and so contravening the laws of God and nature. 5. That they have no right, in law or equity, and I think have less in the laws of necessity; for they have some of them a hundred, more or less, poor negroes to sweat for them."

Mr. Walker contended that such a division of the funds, contrary to law and constitution as it would be, must subvert the Church itself, and was therefore revolutionary. Mr. Herr contended that the whole matter, as far as the south was concerned, was considered as a deception on the Church, and was unconstitutional, so that the next General conference ought to pronounce it null and void from the beginning. A layman,

\* For the reports of these conferences, see W., December 10, 1847; and Scraps, V, pp. 756-761.

† W., August 13, 1846. Scraps, V, p. 614.

‡ W., September 3, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 616-620.

Mr. Curry, of Maysville, an eminent lawyer, urged that the investment of Church funds were in the nature of a compact, for the advancement of the great interests of the Church; and the contributors were entitled to their benefits so long as they were members of the Church, and no longer. But the southern seceders left the Church and have waged a warfare against her. Let them return to the Church and to their duty, and their rights will be recognized. As the matter now stands, the General conference has no right to appropriate funds to the southern organization, which goes for the advancement of human slavery. Already concessions have been made which resulted in evil; it is therefore now full time to pause.

4. The Rev. Abel Stevens, editor of Zion's Herald, presented a plan to meet the claims of the south, in such a manner as to get rid of the constitutional difficulties in the way of other modes of distribution. His plan was to give to the south books at cost prices, or as near that as possible, so that the Concern would sustain itself respectably and safely. He urged his plan with some twelve arguments, of great plausibility; and, indeed, this seems to be the only safe way of adjusting the difficulty. It was no other in substance than the mode struck out by Mr. Wiley, and others; though it was not just what the south wanted; for their great object was ecclesiastical recognition in a way derogatory to the Methodist Episcopal Church, if not subversive of its constitution and organization.\*

5. Dr. Bond, in the Christian Advocate, proposed a plan for the division of the Book Concern and Chartered Fund with the south, and presented arguments in favor of it.

The following is Dr. Bond's plan for the division of the property of the Book Concern:

"Let the General conference of 1848, after stating in a preamble the causes which render its action in the premises expedient and equitable, embody in the form of resolutions, the necessary arrangement and provisions, for the apportionment and transfer of a *pro rata* proportion of the Book Concern, etc., to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and recommend the said preamble and resolutions to the annual conferences for concurrence. The bishops will, of course, be charged with the duty of presenting the matter to the annual conferences, and of reporting the result to the commissioners or agents named in the resolutions, and empowered to execute the necessary trusts; who, upon receiving from the bishops the certification of the concurrence of the annual conferences, shall proceed to apportion the property according to the provisions of the constitutional plan adopted as aforesaid, and in conjunction with the persons who may have been, or shall be appointed, on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to receive its portion of the property.

"Our plan would be free from all constitutional objections. The same powers which, by concurrent action, can alter and amend the constitution, can add a clause to it for a specific purpose, which will operate simply as an exception to any one, or more, of its general provisions. Our plan will operate as an exception to the general provision of the sixth Restrictive Article of the constitution, for a special and definite object; which, when accomplished, will leave the original rule in all its force, as it now stands in our book of Discipline. And even

pending the execution of the purpose for which the amendment is made, it can affect nothing but the particular object for which it was intended.

"The following letter from the Hon. Judge M'Lean, of the United States Supreme Court, which he has kindly put at our disposal, will, we hope, satisfy all scruples as to the constitutionality of the measure we suggest:

"Washington, February 13, 1848.

"Dear Sir,—In your favor of the 28th ult., you inquire, whether it is competent for the General conference, by and with the concurrence of the constitutional number of members of the annual conferences assembled, to suspend one of the Restrictive Rules of the Discipline for a definite purpose? The sixth rule is the one referred to, which relates to the "Book Concern and Chartered Fund," and the object of the suspension of the rule is, to make an equitable apportionment of the above fund to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"The proviso to the above rule authorizes an alteration of it, "upon the concurrent recommendation of three-fourths of all the members of the several annual conferences who shall be present, and vote on such recommendation; then a majority of two-thirds of the General conference succeeding shall suffice to alter any of the above restrictions, excepting the first article; and, also, whenever such alteration, or alterations, shall have been first recommended by two-thirds of the General conference, so soon as three-fourths of the members of the annual conferences shall have concurred, as aforesaid, such alteration, or alterations, shall take effect."

"I have no doubt that the modification of the rule, as suggested, may be constitutionally made.

"Whether the amendment of the constitution shall be general, or special, is a question of policy, and not of power. The power of amendment must be exercised within the limitations imposed, but the extent of the amendment is a matter of expediency. None of the guarantees of the constitution are violated, when the sanctions required to alter it are observed.

"When Louisiana was purchased, under Mr. Jefferson's administration, believing there was no constitutional power to annex it to the Union, Mr. Jefferson was about recommending to Congress to take the necessary steps to amend the Constitution for that purpose, when Congress, unfortunately, being more influenced by the popularity of the measure than the limitation of their powers under the Constitution, passed an act to annex the territory.

"The object of the President on that occasion was not, as I understand, to make a general alteration in the Constitution for the annexation of foreign territory, but to provide for the annexation of that which had been purchased from France. And no one can doubt the constitutionality of such a procedure.

"Congress, and the states, had power so to alter the Constitution as to embrace Louisiana in the Union. And, on the same principle, the General and annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church may modify their constitution so as to divide the above fund, and thereby provide for the unhappy exigency which exists. And this provision, like the one above contemplated, may be limited to the object stated.

"To make the desired alteration, nothing more would be necessary than for the General conference to state in a preamble the causes which

render a division of the fund expedient and equitable; and then resolve, two-thirds of the General conference concurring, that the sixth Restrictive Rule be so modified as to authorize an equitable division of the fund with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and that effect shall be given to this amendment when three-fourths of the members of the annual conferences who shall be present, and vote thereon, shall concur in the same.

“This amendment leaves the above rule, as to all subsequent action, as it now stands.

“Very truly, yours,

JOHN M'LEAN.”\*

When this plan is properly canvassed, we think it is precisely the same, in all important respects, as the mode which failed in passing through the annual conferences. Some objections were presented against it by Zion's Herald and Dr. Bangs.† The southern editors looked upon it with little confidence of success.‡

Dr. Bond also gave his reasons why the property, both of the Chartered Fund and Book Concern, should be divided with the south. The following, in brief, were his reasons:¶

(1.) The action of the General conference of 1844, however illegal, gave the south grounds to expect its claims.

(2.) The annual conferences, by a large majority, favored the distribution of the funds.

(3.) The reasons assigned by the annual conferences for their action countenanced the expectation of the south.

(4.) The claimants in the south, especially widows and orphans, ought not to forfeit their claims.

(5.) The membership in the south, having but little to do with the division, ought not to be deprived of the means of supporting the superannuated preachers.

(6.) The Southern Church helped to provide the funds.

Dr. Bond bases his reasons for division of funds on moral reasons; but not on the plan of separation, which he considers to be of no authority, or unconstitutional. The reasons he gave were gravely opposed by several articles in the papers, immediately before the session of General conference.¶

As to the moral considerations presented by Dr. Bond, they were at the time viewed in the following light:

As to the first reason, the General conference of 1844 did not essay to *authorize* the establishment of a separate Church, but rather to *submit* to it as a necessity, should the south assume the entire responsibility of forming it. Beside, the representations of the southern delegates have proved to be erroneous.

In regard to the second reason, the annual conferences vetoed what the General conference recommended, and that, too, previous to the Louisville convention. And as far as the annual conferences acted in favor of the division of funds, it was, like the General conference, under erroneous representations of the south. With the real facts before them, would the

annual conferences approve of the plan of separation?

The principal reasons among the annual conferences for non-concurring were, lest they should favor schism and an unnecessary separation of the Church.

Whatever blame attaches to the deprivation of superannuated preachers, widows, and orphans, belongs to the south, who have, by their acts, deprived these of their supplies.

Members in the south can not complain of being deprived of these supplies, as their deprivation arose from their own acts and deeds in renouncing the fellowship of the Church to which these privileges belonged.

And in regard to the claim from aiding and building up the Book Concern, the *design* or *intent* of donors was to build up the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and this intent, according to reason and Scripture, must be sustained, otherwise the voluntary system of supporting Churches must be entirely given up.

6. We may now take a survey of the various plans and opinions current on the division of the funds of the Book Concern. From the General conference of 1844, most, or very many, in the north were disposed to appropriate to the south a *pro rata* proportion of these funds. But when the division of funds was asked or demanded on such principles as would disrupt the Church herself, the demand could not be met.

The grounds on which these claims were based and asked by the south, were those that follow and the like.

That the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States was divided by the General conference, into two independent Churches, the one the Methodist Episcopal Church, north, and the other the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; so that the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States no longer exists, but is dissolved.

That the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, should be allowed to vote in reference to the concerns of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

That the General conference can appropriate the proceeds of the Book Concern, either without or contrary to the three-fourth votes of the annual conferences.

That the appropriation should be made as a part of the plan of separation, when the south have already destroyed every part of it.

That the annual conferences, as partners in a mercantile stock company, may claim and obtain their shares of the Book Concern.

That the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have claims according to law.

When such claims as these were set up, most men positively refused to do any thing. And, hence, they were compelled to pause, unless in some such way as would prevent all risks in the case. It is true, some such claim as the following has something very plausible in it. A large society of members erect a church deeded to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to no other. After some time, nearly the half, or even a majority, withdraw or separate from the Church, and claim their proportion of the funds which they expended. To these the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church reply, that we can not divide the Church property with you, as this would, both by us and by you, be contrary to the very conditions of the subscription paper. But, were the Church

\* C., March 1st. W., March 31, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 172, or VIII, p. 339.

† Z., March 8th, 29th. Scraps, VI, pp. 119, 146.

‡ R., March 16, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 140-146. S., March 17th. Scraps, VI, p. 146.

¶ C., March 1, 1843. Scraps, VI, p. 168.

§ W., March 31st. April 7th and 26th. Scraps, VI, pp. 166, 168, 361.

members to say, we will subscribe, if you are otherwise deserving, to enable you to erect a Church for yourselves, surely, such a proposal could not be viewed as a taunt to those who had withdrawn. When the Book Concern was burned in New York, it was not deemed disreputable to receive donations to make up the loss. But, now, when the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is approached with the proposal of aiding them to commence a Book Concern, by members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it is an unpardonable offense; although the subscription paper is issued by themselves to their own members to do the very same thing.

The doctrine, for some time, had been promulgated in the south, that the next General conference could make the appropriation of the proceeds of the Book Concern, not only without the three-fourth vote of the annual conferences, but in opposition to these votes. For awhile, this new doctrine was confined to the mere declarations of correspondents and editors in the southern papers. Then it was embodied, in more form, in what was designed to be a call by the Rev. Messrs. Bascom, Green, and Latta, commissioners of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church; namely, Rev. Messrs. N. Bangs, J. B. Pinley, and G. Peck. Accordingly, in an address of the southern commissioners to those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, dated Cincinnati, Ohio, August 25, 1846, and published in the Nashville Christian Advocate of December 4, 1846, a call is made to divide the funds of the Book Concern. The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in this address, declare, "From all the information in our possession, we see no reason why we should not act upon the assumption, that the proposed change in the Restrictive Rule has been authorized." After some explanatory matter, the commissioners say, "In the instance of several annual conferences the vote was contingent, and future events, now to be judged by the commissioners, were to give an affirmative or negative character to their votes. In the instance of two of these, at least—and we believe it to be equally true of four—it is susceptible of the clearest proof, that, by their own official showing, their votes must, beyond all doubt, be counted in the affirmative, or not at all, and in either case, and indeed without reference to either, taking no account of the conferences which refused to vote, it is believed the constitutional majority of all the votes given, was in favor of the change; and it will, it seems to us, devolve upon the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church to make the contrary appear, before they can, in good faith, refuse to carry into effect the plan of separation." The three or four conferences referred to were, we presume, Illinois, Ohio, and Baltimore. The truth is, all of these conferences gave their official vote against the change in the sixth Restrictive Article. But the commissioners of the Church, South, seemed to have no regard to constitutional votes; and, indeed, they proposed to try the issue by law, according to the instructions of their General conference, if constitutional barriers will be too strong for their invasions.

7. The editors of the southern papers became almost furious because their new doctrines were not indorsed by the New York and Cincinnati

papers and their correspondents. They also ascribe the basest acts and worst motives to those who could not receive their teachings.\*

The editor of the Richmond Christian Advocate, in his paper of the 16th of September, writing of the communications referred to, says, "These earnest efforts to vindicate a predetermined outrage upon honor and conscience, foreshadow the gloom of sorrow and remorse awaiting those who shall work out the consummation of so hardened a deed of guilt." . . . "They have published to the world their readiness to perpetrate a great moral wrong—they have not virtue enough to resist the temptation of improperly appropriating their neighbor's property!" He says much more to the same purpose, which we omit, and insert barely the following of the 30th of September. Speaking in reference to the Ohio delegates, he says, "The northern hemisphere of Methodism is full of signs. If infatuation, as a Divine judgment, precedes Divine punishment, there is ground to fear our northern brethren have entered the door of infatuation. They are about to commit two evils; to forsake the way of righteousness, and enter into that of covetousness."

The editor of the Methodist Episcopalian, in October, 1847, contended that each annual conference was constitutionally entitled to its share of these funds, and urged the duty and necessity of a legal process on that account, provided this demand were refused.† He contends, too, that the southern conferences as well as the northern were entitled to act in reference to this matter.

The editors of the Nashville Advocate, of October 15, 1847, in reference to some strictures of Zion's Herald, say:

"And does he not know, that no vote of the annual conferences is requisite at all to divide the funds, when such division is expressly for the same purpose as prescribed in the Discipline? No man is so blind as he who voluntarily refuses to see, and nothing will pervert the sight quicker than a love of filthy lucre. Our Yankee friends are keen sighted when money is the object of their vision;"‡

Much more might be quoted from the southern papers on this point. The foregoing is given barely, or principally, as a part of the history of the times. On this subject, we now make the following observations:

(1.) The funds and proceeds of the Book Concern are now managed on the same principles, both constitutional and statutory, by which they have been regulated from the origin of the Book Concern down to the General conference of 1844; and if the Methodist Episcopal Church is wrong, the wrong was one in which the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were partakers, when they belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church. And they have adopted precisely the very same principle in the constitution of their new Church.

(2.) The application for a change in this policy was to the voluntary votes of the annual conferences; and the charge of the south against them amounts to this, that they did not vote to change the constitution of the Church to suit the south.

(3.) The appropriation of funds is demanded

\* W., October 15, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 661-665

† W., November 5, 1847. Scraps, V, p. 696.

‡ Id., p. 697.

by virtue of a plan, which was never ratified by those having authority, and all principal provisions of which the south have violated, in all their judiciaries and their officials, from their convention and General conference down through their bishops, annual conferences, and editors.

(4.) The appropriation would also demand, in the way in which they ask it, that the Methodist Episcopal Church should assume, for the south, the responsibility of their conduct in their leading revolutionary movements.

(5.) Our next General conference could make no appropriation of book funds to the south, whatever the consequences may be.

(6.) Then, if the south sue at law, they must get all they can in this way; because the Methodist Episcopal Church can not, in safety, meet their demands, without entire disruption. As the south *appealed* to the annual conferences, and *agreed* to stand to that appeal, if they now break their agreement, and go to Cæsar for that ecclesiastical recognition which the Methodist Episcopal Church can not grant them, it is a lamentable affair, and must be borne.

(7.) After all, it is not *money* that is the cause of this difficulty. The south prize more the recognition of the Methodist Episcopal Church than the money. And the Methodist Episcopal Church prizes much more the purity of morals, and the integrity of her polity, to a mere pittance of book money. Financial matters have been involved in this subject of Church polity; yet the mere money is not the thing in question on either side.

(8.) Beside, the south have already obtained much of what they so loudly complain in the following respects: 1. They have already taken possession of the offices and all the appurtenances of their three southern papers, and the Depository at Charleston, and they use this property, amounting to a considerable sum. 2. They have received large appropriations, amounting, at least, to \$10,000, to support their papers, while those papers yielded no profit. 3. Much money is due the Book Concern in the south, and

will be due, in all probability. 4. They now receive books, on advantageous terms, to supply the people of the south. 5. As to what remains, according to their claims, it is not worth making such loud complaints about, much less such heavy accusations. 6. Beside, both at last General conference, and ever since, the most liberal sentiments and action have been manifest toward the south, with the exception of rejecting their enormous claims.

(9.) The Methodist Episcopal Church has not yet touched a single cent of what the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, claims, or can claim, but has invested it till a final adjustment takes place.

(10.) There is something ungenerous, as well as unchristian, in the damnable style of the south in regard to this matter. They use such language as neither Scripture nor the genius of Christianity will justify. There must be great error, if not sin, at work in this matter. The spirit of slavery seems to have seized on the spirits of men. The temper which leads to, and continues slavery, seems to be doing its terrible work.

8. Indeed, the most intelligent and able men in the Methodist Episcopal Church, who had studied the subject, were convinced that nothing could be done safely to meet the views of the south. They felt convinced that much harm had been already done, in 1844, and subsequently, in expressing themselves favorable to dividing the funds with the south. All peace measures had been converted by the south into instruments and reasons for disruption. The courtesies of the Methodist Episcopal Church have been construed into concessions, her concessions into grants of right, and then these rights have been insisted on as if they had been constitutional guarantees. Under these circumstances, the leading men in the Methodist Episcopal Church, in order to preserve the integrity of the Church, were compelled to avoid, even in appearance, what would disrupt the Church, or destroy its organization.\*

## CHAPTER XLIV.

### CHURCH PROPERTY—CHURCHES, PARSONAGES, ETC.

1. It was stated that the property of the Book Concern more especially belonged to the ministry. In them the trusts were vested; they were the beneficiaries of it, and they generally managed its affairs. But the property in churches, parsonages, cemeteries, schools, colleges, etc., belonged properly to the people, as they were the founders, the trustees, the managers, and beneficiaries.

There are certain legal principles which have been adopted, to secure the right of property to those to whom it justly belongs. Among them, the following have a place, as applicable to this subject:

It has been decided that "when a new town is erected out of an old one, it loses the use of the town property, which remains in the old town, though acquired at the common expense of the inhabitants before the division."

"Every person who has an interest, by virtue of being a member of a voluntary society, of a

public nature, must be subject to the will of a majority of that society, and to the rules adopted by it."

"Every member of a Church has a beneficial interest in the property, so long as he shall continue to be a member, but no longer."

A Church, though not incorporated under the law, yet possesses a corporate capacity, as far as it respects charitable purposes, in reference to property. The character in a court of equity of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States, or the Presbyterian Church of the United States, is what is generally called a *quasi corporation*.

2. The Methodist Episcopal Church adapted its Discipline, on Church property, to the legal principles of the country. A general form of deed has been long since adopted, accompanied with provisions to adapt this general form to the

various laws of the several states, so as to have deeds to conform to these peculiarities in the laws.

The deed for churches provides that the church shall be for "the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." The church is for the use of the members of any local Church, belonging to the General Church, in "the United States."

The rules and regulations of the General conference, from time to time adopted, are to govern "according to the rules and Discipline which from time to time may be agreed upon and adopted by the ministers and preachers of the said Church, at their General conference." But the General conference can make no rules to deprive the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the use of the property, nor can they appropriate it to the use of members of other Churches.

The trustees must permit such preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church as shall, from time to time, "be duly authorized by the General conference of the ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or by the annual conferences authorized by the said General conference to preach and expound God's word." The preachers must belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and preachers of other Churches, such as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the Presbyterian Church, have no right to occupy these houses, other than mere Christian courtesy will allow.

When a trustee ceases to be a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, he ceases to be a trustee.

If the church be in debt, the trustees can sell it for the debt; and if a surplus remain, after the debt is paid, the surplus is to be placed in the hands of the stewards of the local society, and to be applied for "the use of that society," as the annual conference will decide.

But in the case where there is no society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or where they have withdrawn from it, there is no provision in the deed, or in the regulations of the Discipline. It is a case not provided for. According to the laws of equity, or of the common law, the property would revert to the persons who made the deed, to the trustees, or to the contributors to the buildings. The design or intent of the subscription paper and of the deed was for a church, and this church for the use of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But as these no longer use it, the *intent* of the deed failed. Hence the grantors of it would have their claims for the lot, and the contributors would have their claims for the house to which their contributions were appropriated.

Hence, in view of the secession of the south, and in consequence there would be no members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the south to occupy the churches, the General conference of 1844 renounced all claim to this property, in the ninth article of the report on the declaration, improperly called the plan of separation, in the following words:

"That all the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in meeting-houses, etc., within the limits of the southern organization, shall be forever free from any claim set up on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as this resolution can be of any force in the premises."

The General conference was aware that members of the Methodist Episcopal Church could claim, recover, and use, any Methodist Episcopal Church meeting-house, as their right, and the

General conference could not prevent them from that use. They knew also that the grantors of the deed and the contributors could lawfully lay in claims, when the *intent* failed. The General conference could therefore do no more than quit any claim of theirs, which was only to send preachers where there were no members, or that they would not send their ministry to organize members in Churches where the new Church would operate, though the plea of the new Church was merely that of occupancy, and no more. It was supposed, however, that the grantors would not molest them, and that the contributors would not molest them; the General conference, therefore, agreed not to molest them, provided they separated or seceded, as the report of the committee of nine contemplated; namely, that they should *find, but not create* a necessity, and that they should do so peaceably.

3. Nothing is more clear than that preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church alone can fill the pulpits of the churches of this Church; and none but members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States can have the use of these Churches. Of this we may furnish some cases in which this is clearly decided in the courts of law. Cessation from membership deprives of the use of the property in the Church.

We refer to the case of Price and others vs. the Methodist Episcopal Church and others, of Hamilton county, Ohio, Supreme Court, May term, 1831. The trustees of the lot on which Wesley Chapel, in Cincinnati, now stands, laid off part of the lot, that they did not then need for a house, for a burying-ground. Church members had the lots gratuitously, and strangers paid a consideration. On erecting the new church, it was necessary to remove to another part of the lot the remains of some. The trustees offered to do it, unless the relatives preferred to do it themselves. Price and others brought a suit against the trustees. The court decided, as the deed required the lot for a house of worship, they had no right to interfere with that use of the ground, and Price and others could not maintain any right, to the prejudice of this use, though they paid money for it, and were even at expense to erect monuments. This was decided by the Supreme Court of Ohio, before Judges Hitchcock and Wright.\*

4. The case of Sherman vs. Rusling in the District Court of the city and county of Philadelphia, before Judge Pettit and a special jury, in 1833, may be cited. Mr. Sherman was deprived of his leadership, and expelled from the Church, according to Discipline. He sued Rev. Mr. Rusling, preacher in charge, for damages of \$5,000, for injury to his character, and for depriving him of the use of the Church property. The court decided there was no cause of action, because the prosecutor was dealt with according to the rules of the voluntary association, of which he became a member by his own choice.†

5. We may also adduce the case of the people of the state of New York on the relation of Benjamin Griffin vs. William Steele, and others, trustees of the Centenary Methodist Episcopal Church, Brooklyn. Judge Edmonds, January 31, 1847, delivered the opinion of the court. The trustees rejected the Rev. Mr. Griffin, the preacher stationed by Bishop Hamline, and employed Mr. Green, who had been suspended

\* See this case in collection of Pamphlets, V, pp. 472, 494.

† Pamphlets, V, p. 574, 606.

by the New York conference. The Judge recognizes the legal principle to be, that the intention of the donor is the criterion by which to determine the purposes to which the property has been dedicated; and that this is to govern, provided it does not infringe on the laws. The plea of the trustees was, that the society, in respect to receiving preachers, is independent of the higher Church authorities. But were this predicated of this congregation, it might be of every other one in the United States. The Judge quoted the authority of Lord Mansfield, and decided that the laws of the Church must govern its members and ministers. He, therefore, issued a mandamus against the trustees, and in favor of the appointment of Mr. Griffin by Bishop Hamline; so that the trustees of a church can not appropriate the property of a Church so as to allow any to occupy the pulpit as pastor, except the person appointed by the bishop, or his substitute, the presiding elder.\*

6. As the new Church commenced its course on revolutionary principles, it could not avail itself of the well-established principles of the common law of England, and of this country, in securing title to the property within its bounds: hence recourse was had, in securing the use of property, to other than the principles already acknowledged in the courts of the United States and Britain.

Being well convinced that, as a secession, they could not legally retain the property, they shortly after the General conference of 1844, declared, as we have already seen in a former chapter of this history, that the southern legislatures and courts would award them the property. We heard, indeed, the leading men in the south say, in May, 1844, that the only way they could retain it was, that the Methodist Episcopal Church would not claim it, and, having possession of it, they could retain it, as the courts of law would not be likely to interfere. Several of their writers pacified the southern public with the assurance that their courts and legislatures would, by their protection, secure the property to the south, though the principles of law and judicial decisions were against them.

Dr. Tomlinson, in the Western Christian Advocate of December 27, 1844, maintained that, as the south would be a secession, it could not retain the Church property, and quoted Chief Justice Robinson's decision, of 1842, to show that secession from Church membership, no matter from what cause, draws after it a total privation of all legal claim to the property of said Church.

Rev. Mr. Henkle, in the Nashville Advocate,† attacked Dr. Tomlinson with violent denunciation, and, in a long, abusive article, controverted his position without giving any solid reason against it. Dr. Tomlinson, in an able article, responded to Mr. Henkle, and quoted the opinion of Judge Robinson, with which Mr. Henkle's article was at variance.

The following is Judge Robinson's official opinion, given in 1842:

"As the conveyance from Crittendon was to the use of the Baptist Church, as an organized body of professing Christians, in Frankfort, every member of that Church has a beneficial interest in the property thus conveyed so long

as he or she shall continue to be a member, but no longer." And in another place he says, "Then, not now being members of the Church to whose use the ground was conveyed, the appellants seem no longer to be entitled to any beneficial interest in that property, nor to any other right which this court can either enforce or recognize; and consequently the old Church, as organized at the date of that conveyance, and still subsisting, must be deemed to be entitled to the exclusive use and enjoyment of the property for all the purposes for which it was first dedicated."\*

In the mean time, Mr. Henkle prepared a pamphlet, entitled "The True Issue," in which he pertinaciously maintains his new opinions, and quotes, in his support, the authority of the wresting of the Church property in Pittsburg by the Methodist Protestants, as one in point, to show the legality of his new theory.†

Mr. Henkle, in the former part of his pamphlet, maintains that the reason why the south renounced the jurisdiction of the General conference was, the impossibility of accomplishing their ministry under its jurisdiction, and furnishes some nine reasons for this assertion. He then passes on to the consideration of the Church property. To counteract the well-established principle, that if the south be considered as a secession, it can not retain the Church property, he descants on the character of the deed in the Discipline, and endeavors to unsettle its principles as far as he can. In view of this, he maintains the following propositions:

"(1.) That much of the property is not held under the deed prescribed in the Discipline, and that, in strictness of construction, very little of it is so held.

"(2.) The deed, acting under the provisions of the common law, unaided by local enactments, the statute of charitable uses, or some like help, is of no legal force.

"(3.) If the deed were absolutely perfect, and of paramount legal authority, it does not vest the title of a local church, or meeting-house, in all the members of the Church equally throughout the Union, and that it had no such intention.

"(4.) If all our churches were held under the deed of the Discipline; if the deed were of full legal force; if it vested in the memberships at large equal rights with the members of the society by whose money, and for whose use, the property was created, yet, by the deed itself, and the Discipline generally, the General conference is vested with such control of the property as fully authorizes that body to appropriate to the south, legally, such portion of it as belongs there in moral equity.

"(5.) The General conference, having adequate power to act in the premises, the courts will enforce that action in its true legal meaning and intention."

On these propositions, Mr. Henkle argues and perverts law and principle, till the subject

\* W., May 9, 1845. Scraps, II, p. 639.

† The True Issue and the Property Question: being a Statement between the North and the South in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Legal Rights of the Parties to the Church Property. By M. M. Henkle, A. M. Also, a Legal Opinion, respecting the Organization and Property of the Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. By Hon. George Robinson, LL. D., late Chief Justice of Kentucky, Professor of Constitutional Law, Equity, etc., in Transylvania University, Lexington, Kentucky. 1845. Office of Observer and Reporter. See collection of Pamphlets, XLVI, pp. 327-365.

\* See this case in C., February 9; in W., March 24, in Z., February 9, 1848; and Scraps, VI, pp. 60-73.

† N., January 31, 1845. Scraps, II, p. 164.

is completely mystified, and principles, and even facts, are confounded. We will give some specimens of his assertions.

He says "that a secession from the jurisdiction of the General conference, as at present constituted, was intended by the south and the north, is granted, but nothing more." No man in the north ever dreamed of any secession from the General conference which did not also include a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

He says, page 20, "The fact of finding the Church, after the proposed change, acting under two General conferences instead of one, while those conferences would be acting under one constitution, one creed, one Discipline, would not change the matter in the least, nor prejudice the rights of the southern division." No such fact, however, existed, or does exist, of the Church acting in this way. The Methodist Episcopal Church acted as she always did, while the new Church set up for herself.

He says, page 26, "Let the north refuse to recognize the south as a *co-ordinate branch* of the one great American Methodist Episcopal Church, as a constituent part of the common whole, and *she* at once ceases to be that Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America, to which the property was deeded. Indeed, after the action of the General conference, it will be impossible to place the south in any legal category in which the north will not, necessarily, be equally involved. But if *one*, and if *but one*, of the divisions *could* be the original, identical Methodist Episcopal Church, the south, in view of her strict adherence to the Discipline, would be that Church, while the north, having departed from the law of the Discipline, would cease to be such. But the manifest truth is, that unless both coördinate branches be embraced, the original Church ceases to exist." Here, by boldness of assertion, and mingling up confusedly opposing principles, a new theory is made out at variance with all previous Church principles and precedents.

At this period, or May, 1845, Mr. Henkle does not insist on the division of the Book Concern without the proper votes of the annual conferences; yet he supposes the annual conferences will vote for this if they are honest men.

Mr. Henkle, in his "True Issue," refers to, and quotes, the case of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Pittsburg. It was as follows:

Those who afterward became Methodist Protestants, while they were yet members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, succeeded in obtaining a charter from the state, which vested the property in the majority of the local congregation, and got the old trustees to consent to organize under this charter, and relinquish the old deed. When the Methodist Protestant Church was formed, a majority, or a large number, of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Pittsburg seceded, and became Methodist Protestants. A majority of the trustees were among the seceders, and took possession of the church. A suit was commenced by the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Protestants gained the suit. The plea was, that the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States is not incorporated by law, and can not retain property. A grant for said Church, or its preachers, can not be carried into effect. The *trust* of the trustees was superseded by the new charter; and, through its

interference, the trustees were frustrated by the decision of the Judge. The case was not appealed, but compromised; and, hence, there was no legal test to decide, as the common law of England and America had always done, that trustees could hold property for voluntary organized Churches, though they were not chartered societies. The Pittsburg case was an anomaly. The malcontents in the Church, by previous movements in obtaining a charter, perverted the property from the original purpose. The Judge was misled by the plausible overtures of the opponents of the Church, as well as by his ecclesiastical prejudices. And now this disreputable perversion of property, and wresting of law, are quoted by Mr. Henkle as a fundamental platform by which to aid the Southern Church. Messrs. Henkle and Bascom had been partisans in the Pittsburg affair, and now they were partners in this movement of unsettling the tenure of property according to Methodist Discipline and the principles of the common law.

7. There is also another very curious step in this process. Judge Robinson had been Chief Justice of Kentucky. He was now—in the spring of 1845—Professor of Law in Lexington University, of which Dr. Bascom was President. Mr. Henkle was pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in Lexington. Mr. Robinson was induced to give them a "legal opinion respecting the organization and property of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States."

Mr. Henkle obtained this opinion from the ex-judge, and publishes it to the world as a *legal opinion*. The following are its principal outlines, as they were gathered, not from any law principles, but from the teachings of Messrs. Henkle and Bascom, and the other leaders in the Church, South.

Ex-judge Robinson states that the General conference of 1844 "proposed, or approved, a proposition for an amicable reorganization, under two conferences, and for a territorial segment south of a designated line, and the other for the remaining portion of our Union north of that line, distributing the Church between two coördinate conferences instead of retaining the whole in one single body. Such a change, whether it be deemed organic or merely functional, would not destroy the substantial identity of the preëxistent Church. The body would still be the same under two separate jurisdictions as when under only one.

"It is undeniable that, as to the property, no person can be beneficially interested in the trust who is not a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and it is equally evident that a person becoming interested in it by being received as a member, will forfeit all interest by regular expulsion, or actual secession, from *that Church*; in other words, as the title to participate in the use of the property depends altogether on the contingency of membership, when this ceases that also expires.

"So far as religion, or locality, or personal identity, or the denominational title of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America may be concerned, the members of each section of the Church will still remain what they were before the new modification of their government. Is not each section still a Methodist Episcopal Church? and is not one as much as the other *the Church*, the same original Church? If not, then neither of



them can, with strict propriety, be denominated the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States; neither of them can rightfully arrogate the exclusive title of the Methodist Episcopal Church; but both together will constitute what neither alone can do—the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.\*

In regard to the Book Concern, Mr. Robinson thinks the decision of the annual conferences is necessary in order to make a constitutional division of its property; yet he thinks the General conference can dispose of this matter without regard to constitutional restrictions.

The decision of Ex-judge Robinson was, manifestly, one made to order. He was not then a judge; he had no litigated case before him. He simply embraced the theories that floated in the southern papers first; that were then reduced to some order by Mr. Henkle, under the supervision of Dr. Bascom. And this new theory of the tenure of Church property was used to good account in the Maysville case; and even Judge Nelson had little to do except to merely adopt the theory furnished him in deciding the New York case. The southern papers readily adopted the confirmation of their new theory by Mr. Robinson, and lauded it in their papers.\*

8. A consideration of the Maysville Church case will show how the new theory was applied in the decision. The entire proceedings, from first to last, were published in a pamphlet of 164 pages octavo.†

We have already seen that in the Maysville Church one hundred and forty-one members decided in favor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, being a majority of the whole, even after the Louisville convention; for previous to the convention, when the case was first considered, the Maysville Church resolved, unanimously, to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church. In consequence of this majority, the preacher, the Rev. Mr. Lawder, was sent them from the Ohio conference. The southern members also obtained a preacher, and seized on the church, and excluded the minister and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church from the use of it.

John Armstrong, September 30, 1846, filed a complaint against William Gibson, and others, to the Mason county Circuit Court, in chancery. The decision of Judge Reed was, that each of the parties should use the church half of the time.

Messrs. F. T. Hood, R. H. Stanton, W. P. Conwell, lawyers for the defendants, present the southern theory in the following words:

"That the supreme power of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States was vested in the General conference. That body possessed the power to divide its jurisdiction into two separate conferences, and to institute

the plan of separation. By that act the Church has been divided into two jurisdictions, north and south. The act has been consummated by the ratification of all concerned; and the parties will never meet again in General conference capacity, unless by a new compact between the two divisions of the Church, which has been happily provided for by the resolutions of the Louisville convention. By the terms of the separation the south is entitled to all the Church property within her jurisdiction. . . . The General conference having granted the property in question to the Church, South, the trustees hold it for the benefit of the members of the Church, South. The Church, in point of general jurisdiction, exists no longer as a whole, though one in doctrine, faith, and Discipline."\*

The replication of Mr. Armstrong, by his counsel, states that the decision of the question depends on the answer to the question, Who are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America? The answer is, that the same Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States that existed in 1844 still exists, the same in name, form, Discipline, and faith, though deprived of a portion of its members. The complainants, in 1844, and since, have been members in this Church, because they were never expelled, and never withdrew or seceded. The right to the use of the property is not personal, but relative; it was given, by the deed, not to individuals, but to members; so that even when a trustee shall cease to be a member, he shall cease to be trustee.

The General conference neither advised nor authorized separation; they simply submitted to it, should it be found necessary; and it was not found so. The General conference knew that the title was not in them; they therefore say, "so far as this resolution can be of force in the premises." The General conference never disposed of any property. Even the Book Concern can not be disposed of by them, much less Churches and parsonages.

The General conference is intrusted with general regulations of the Church, and the property is to be held subject to these regulations, as they shall be made from time to time. The *cestui que trusts* are the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the *constant regulation* of its General conference. None of these regulations could be met did the property pass to the use of another Church and the jurisdiction of another conference. The power of alienation is inconsistent with the duty of constant supervision. The supervision of the General conference must cease the instant the transfer is made, and this defeats the letter and spirit of the deed.†

The resolutions of the committee of nine did not and could not dispose of Church property solemnly vested by deed of trust in the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church; nor could they nor did they divide or dispose of the members of the Church. They conceded the right to withdraw from the Church; and this was done by a large number of southern members, who have thus become *seceders*. And such are no longer entitled to be members of the Church, nor are they entitled to any of its privileges.‡

\* N., March 24, 1845. Scraps, II, p. 602. S., May 16, 1845. Scraps, II, p. 644.

† "The Methodist Church Case at Maysville, Kentucky; with a view of the difficulties preceding the rupture, prepared by counsel on each side; a complete record of the Pleadings and Testimony in the Chancery Suit, instituted in the Mason Court, by John Armstrong, to recover the Church property; the arguments of counsel; the decision of the Circuit Judge; and the Opinion of the Court of Appeals, confirming the property to the Church, South. By Henry Waller, counsel for complainant, and Francis T. Hood and Richard H. Stanton, counsel for defendants. Maysville. Henry Collins. 1847. 164 pp. octavo." See Pamphlets, XLVI, pp. 676, 738.

\* Maysville Church case, p. 31.

† Id., p. 41.

‡ Id., p. 42.

Mr. Waller, in his plea for Armstrong and the Methodist Episcopal Church, maintained, that there were two distinct classes of beneficiaries created by the conveyance in the deed; namely, the *members* of the Church and the *ministers* of the Church. As are the beneficiaries, so are the *uses*; the property is held for the *use* of the members "as a place of worship," and for the use of the ministers, "to preach and expound God's holy word therein." The General conference does not own the property. Bishops Coke and Asbury declared, "The union of the Methodist society throughout the states, required one general deed, for the settlement of our preaching houses, and the premises belonging thereto."\* They also declare, "That the property of our preaching houses will not be invested in the General conference."

The trustees, the members, and the ministers are all subject to the two controlling conditions of the deed. They must all belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and they must use the property under the rules and Discipline of the same Church. The membership and the jurisdiction must be that of the Methodist Episcopal Church. These are the irrevocable conditions of the deed. And these conditions relate not simply to faith and doctrine, but also to organization, to connection, to jurisdiction. A Church may have the same faith and forms of government, but unless it is under the jurisdiction of the same General conference, no right can accrue to it by the deed of settlement. When trustees cease to be members they cease to be trustees; and when members or ministers cease to belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church, they cease to be beneficiaries of the use of the churches. The control of the General conference was to be continuous and enduring, as the *same* General conference, and not another one yet to be organized; for their control reaches to *all times, forever hereafter*, so that no members or ministers of other Churches can be beneficiaries. And while the property itself was vested in trustees, its uses in the members, the *mode and administration* of these uses, by the force of the constitution itself and under its restrictions, resided permanently in the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Therefore, the members and ministers of the new Church organized since 1844, and under the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, ceased to be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, therefore, can not be the beneficiaries of the property. The members and ministry of the new Church are under the jurisdiction of a new and independent General conference. They can not, therefore, enjoy the use of the property of the members and ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The resolutions of the committee of nine did not effect either a separation, division, or reorganization of the Church. The General conference did not advise or authorize division; in the event of the threatened separation, that body simply submitted to the necessity, and resolved to meet the emergency with the strictest kindness and the strictest equity. The act of the south was secession, and not division or reorganization; and beside, the General conference did not possess the inherent powers to decree a division. The power

to divide the Church is not warranted either by analogy, the terms of the constitution, the composition of the general body, or the general purpose for which it was created. The idea of division was not in the report, and was carefully avoided by its framers.

As to the distinction drawn between the Church and its jurisdiction, it is absurd. The Church, its government, and its jurisdiction are coexistent, coequal, and identical. Without the jurisdiction there is no government; without the government there is no Methodist Episcopal Church. The terms are identical and reciprocal; the one implies the other. The Church, South, is a new Church, and its General conference originated or held its first session May, 1846; the next, May, 1850. The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church held its first session in 1784, the next in 1788, and so every four years to the present time.

The foregoing are brief outlines of Mr. Waller's argument. He maintains the principles of the common law, and, indeed, the only principles on which Church property can be held with security; while his opponents maintain principles that grow out of secession and misrule, and lead again to the same results. Indeed, the principles insisted on by the Methodist Episcopal Church are the only ones on which the right, the use, and the legitimate succession of Church property can be maintained.\*

Chief Justice Marshal, in delivering the opinion of the court, carried out the principles inculcated by Mr. Henkle and the southern leaders in the secession; and as a matter of course, he awarded the property to the Southern Church. The following are some of the leading principles and assumptions maintained by Mr. Marshal:†

That the separation of the southern conferences, and the independent organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, took place under the authoritative sanction of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

That the Methodist Episcopal Church existed and exists, independently of deeds, and with the same power of changing its name, and form, and organization, as it had at first of fixing them.

The one united Methodist Episcopal Church referred to in the deed, and extending its name and authority to the utmost limits of the United States, having ceased to exist by division into two Churches, of distinct territorial jurisdiction, there is, in fact, no such Church as is contemplated in the deed, and, therefore, no General conference of such a Church, no ministers and preachers of such a Church, no members of such a Church.‡

There are now two distinct Churches in the place of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the one the Methodist Episcopal Church, north, the other the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; these two differing from the original and from each other, only in locality and extent, each possessing in its locality the entire jurisdiction of the original Church.

Many other statements are adduced by the Judge to enable him to decide his case in accordance with the views and teachings of his southern friends. But it is unnecessary to enlarge. Those who have read the pamphlet of Mr. Henkle, can readily see the paternity of the

\* History of Discipline, p. 338.

\* Maysville Church case, pp. 101-128.

† Id., pp. 129-164.

‡ Id., p. 145.

decision. And Mr. Henkle's pamphlet is identical in principles with the reports of the Kentucky, Tennessee, and Virginia conferences of 1847. So that the decision of the Judge is not one founded on the principles of the common

law; but it is one founded on the theory introduced by Church revolutionists, the adoption of which would scatter to the winds the tenure of all religious and charitable trusts.

## CHAPTER XLV.

### CHURCH PROPERTY AND CHURCH PRINCIPLES.

1. In this chapter we purpose to take a brief survey of the tenure on which the Book Concern is held, the nature of the trust, and the character of the beneficiaries; but especially the Church principles involved in the property question.

It is scarcely necessary to quote the Discipline, in which the objects of the Book Concern are defined. It is enough to say that the beneficiaries of the charitable use of the proceeds of these funds, are the superannuated and distressed traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church alone, and of no other, and their widows and orphan children; and that the General conference can not make any other appropriation of these funds, without the concurrence of three-fourths of the voters in the annual conferences.

The *ownership* of the funds of the Book Concern and the Chartered Fund, is not such as a man has in his personal or real estate property. With these a man can pay his debts, or barter, sell, or leave them to his heirs. But preachers can pay no debts with the Church funds, nor can they barter, sell, or leave them to heirs, whether it regards the stock or the produce. When preachers leave the Church they forfeit all right of every sort to these funds. The capital is held in trust by the preachers for a specified object—the circulation of religious knowledge; and the proceeds are to be employed for specified purposes. The preachers do not own these funds, as they do real or personal property, and their *trust ownership* requires that they guard and appropriate them to their objects, but not to pervert them.

2. The General conference of 1844 did *not authorize* the division of these funds. They only recommended this to the annual conferences, as their constitutional powers did not enable them to do any thing more. It is enough to state this here, without dwelling on it any further.

3. The annual conferences had a right to refuse compliance with this recommendation, and they did refuse. The southern interpreters, however, insisted that the votes of the annual conferences were unnecessary to the division of the funds. But with such a latitude of interpretation there is no guard to constitutional guarantees; and, therefore, such assumptions must be rejected at once.

4. We have already seen that the General conference did not divide the Church, and we mention this here, as it stands connected with the present question. The Church barely took preparatory measures to meet a prospective secession, so that the least possible evil would arise from such a calamity.

5. Nor was the report of the committee of

nine any law of the Church. No element of it was ever in the Discipline. A principal article of it, on which the rest depended, was positively prohibited for want of the necessary votes in the annual conferences.

6. It is a well-defined principle in all governments, that the constitution must be preserved inviolable. And there is a power in all good governments to set aside an unconstitutional enactment even of the general legislature. The conference itself is the highest court in the Church, and therefore possesses this power. If in any case it will clearly appear that a law or laws has been passed, the operation of which deprives any one of his constituted rights or privileges, it is the duty of the General conference to pronounce this law null and void. No length of time can give force or make binding an unconstitutional law; but as soon as its unconstitutional character is declared, it ceases to be law. The plan itself, for want of the confirmation of the annual conferences, never had authority, except the brief period preceding its annulment in 1848. At that time it was not repealed nor revoked, but simply pronounced null, having worked unconstitutional results.

7. On the principles of equity or justice, the claim for division of funds has been set up with great confidence. But what law of Christianity binds the Church to do things contrary to law, above law, and against law? What law of Christianity binds the Church to approve and give encouragement to schism in any way? What does one of the laws of Christianity say about those who make divisions, strife, and contention?

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offenses, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." Romans xvi, 17, 18.

8. Beside, the principles on which religious trusts are based are at variance with giving the proceeds to seceders from the Church. To do this would be endowing secession, and would encourage the extension of it. None of the secessions from Methodism received any portion of the Book Concern or Chartered Fund; and were the south to be rewarded for their course, in the way of dividing with them the Church funds, others might by a parity of reason claim the same.

9. The funds in question were involved in constitutional questions from the beginning. It, perhaps, might have been better had no constitutional questions been involved, had this been possible. But as the constitution of

the Church and these funds are intimately blended, it is difficult, or rather impossible, to disentangle them. And though there is something seemingly wrong in this matter, if viewed in regard to individuals, yet in the organization of Churches it can not be avoided without involving greater evils. For instance, the Methodist Episcopal Church own Wesley Chapel in Cincinnati, the graveyard in the city, and other valuable property. When the Methodist Protestants separated they forfeited their share of the property, although they contributed their full share in making the purchase. Subsequently some members of the Methodist Episcopal Church united with the followers of Mr. Scott, yet they could not take with them any of the property. The *design* and *intent* of the donor seems to be of *moral* or *binding* force in such cases, both according to the Scripture and the principles of sound common law. And when these principles are not respected, a floodgate of incalculable evil is thrown open, of far greater injury than the mode which sustains the *intention* and object of the donor when the gift is made and received. He that gives a free-will offering to God and his cause, can not afterward transfer it to another object. Upon any disaffection, any donor or company of donors might draw off and demand a return of their money; and if it is really *due* them, the law that forbids its return is unjust, notwithstanding its sanction by the highest legal authority both of Britain and America. The acknowledgment of such a principle would be ruinous to all benevolent institutions that require the use of property.

10. Indeed, the very existence of the voluntary principle of sustaining Church institutions is at stake, and must be prostrated if the plea of justice or equity will refund to donors their contributions when they demand them at a future time, on their secession from the Church, or when they become disaffected or change their minds. In short, no Church would receive contributions with any such qualifying clause; and the history of our land does not furnish an instance. And if the Methodist Episcopal Church is wrong in this matter, all the Churches of the country are equally wrong. Nay, the laws both of Britain and America, and of the civilized world, are all morally wrong, if the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this respect is wrong. Nay, the Bible must come in for a share, also, as it sanctions the principle and the practice in the most unequivocal manner.

It would be a serious matter, indeed, to lay sacrilegious hands on property consecrated to worthy objects, and by so doing unsettle and break up the foundation of all religious and organized societies, by countenancing minorities in a spirit of insubordination to majorities, and thus encourage a factious and schismatic spirit in the Churches.

Nevertheless, there have been several very plausible objections brought against the Methodist Episcopal Church for adhering to this principle of Scripture, of American and British law, and, indeed, the general law of the civilized world. It will be proper to notice the principal objections before we conclude this topic.

11. It is said that the south have greatly aided in building up the Book Concern, both in contributions when it was burned down and in selling books.

In regard to the donations, claims on this score are such as would destroy all such institutions, and they are spurned by Scripture, and the

laws of our country, and of all the civilized world. Beside, others in the middle and north could lay in claims for the same reasons; though no sane man would entertain any such claim as a right to be acknowledged and met.

In regard to selling books, all stand on an equal footing on this score, as no one was ever a successful claimant on this account in the north, the south, or elsewhere. All vendors of books have their per centum allowance on this account, and with this their claim ends.

Yet the south—we may say it—while they have patronized the Book Concern, have also been a heavy tax on its resources. 1. Their periodicals have been an expense on the Concern—the Nashville Advocate receiving at one time about \$7,000, and the Richmond Advocate about \$4,000 to sustain them. 2. The expense of transportation of books to the south has been a heavy tax on the Concern, and thus rendering the issues of the general catalogue higher. 3. Much loss has been sustained in the south by depositories and by bad debts. 4. The south has retained the offices of the three southern papers in their hands after their secession.

12. Much has been said respecting the withholding of dividends from the superannuated preachers in the south, and from widows and orphans. When these preachers ceased to belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church they ceased to be beneficiaries of the fund, and either they cut themselves off, or those who make the complaint did the deed. And if the Methodist Episcopal Church be wrong in this, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, can not be right, because she has adopted the very same principle in her Discipline, and has followed the same practice in the distribution of her funds.

13. Indeed, the charge of repudiation has been brought against the Methodist Episcopal Church because she declined to divide these funds with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

In regard to the *repudiation* so loudly complained of by the south, and maintained by those who are imbued by their sentiments, it may be safely denied and even retorted. They have *repudiated* or renounced their place in the Methodist Episcopal Church in rejecting its authority. The term *repudiation*, in its recent sense of refusing to pay just debts, has no relevancy to the Methodist Episcopal Church, as she never contracted any debts or borrowed any money from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The three following propositions present the true state of this question:

(1.) The Methodist Episcopal Church neither holds nor uses any property that ever belonged to or was owned by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

(2.) The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, never owned any property now in the possession of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(3.) But the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has seized and now uses property belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The following facts range under this last proposition:

*First.* The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has seized on the offices of three papers, namely, the Southern Christian Advocate, the Richmond Christian Advocate, and the Nashville Christian Advocate. This was the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, in law and equity, is now her property. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has confiscated, by seizure, this property of the Methodist Episco-

pal Church, and uses it for her own purposes.

*Secondly.* A large amount of missionary funds appropriated to the Indian schools of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the United States government, as well as missionary property among the Indians, amounting, in all, to some \$60,000, and obtained principally by the faithful labors of the Rev. E. R. Ames—all this has been taken from the Methodist Episcopal Church by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and appropriated by the latter to her own use.

*Thirdly.* Many meeting-houses and some parsonages, the property of our laity, have been seized, and in some cases violently, by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and used for her own purposes, thus depriving the rightful owners of them. As many, at least, as twelve in the bounds of the Ohio conference, in Virginia and Kentucky, have been thus wrested from the Methodist Episcopal Church. How many have been thus confiscated in Virginia, and Maryland, within the bounds of the Pittsburg, Baltimore, and Philadelphia conferences we can not tell; but the number is considerable. Some of these churches have been seized by mob violence, and our people barred out and our preachers shamefully treated by the members, or by the instigation of the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; yet our people have resorted to no such measures. They even have not resorted to law, except in the case of the Maysville Church—and probably one or two others—which has been wrested from those who built it, and taken by those who never paid a dollar for it. Our people, in some places, have built new churches, sooner than go to law, or they have worshiped in cabins or under the shade of trees.

*Conclusion.* The repudiation is not on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

As to the property of the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church, seized and used by the south, no complaint is uttered, because, as we suppose, this does not disturb the polity of the Church. Neither annual conference, editor, preacher, nor layman of the Methodist Episcopal Church has yet uttered any complaint against this, and we utter none now; and we suppose, should the deputies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, come to Cincinnati and New

York and take all the movable property they could find in the two Book Rooms, that no resistance would be made, and no complaints uttered, seeing the Methodist Episcopal Church, by this treatment, would not become a party to the measure of dividing the capital of the Book Concern, and disrupting herself, in the face of Discipline, constitution, law, and the common principles of all well-regulated Churches and benevolent institutions in the world.

14. Our southern brethren took special delight all along to furnish a name for the Methodist Episcopal Church to correspond with the name affixed to their new Church; namely, "The Methodist Episcopal Church, South." And to meet this they have been careful, at an early day, to postfix the word *north* to the title of the Methodist Episcopal Church; so that, in their common parlance, they studiously call it "The Methodist Episcopal Church, north."

The Virginia conference, in its decisions in the winter of 1847, fixes the *time and place* of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as follows:

"And whereas, the aforesaid thirteen annual conferences did, by their representatives, in general convention assembled, in the city of Louisville, in 1845, erect themselves into an independent ecclesiastical organization, under the style and title of the *Methodist Episcopal Church, South.*"

Thus by the organization of one Church, and the invention of an imaginary one—"the Methodist Episcopal Church, north"—the old Methodist Episcopal Church is annihilated, and the two new heirs are to possess her entire inheritance. And this invention became more potent in after times than any thing else in shaping claims against the Methodist Episcopal Church, in regard to property. One thing, however, is remarkable, that in suits at law they were not adventurous enough to sue the Methodist Episcopal Church, north; but all was done in reference to the Methodist Episcopal Church. And even now this is the studied phraseology in the southern papers, and missionary reports, in order, we suppose, to place the Methodist Episcopal Church in a false relation to them; or more probably still, to give some show of consistency for themselves in adopting a new name.

## CHAPTER XLVI.

### EVENTS PREVIOUS TO MAY, 1848.

1. WE close the period preceding the General conference of 1848, by noticing some events not yet considered, and by taking a general retrospect of the past, in connection with the proceedings of the General conference of 1844.

Our British brethren took a very lively interest in the proceedings of 1844, and those which followed. Rev. Richard Reece, one of the ablest and most influential preachers of the British conference, in a letter to a member of the Troy conference, published in the *New York Advocate* of January 6, 1847, expresses himself as follows in regard to the evangelical union, and the position of the Methodist Episcopal Church:

"I feel that love is the element in which I live, and hence I heartily concur in the present movement for promoting evangelical union among all Christians. We have had many extraordinary, highly-favored meetings. 'Bear and forbear' seems to have been our motto. What the final result will be we can not tell, but hitherto the fruits have been good. Yesterday a Baptist minister brought up the subject of slavery—a vexing question. Some of your countrymen made candid, wise, and forcible speeches before the subject went into committee, where it still remains. I am sorry it was mooted upon this occasion; but the good proposer I have long

known to have the unhappy art of throwing the apple of discord into public meetings. We all abhor slavery; but we think it is possible for many slaveholders, circumstanced as they are under your local governments, to be good Christians.

"I have grieved very much at the conduct of Bishops Soule and Andrew, desecrating our Methodism in making it the advocate of slavery, the friend of slavery. The friend of the *slave* it has always been, but the avowed and determined enemy of *slavery*. I hope that you in the non-slaveholding conferences will take care to keep up the distinction between genuine Wesleyan Methodism and the professed Methodism of Soule, Andrew, Bascom, Smith, etc. Do your duty and God will take care of his own cause and of you.\*"

Mr. Reece and all the fathers of Methodism believed that "it is possible for many slaveholders, circumstanced as they are under our local governments, to be good Christians." Yet Methodism proper was never the advocate or apologist of slavery, though it has been "the friend of the slave." It is the avowed, determined enemy of slavery. And yet there may be a Methodism that can become the friend of slavery and cease to be its avowed and determined enemy.

When the British conference, at their session in 1847, were considering on the propriety of sending a delegate to the American Church, "Dr. Newton observed there was a previous question—to that body should they send a representative? They were all aware there had been in America a separation into two conferences on the subject of slavery. He submitted that the body repudiating slavery was the one to which their representative should be sent. Dr. Bunting considered that the other body was not recognized by this conference as being properly the Methodist Episcopal Church of America. Dr. Newton was quite sure the American conference would have Mr. Stinson as the representative of this body. Dr. Bunting thought that in the circumstances in which the American conference was placed on the question to which reference had been made, that body would have a representative from this, who, by his age, talents, and high reputation, might be qualified to offer them special counsel, and fully represent the views and principles of the British Methodists. He would, therefore, venture to propose that their highly-esteemed and talented friend and brother, the Rev. Dr. Dixon, should be requested to visit America as their representative to that conference. This proposal was hailed with loud expressions of approval by the conference."†

2. While the New England conferences express themselves as strongly as ever in regard to the inherent sinfulness of slavery as a system, they make the distinction between the innocent and guilty slaveholders more clear than formerly, if we rightly understand them.

The Vermont conference, in its session in 1846, in its first resolution on slavery, admits freely "that a person may be thrown into the legal relation of slaveholder without his consent, and be innocent; and further, that he may innocently consent to the legal relation in so far as is necessary to emancipate the victim of legal oppression; yet that slaveholding, in the usual sense of the term, or in the sense of holding and

treating human beings as property, stands opposed to every commandment of the decalogue."\*

The Providence conference, at its session in 1847, "honors the border conferences for the noble and manly stand they have taken against the encroachments of slavery in the Episcopacy." They say they are "encouraged by promising indications and the fidelity of our brethren who are more immediately concerned." And they proceed to "pledge themselves to maintain the same conservative and true antislavery ground by which the Providence conference has already become distinguished."‡

The New England conference, in 1847, declare: "Inasmuch as a slave is defined by the slave code, to be one who is deemed, taken, reputed, and adjudged to be chattels personal, in the hands of his master oppressor, to all intents and purposes whatsoever; a slaveholder is one who deems, takes, reputes, and adjudges a fellow-being to be his property, and regards him or her as such, thereby subjecting him or her to all the vicissitudes incident to property. A man may redeem a captive, and by virtue of the ransom price he has paid, defend the ransomed against the claim of the captor, but he does not regard that man as his property. The captive thus ransomed is not a slave; nor is the ransom a slaveholder, though the right of the captor, such as it was, is transferred to him. To constitute a man a slaveholder, then, in the sense we use the term, requires his own voluntary act in holding and regarding a fellow-being as his property, or voluntarily sustaining such a relation to him, as to subject him to the vicissitudes incident to property."§

The New Hampshire conference declared, in 1847, "that while we sympathize with our brethren in the border conferences, and all others who disapprove of slavery, and are seeking by all wise and consistent measures, to free themselves from any participation in this system of wrong, we can hold no Christian fellowship with such as are engaged in the buying or selling of men, women, or children, with intention to enslave them, or who for their own profit hold slaves, and attempt to justify such practice on Christian principles."||

Divested of ambiguity, and viewed with allowance for the technical language of the abolition school, the true sentiments expressed in the forgoing extracts are in accordance with Methodist doctrine, that there are some slaveholders, in the legal and common meaning of the term slaveholder, who are good men and good members of the Church of Christ.

There was some controversy in New England, in *Zion's Herald*, on "sinless slaveholding," although no light was thrown on the subject, in our view. The whole difficulty arose from using the word slaveholder in different senses. The popular meaning of slaveholder, is one who owns and holds a slave in the eye of the law, or a legal slaveholder. Some are slaveholders by inheritance, without their will or act, and hold slaves in order to free them. The abolitionists, generally, did not call these slaveholders. Hence the confusion of ideas and the war of words. A specimen may be seen in the resolution of the New England conference quoted above. Those who have patience to plod through the confusion

\* C., January 6th. W., January 13, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 203.

† R., October 7, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 654.

\* Z., August 26, 1846. *Scraps*, IV, p. 696.

† R., May 13, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 457.

‡ Z., May 19, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 488.

§ Z., July 14, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 578.

of ideas may consult the references in the margin.\*

3. We have had occasion to mention that the pro-slavery spirit of the south would not allow of the circulation of any books in their country that said any thing against slavery. The American Sunday School Union conformed to this, and expunged from their books antislavery matter, and took the precaution to avoid it in future. In a book entitled "Jacob and his Sons," the following was found on pages 45 and 46.

"What is a slave, mother?" asked Mary; "is it a servant?"

"Yes," replied her mother, "slaves are servants, for they work for their masters and wait on them; but they are not hired servants, but are bought and sold like beasts, and have nothing but what their master chooses to give them. They are obliged to work very hard, and sometimes their masters use them very cruelly, beat them, starve them, and kill them; for they have no body to help them. Sometimes they are chained together and driven about like beasts." The Board of Managers of the South Carolina Sunday School Union complained to the American Sunday School Union, and the latter blotted out the testimony of truth and right against slavery.† The pamphlet referred to in the margin gives the history and discussion of this subject. The same course was pursued by the Harpers in their publications. In 1835 they apologized most humbly to the south for the antislavery matter in Reed and Matheson's Narrative.‡ A similar apology was made for the republication of Hinton's work.¶

4. That the Methodists of the far south became imbued with the pro-slavery sentiments of their neighbors we have ample proofs, of which the following is no more than a specimen: Some time before the session of the South Carolina conference, in the winter of 1847-48, the book of Discipline was pronounced to be an incendiary publication, and the suppression of it was undertaken by the Mayor and the authorities of Charleston city, South Carolina. The Methodist ministers of the city bound themselves that no more of the Discipline would be sold there. This matter came up before the next session of the South Carolina conference, and the conference approved of the suppression of the Discipline, repeating a resolution passed ten or eleven years previous, which is in the following words: "Whereas, we hold that the subject of slavery, in these United States, is not one proper for the action of the Church, but is wholly appropriate to the civil, and not to ecclesiastical jurisdiction; therefore, resolved, that we regard it improper for this conference to pass upon it in any way; and regret that it has ever been introduced, in any form, into any of the judicatures of the Church."

The editor of the Southern Advocate says: "The true reason for the course adopted by the Charleston preachers, and sanctioned by the conference, was found, not in any apprehension of persecution on their part, but in a strong desire that the religious privileges of the colored members of our Church, and particularly of the

blacks on our extensive missions, should not be restricted."\*

The old Discipline had been guaranteed by the Louisville convention, to the new Church, without alteration, except such verbal changes as were necessary, to adapt it to a distinct ecclesiastical organization. And several conferences entered the new connection on this stipulation. An effort to expunge the section on slavery was made in 1846, at the Petersburg General conference; but it was spared, not from principle, but from unsound expediency—or to prevent the opposition of some border conferences. Indeed, the whole southern connection was bound to the ear of the South Carolina and Georgia conferences, and these to the car of Mr. Calhoun and the ultra pro-slavery party. The whole goes to show how far the south had swerved from the principles and practice of Methodism.† And yet Mr. M'Ferrin complains that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is "denounced as a pro-slavery Church, and is held up as such to the scorn and contempt of the world."‡ Surely there is no cause for complaint here, seeing our southern brethren make the proclamation themselves.

In all the principal secessions\* from Methodism it is worthy of remark, that the popular indignation has been invoked against her on political accounts; while their own particular form of Methodism was the right thing. Such was O'Kellyism, or republican Methodism; such was Methodist Protestantism; and such now is southernism, with the cry of danger to southern institutions.

5. It is due to our southern brethren to say, that they have plied with great sacrifice of labor, privation, and pecuniary expenditure, the missions among the blacks. Of this we have, in the course of this history, done them justice, and no more than justice. Bishop Capers kept this subject continually before the Southern Church, in warm, argumentative addresses from time to time. The editor of the Southern Advocate, with all his might and main, pleaded and labored for the good of the slaves. The South Carolina conference published annually an able address on the subject.¶

Whatever may be the errors of the south, in their recent course, we are bound to render them a willing award for their zeal and activity in communicating religious instruction to the slaves.

#### PUNCH AND COLORED MISSIONS.

We give the following account of Punch, from the report of the Missionary Society of the South Carolina conference, for the year ending January, 1847. It was written by Dr. Wightman. And this is a mere specimen of the happy influence of religion among the slaves:

"One of the missions established in 1836, brought to light the remarkable history of 'Punch,' and opened to the public an affecting passage in the life of that venerable man of God, Bishop Asbury. On one of the Bishop's tours of visitation, in 1788, on his way to Charleston, South Carolina, he was passing through All-Saints parish, and found, at a creek on his road, a negro engaged in fishing. While his horse

\* Z., February 10, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 267-270, 759.

† W., November 12, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 706, 707. See letters respecting a book dropped from the catalogue of the American Sunday School Union, in compliance with the dictation of the slave power. New York: Wm. Howard. 1848. 36 pp., 12mo. See my Pamphlets, XLII, pp. 749-781.

‡ See collection of Pamphlets, XXIV, pp. 141-143.

¶ Pamphlets, XXIV, pp. 48, 161.

\* S., March 31, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 176-179.

† C., March 15, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 136, 156, 196, and VIII, p. 345.

‡ N., November 23, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 617.

¶ S., February 4, March 21, December 3, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 54, 260, 494, 604, 734; VI, p. 38.

was drinking, the Bishop entered into conversation with the fisherman. "What is your name, my friend?" "Punch, sir." "Do you ever pray?" "No, sir," said Punch. With this, he alighted, fastened his horse, took his seat by the side of Punch, and entered into conversation with him on the subject of religion; explaining to him, in terms suited to his understanding, the main peculiarities of the Christian system. Punch was sufficiently astonished at all this, but listened attentively; and as the good Bishop sung the hymn,

'Plunged in a gulf of dark despair,'

and closed it with a short, but fervent prayer, the poor negro's tears came fast and free. This interview over, the Bishop bade him an affectionate farewell, and resumed his journey, never expecting to see his face again. After the lapse of twenty years, however, when on one of his latest visits to Charleston, Bishop Asbury was waited on by Punch, who had obtained permission from his master to do so, and had traveled seventy miles on foot for the purpose. How touching must have been their second interview! What a harvest had sprung from the handful of bread-seeds cast upon the waters! It appeared that the Bishop had no sooner left Punch, than he hastened homeward with

'The thoughts that wake,  
To perish never,'

stirring within his soul; he began to practice upon the instructions of that memorable conversation. He found 'the knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins,' after several days of distress and earnest prayer. The change was too remarkable to escape notice. His fellow-servants began to inquire into the matter. Those were strange things which Punch had to tell them. One and another resorted to his cabin to hear further about these things. The interest spread; many were brought to the knowledge of God. One remarkable result followed. An irreligious overseer had charge of the plantation. He ascertained that some new influence was stirring among the people. Punch was holding prayer meetings at night, and this was not to be allowed. He ordered him to desist. Punch, accordingly, with a sorrowful heart, dismissed his company of worshippers. A week or two passed away, when one evening the overseer's voice was heard calling for Punch, while the latter was engaged in prayer. In no small alarm he went out, when, lo! the overseer was found kneeling under a tree, calling upon God for mercy, and asking the benefit of Punch's prayers. The upshot was his conversion. He joined the Methodist Church; became an exhorter, and finally a preacher.

"The missionary who was sent to the Waccamaw mission, found on the plantation where Punch lived, between two and three hundred blacks under the spiritual supervision of the gray-haired patriarch. 'I was much interested,' says he, 'on my first visit to the old veteran. Just before I reached his house, I met a herdsman, and asked him if there was any preacher on the plantation. "O yes, massa, de old bishop lib here." Said I, "Is he a good preacher?" "O yes," was the reply, "he word burn me heart!" He showed me the house. I knocked at the door, and heard approaching footsteps, and the sound of a cane upon the floor. The door opened, and I saw before me, leaning upon a staff, a hoary-headed black man, with palsied

limbs, but a smiling face. He looked at me for a moment in silence; then raising his eyes to heaven, he said, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." He asked me to take a seat; and I found, in the following remarks, the reason of his exclamation. Said he, "I have many children in this place. I have felt for some time past that my end was nigh. I have looked round to see who might take my place when I am gone. I could find none. I felt unwilling to die and leave them so, and have been praying to God to send some one to take care of them. The Lord has sent you, my child; I am ready to go." Tears coursed freely down his time-shrivelled but smiling face. This interview gave me much encouragement. He had heard of the application for a missionary, and only wanted to live long enough to see his face. After this I had several interviews with him, from which I learned his early history. I always found him contented and happy. In the lapse of a short time afterward he was taken ill and lingered a few days. On Sabbath morning he told me he should die that day. He addressed affecting words to the people who crowded around his dying bed. His theme was, "Now, Lord, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace." He applied these words to himself, and continued his address to the last moment; and death gently stole his spirit away while saying, "Let thy servant depart in peace—let—let—le—!" His mistress sent for me to preach his funeral sermon. The corpse was decently shrouded, and the coffin was carried to the house of worship. I looked upon the face of the cold clay. The departed spirit had left the impress of heaven upon it. Could I be at a loss for a text? I read out of the Gospel, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace!"\*\*

6. The subject of Christian unity was treated on by some for about twelve months previous to May, 1848, with the view of leading to fraternization between the north and south. The Rev. Wm. Hunter, with excellent temper, and no small portion of ability, discussed unity, and pleaded for fraternization.† The southern papers greeted his overtures with much satisfaction.‡ This met with little favor either in New England or in the north generally.¶ The whole middle and north, with few exceptions, were convinced that there could be no ecclesiastical fraternization, and maintain the principles of Scriptural truth, and Methodism, as based on it, unless the south would give up its ground, of which there was no intimation, but an avowed purpose to cleave to their innovations on Methodism. Hence, the attempt at preparatory conciliation of the two great bodies fell to the ground.

The Rev. Wm. Burke attempted to address the two General conferences with what he calls *facts*; but there was no ear to listen in the north, because the facts were considered to be either no facts, or such as could not be brought to bear on the subject.§ His very title was considered to be an insult to the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was, "Facts submitted and respectfully recommended to the consideration of the General conferences of the two ecclesiastical jurisdictions of

\* S., December 3, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 739.

† P., November 17, December 15, 1847. *Scraps*, V, pp. 714, 747, 766; VI, p. 132.

‡ S., July 16, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 582.

§ N., December 22, 1847. *Scraps*, V, p. 771.

¶ N., April 21, 1848.



the Methodist Episcopal Church, north and south." Here there was one Church, but two ecclesiastical jurisdictions, and the word *north* was intended for the Methodist Episcopal Church. This address had no hearing.

The Rev. M. Henkle, in a long, elaborate article, addressed the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the Nashville Advocate, in which he maintained southern principles, and endeavored to make them palatable to the members of General conference. The Pittsburg Advocate quoted this long, absurd address. But it received no attention, as its absurdities forbade its consideration.\*

A retrospect of past events, as they stand connected with the General conference of 1848, will now deserve a brief survey.

7. An examination of the disciplinary character of slavery, as taught in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from its organization, will show that her position in 1844, and onward, is fully sustained.

In its *moral character*, the Discipline, from time to time, pronounces slavery to be "contrary to the law of God, man and nature; hurtful to society; contrary to the dictates of conscience and pure religion; doing that which we would not have others do to us and ours; contrary to the golden law of God, the inalienable rights of mankind, as well as every principle of the Revolution; an abomination; a crying evil; an enormous evil; the buying and selling the souls and bodies of men is a complicated crime." Slavery, in the General Rule, is placed, in its moral characteristics, along side of swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and drunkenness. And this was the voice of the Methodist Episcopal Church for sixty years, or from 1784 to 1844, as it is at this day.

The extirpation, eradication, or pulling up by the roots, of slavery is, and has been, an avowed object of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The means of the Church are moral and disciplinary, not civil or political, yet without improper opposition to existing laws and constitutions.

When purchases or sales of slaves are allowed by the Church, there are two principles enjoined by the letter and spirit of the Methodist Discipline: 1. There must be no intention to *originate, continue, or perpetuate* slavery. 2. The purchase or sale must be made in the exercise of *mercy* or *humanity* to the slave, according to the decision of non-slaveholders. There is no room to buy or sell for *gain, convenience, or pleasure*, or any such motive, but for the sake of humanity and mercy to the slave.

Up to 1820, when the regulations requiring emancipation were in the hands of the annual conferences, emancipation was enjoined on the laity in the border slave states. About this time, and after, the southern preachers generally became slaveholders by inheritance. Ever since the preachers became owners of slaves, a very general relaxation took place among the laity on the subject; and even in 1832 there were only a few individual preachers who entertained the idea of a slaveholding bishop.

8. At the General conference of 1836, by the increase of slaveholding preachers, many southern preachers were in favor of having slaveholding bishops. For the first time, it was avowed, on the floor of General conference, that this was both right and necessary. When no slaveholder was elected, the southern members held a meeting to consider what was to be done, and post-

poned or did not act decisively on the subject. At the close of the General conference, Rev. Wm. A. Smith issued a circular to the south, dated July 30, 1836, urging the south to preliminary measures in view of secession. The sentiment of secession gained ground from 1836 to 1840; for the Georgia and South Carolina conferences, in the winter of 1837-38, declared that slavery was no moral evil.

At the General conference of 1840 the slaveholders gained several advantages. They succeeded in having resolutions passed, pronouncing against the testimony of colored persons. But as no bishops were elected, tests were wanting to try their principles. The conference adjourned to the advantage of the south, but, at the same time, the antislavery sentiments of the Church were much stirred up.

In the fall of 1843 the subject of slaveholding bishops was discussed in the southern papers. It was contended that one of three things they must do: they must have a slaveholding bishop, or suffer themselves to be degraded, or secede from the Church. It was agreed that they could not have a slaveholding bishop. To submit to such a degradation could not be borne. Their course, therefore, must be to secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church. These discussions were vigorously carried on in the fall. Bishop Andrew was married in January. These discussions all ceased on his marriage. All things were hushed up till General conference. The case of Bishop Andrew was the one on which to try their strength. The odium of slavery must be wiped off, and they came to conference prepared to do their utmost.

With these views and purposes, the southern preachers came to the General conference in 1844; and as they had determined to have a slaveholding bishop, in the person of Bishop Andrew, the course of secession was the only one left, according to their previous decision, strengthened by the circumstances of the occasion. Accordingly the General conference of 1844 prepared, as they did, to meet this secession. And the declaration of the south was both the avowal and formal commencement of the secession movement, followed by the Protest, practically prosecuted by the Circular of the southern members at the close of the General conference, and consummated in a formal secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the organization of a new Church at the Louisville convention.

9. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is therefore pro-slavery in her organic character, and especially in the spirit of her leaders, and has virtually renounced the moral and Scriptural principles and practice of Methodism on slavery.

As proofs, confirming the foregoing, we present the following, which might be extended to a great length:

(1.) The first projector of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, the Rev. Wm. A. Smith, D. D., in his famous Circular, on July 30, 1836, avowedly declared that the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the subject of slavery, would not be endured in the south.

(2.) The Georgia and South Carolina conferences, in the winter of 1837-38, renounced formally the moral doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church on slavery, as we have previously quoted; and these two conferences have taken the lead, and have given tone to the proceedings and principles of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

\* P., May 2, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 361.

(3.) The declaration of the southern delegates proves this. The discussion on the subject of slavery, the action of the General conference on it, and their decision in the cases of Harding and Bishop Andrew are the reasons why they renounce the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(4.) The sentiments of the laity, who called for separation immediately after General conference, are at variance with Methodist Discipline. Many specimens have been given in our narrative of these proceedings after General conference of 1844.

(5.) A similar current of anti-Methodistic sentiment runs through the speeches of the members of the Louisville convention. The New York Spectator, after quoting specimens, says, "But what we regretted to see in the Louisville convention was the labored defense of slavery, as slavery."

(6.) The Louisville convention teaches that the General Rule on slavery refers only to those who are free; and therefore the purchase, sale, and traffic of those already slaves is not forbidden.\*

(7.) Leading southern men teach that slavery is not a subject of moral discipline. Dr. Pierce teaches so,† and Dr. Longstreet, in his famous pamphlet on slavery, teaches that God sanctions the relation of master and slave. Others in the south teach the same doctrines.‡

(8.) In the speeches of Bishop Andrew, Drs. Smith and Winans, the doctrine of Methodism on slavery was even denounced; for it was not deemed a proper subject for ecclesiastical legislation; it was wrong to introduce it into the Discipline; it does more harm than good; it is a nullity in the Discipline.

(9.) The proscription of the new Discipline in Charleston, South Carolina, goes to the same purpose; as the preachers of South Carolina conference agreed to circulate no more Disciplines, except such as had the section on slavery stricken out.

(10.) But we must, in justice to the south, say that there are many laymen and preachers in the south, even the far south, who do not receive the views of the leaders of the new organization. As a sample of the sentiment, we give the following extract of a letter from a preacher in the far south, dated March 23, 1848, addressed to us, whose name and location, for obvious reasons, we keep to ourselves. In reference to the sentiments inculcated in the Western Christian Advocate, this excellent and devoted Christian brother and minister says:

"In these sentiments *many, very many* of my southern brethren would join me, if they could but dare to speak out the feelings of their hearts. My dear brother, the great mass of both talent and piety, if it were to speak out unbiassed and untrammelled in the south, would be found to entertain sentiments and feelings as different from those attributed to them by some of their own official organs as light is from darkness—heaven from hell. I am a native southerner—never resided out of a slaveholding state—an am a slaveholder—was brought up in the midst of the institution: in a word, *I know too much* of slavery to be a pro-slavery man. You must not believe, my dear brother, that, because we are cursed with the curse of curses, we are, therefore, pro-slavery. God forbid!"

We doubt not there are very many such in the south, as our brother who wrote the above; and our hope and prayer are, that they will, in time, rescue Methodism in the south from its present perilous condition.

10. Serious mistakes, or wrong principles, have obtained great currency by misnaming the Report on the declaration of the southern members, a *plan*, or the *plan of division*, as though the General conference *divided* the Church, and formed a *plan* for that purpose.

From the journals of the conference of 1844, pages 109, 128, 130, it is plain that this Report should be called the "*Report on the declaration*," because it is a report based on the declaration of the south; and it is not a plan by which the south may separate, but a decision of the General conference, declaring how the south will be treated, should they secede from the Church for a certain reason.

The term *plan* is not in the Report, or its heading, as presented to and passed by the General conference. The reporter of the debates is at fault in heading it, "Report of the Committee of Nine on the Division of the Church." The Report was not on the division of the Church, for no proposition was entertained for the division of the Church, as the General conference deemed themselves incompetent for this. The History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, page 90, calls this Report "the plan of separation." Dr. Capers subsequently advanced on this, and calls it the "deed of separation," and subsequently all sorts of arguing have been employed to show that the General conference planned the division of the Church, and made a solemn deed for that purpose, and even authorized all the doings of the Louisville convention, and the acts of the Petersburg General conference.

The General conference gave no instructions, of any sort, as to the proceedings of the south in forming their new Church. There was nothing done in appointing delegates to the convention, or of the convention itself. It neither *divided* the Church, nor provided for its division. The conference assented to the withdrawal of the south, as they would to the secession of a member. The General conference barely declared how they would treat the south, provided the south assumed the responsibility of the act. As Dr. Olin, in the Christian Advocate and Journal of September 10, 1847, says, "The General conference did not divide the Church, nor consent to the division. It left the responsibility of that deplorable act upon those who have since done the deed on the alleged ground of uncontrollable necessity."

The following *exceptions* may be justly filed against the Methodist Episcopal Church, South:

*First.* It is now no part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but a secession from it.

*Secondly.* It possesses several elements of a schismatic or revolutionary character.

(1.) *In the doings of a minority.* While professing to belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church, the minority carried their acts to an extent that will be an element of schism in any body; and it will yet divide themselves, unless retraced.

(2.) *In measures.* By agitation of the press, by unfounded charges against the Church, the proceedings of the convention, and of their General conference.

(3.) *In executive administration.* Bishop Andrew is supported in contumacy. Bishop Soule

\* Hist. Methodist Episcopal Church, South, pp. 213, 214.

† W., Vol. XII, p. 42. Id., Vol. XV, p. 2.

‡ W., April 12, 1848, Vol. XV, p. 2.

is upheld in disregarding the acts of his colleagues and the acts of the General conference.

(4.) *In the true reason of their conduct.* This is to continue and protect slavery. The secession is not on doctrines, nor on Church polity, but to support a wrong system. It is, therefore, the worst of all secessions.

*Thirdly.* The new Church is *pro-slavery*, as we have shown fully in this narrative.

12. In recognizing the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as a sound branch of Wesleyan Methodism, the following *principles* must also be recognized:

(1.) A minority, after employing all the legitimate privileges of a minority, by vote, debate, and protest, may proceed to counteract the doings of the majority, and subvert the entire polity of the Church; and all this under the plea of being still a legitimate part of the Church, and of acting under her sanction and authority.

(2.) One cardinal reason may be alleged as the cause of the separation, while another may be the true reason for the movement. For instance, the plea of necessity may be urged when no necessity exists, in order to prepare the way for accomplishing the object of disruption.

(3.) A bishop, under censure, disability, or restraint, may despise or act in defiance of the supreme authority of the Church.

(4.) Another bishop may call into the field the offending bishop, and persuade, yea, authorize him, to spurn the decision of the supreme authority, and to disregard the official decision of the bench of bishops.

(5.) A bishop may, after renouncing the authority of the Church, claim the right to act officially for the renounced Church, nay, even to act officially *against* it, even to the subversion of its polity and the disruption of its parts.

(6.) Almost any measures may be employed in forming the new organization, provided, only, that they may be successful.

(7.) The Church, in ecclesiastical matters, must submit to the state in moral principles and moral acts, or be guilty of treason.

(8.) Slavery, as established by law in the United States, is authorized by the Bible.

(9.) The Episcopacy is to be elevated into a relacy.

These are some of the many principles and measures, as matters now stand, which must be acknowledged by the Methodist Episcopal Church, as the price of fellowship with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. If the Methodist Episcopal Church can make all these large concessions as an oblation to slaveholding and revolution, the consequences can be easily told.

13. Another point must be mentioned here; namely, the principles and measures involved, as matters now stand, in dividing the funds of the Book Concern with the south, to say nothing of the mere constitutional questions involved.

In the Western Christian Advocate of December 10, 1847, we published the reports of the Virginia, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Holston conferences on the division of the Book

Concern. These reports comprise the mind of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on this point, because the sentiments of the reports have been maintained generally, if not universally, without the expression of a contrary sentiment thus far. We give the following list of principles and precedents, which are now inseparably connected with the division of these funds, as asserted and maintained by these conferences, and by the south generally:

(1.) That the Methodist Episcopal Church was dissolved, or disorganized, by the General conference of 1844.

(2.) Two new Churches have been formed out of her ruins; namely, the Methodist Episcopal Church, north, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; or, as some interpret, the Methodist Episcopal Church, north, is not yet properly organized, as her professing parts have not *adhered* according to the plan.

(3.) That the General conference did *divide* the Methodist Episcopal Church, and *authorize* the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

(4.) That the plan of separation be sanctioned as interpreted and practiced upon by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

(5.) That all past seceders should have their portion of the Book Concern, as well as all who, at any future time, may, for any cause, or no cause, secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(6.) That the *intention of donors*, and the *objects of benevolent institutions*, are not to be regarded; but the funds may be divided whenever donors may alter their minds, or whenever members of the association may separate from the society.

These are some of the principles and measures which are involved by dividing the funds of the Book Concern with the south, as matters now stand. We leave it with those who can to remove these obstacles; as for us, we feel ourselves incompetent to the task, and, therefore, we can not attempt it.

On April 19, 1848, we penned the following comment, and now, at the lapse of five years, we repeat it:

In our opinion, the General conference will have nothing more to do beyond the ordinary examination by the Committee on this Concern, and the appointment of editors and agents, as usual. Should a lawsuit follow, be it so; the Book Agents, or a special committee, can place the matter in the hands of competent lawyers, and then await the decisions of the dernier court. Should this test be resorted to, we could not deplore it; for it is high time the Methodist Episcopal Church should know whether her chartered benevolent institutions are to be protected by law, or violated by any and every seceding portion that may set up for themselves. One thing is certain, that the loss of the whole property would be a small thing compared to the suicidal act, by which the Church would consent to disrupt her whole organized polity, and make irreparable breaches on the voluntary principle of supporting religion, by scattering her sacred property to the four winds of heaven, as the whims of malcontents would dictate.

## CHAPTER XLVII.

## GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1848.

I. WE will, as heretofore, pass by all historical matter concerning the Church, except such as pertains to the secession of the south, and the events that relate to it.

The first, or preliminary, act of the conference concerning the secession, was on Tuesday, the second day of May, to appoint a large committee of two from each annual conference, called the "Committee on the State of the Church." The following is the resolution passed in appointing them:

"Resolved, That a special committee be appointed upon the state of the Church, to consist of two members from each conference, to be chosen by the delegations."\*

The following are the names of the committees as chosen, two by two, by their respective delegations:

ON THE STATE OF THE CHURCH—John Davis, W. Hamilton, J. P. Durbin, J. Kennaday, Isaac Bonney, Abel Stevens, J. K. Shaw, G. F. Brown, Miner Raymond, J. D. Bridge, George Peck, Fitch Reed, Osman C. Baker, L. D. Barrows, John Clark, A. Witherspoon, Charles W. Leet, Hiram Mattison, S. Elliott, J. J. Swayze, N. Rounds, William Reddy, George Webber, Herman Nickerson, J. J. Steadman, G. W. Clarke, H. Summers, Richard Haney, J. H. Power, E. Thomson, W. Hosmer, P. Woodworth, G. W. Walker, C. Elliott, George B. Bowman, H. W. Reed, S. C. Cooper.

To this Committee were referred, from time to time, all matters concerning the present difficulties of the Church; and this Committee, having matured every thing to the best of their knowledge, reported, from time to time, six different reports, all of which were adopted in substance.

2. The first thing referred to the Committee, and the first, too, that opened the subject of the southern difficulties, was the communication of Dr. Pierce to the conference, on May 3d, under the same date, asking to be recognized as the representative of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and by this reception to establish fraternal relationship between the two Churches, thus acknowledging the new Church as a regular branch of Wesleyan Methodism. Dr. Wightman defines the design of this measure as follows: "It was simply to exhibit the desire of the Southern Methodist Church to preserve the essential unity of Wesleyan Methodism, and to declare that the movement which led to the new and independent organization was, in no sense, schismatical—the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, no secession."† With this act of fraternization, according to the same authority, were connected the property question, the plan of separation, the dividing line, etc.‡

On Wednesday, May 3d, Bishop Morris, as president of the conference, presented the following communication from Dr. L. Pierce,

which was read, and referred to the Committee on the State of the Church:

"To the Bishops and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General conference assembled—Reverend and Dear Brethren,—The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, appointed me as their delegate to bear to you the Christian salutations of the Church, South, and to assure you that they sincerely desire that the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists, north and south, should maintain, at all times, a warm, confiding, and brotherly fraternal relation to each other; and that, through me, they make this offer to you, and very ardently desire that you, on your part, will accept the offer in the same spirit of brotherly love and kindness.

"The acceptance or rejection of this proposition, made by your southern brethren, is entirely at your disposal; and, as my situation is one of painful solicitude till this question is decided, you will allow me to beg your earliest attention to it.

"And I would further say, that your reply to this communication will most gratify me if it is made officially, in the form of resolutions.

"I have the honor to be, very respectfully, yours in the unity of Wesleyan Methodism,

"L. PIERCE,

*Delegate from the Methodist E. Church, South.*

*"Pittsburg, May 3, 1848."\**

On the 5th of May, Committee on the State of the Church reported, in part, as follows:

"That they have had under consideration the letter from the Rev. Dr. Pierce, and that they recommend to the General conference the adoption of the following preamble and resolution:

"Whereas, a letter from Rev. L. Pierce, D. D., delegate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, proposing fraternal relations between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has been presented to this conference; and whereas, there are serious questions and difficulties existing between the two bodies; therefore,

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

The following amendment was added by the conference:

"Provided, however, that nothing in this resolution shall be so construed as to operate as a bar to any propositions from Dr. Pierce, or any other representative of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, toward the settlement of existing difficulties between that body and this.

G. PECK, Chairman."

After the amendment of the report, by Dr. Tomlinson's motion, there was a unanimous vote for the adoption of the entire report as

\* Journal of 1848, p. 8.

† S., May 19, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 373.

‡ S., May 4, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 363.

\* Journal of 1848, p. 16.

amended, 143 voting for it, and none against it, and three members only being absent.

The explanation of the foreman of the Committee, Dr. Peck, was, that, owing to the existing difficulties between the two Churches, the recognition of Dr. Pierce, as he proposed, would be improper, till these difficulties were adjusted.

It seemed that neither the Church, South, nor Dr. Pierce considered, or acknowledged, that difficulties existed; and, therefore, a fraternal recognition would, in effect, go to say that the course of the south was as it ought to be, and the fraternization once recognized would preclude all further adjustment, and this would virtually acknowledge the course of the south, and that the Methodist Episcopal Church was at fault. The proposition of Dr. Pierce was not to settle difficulties; it was to ask the Methodist Episcopal Church to sanction the entire course of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The act of the General conference did not preclude the future adjustment of difficulties; for it was to be "no bar to any propositions from Dr. Pierce, or any other representative of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, toward the settlement of existing difficulties between that body and this." Indeed, Dr. Pierce did not come to settle or acknowledge difficulties on the part of the Church, South. He came, "in the unity of Wesleyan Methodism," to be received, and, through him, the Church, South, to be received as a sound branch of Wesleyan Methodism, after all that had passed. There was much, too, in the declaration of Dr. Tomlinson, in the debates on the subject, that, as the Methodist Episcopal Church was on the side of liberty, "the sympathies of the Church, South, were on the side of slavery."\*

Dr. Pierce, however, was treated with great courtesy by all. He was invited, by subsequent resolution, to a seat within the bar,† with the explanation that such was the meaning and design of the action of the conference in his case. A copy of the proceeding of the conference in regard to him was ordered to be sent him by the secretary.

On May 9th we have the following additional matter in reference to the overture of Dr. Pierce:

"Brother Sandford presented to the conference a communication from Dr. L. Pierce, accompanied by his credentials, as a delegate from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and requesting a copy of his first letter to the conference.

"To the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Pittsburg—Beloved Brethren,—There are, in my mind, many reasons why I send in the inclosed paper. You ought to see it; and I had promised it. It has been alluded to by at least one member, on the adoption of the report of the committee on my letter.

Very respectfully yours,

"L. PIERCE, Delegate, etc.

"Pittsburg, May 9, 1848.

"Special request.—Will the conference oblige me so far as to let me have a copy of my letter of inquiry, and excuse my being so far troublesome?

"Yours truly,

"L. PIERCE, Delegate, etc."

*Resolutions passed by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its session held in Petersburg, Virginia, on May 23, 1846.*

"On motion of F. E. Pitts,

"Resolved, by a rising and unanimous vote, That Dr. Lovick Pierce be, and is hereby delegated to visit the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to be held in Pittsburg, May 1, 1848, to tender to that body the Christian regards and fraternal salutations of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"In case of the inability of Dr. Pierce to attend the session of the aforesaid conference, the bishops are respectfully requested to appoint a substitute."

"I certify that the above is a true transcript from the journal of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. In behalf of the board of bishops,

"JOSHUA SOULE, Chairman.

"Pittsburg, May 4, 1848.

"Voted Dr. Pierce a copy of his letter to the General conference, at his request."\*

The foregoing would go to say that Dr. Pierce was in no small haste to secure fraternization for his Church, and not to settle difficulties. According to the sense of Dr. Wightman, given in advance, "the question of fraternization will be brought up on the testimonials of Dr. Pierce."† But Dr. Pierce endeavored to secure this object six days before he presented his credentials. In short, he had no power to do any thing more than to "tender to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church the Christian regards, and fraternal salutations, of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." The southern conference decided every thing right that was done by their bishops, their convention, their editors, and by themselves, and they wished an official acknowledgment of all this from the Methodist Episcopal Church. More still, by this act of recognition it would be decided that the Methodist Episcopal Church, her bishops, and all her officials, were wrong, except so far as they believed and acted in conformity with the teachings of the declaration, the Protest, the convention, and all the infractions of the southern bishops.

The proceedings of the 5th and 6th were communicated to Dr. Pierce by the secretary, and the following letter from him terminated the negotiation:

"To the Bishops and Members of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church—Rev. and Dear Brethren,—I have received two extracts from your journal of the 4th and 5th instant. From these extracts I learn you decline receiving me in my proper character as the accredited delegate of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and only invite me to a seat within the bar as due to me on account of my private and personal merits. These considerations I shall appreciate, and will reciprocate them with you in all the private walks of Christian and social life. But within the bar of the General conference I can only be known in my official character.

"You will, therefore, regard this communication as final on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. She can never renew the

\* Debates, May 5th. Scraps, VI, pp. 410-414.

† Journal of 1848, p. 24.

\* Journal of 1848, p. 33.

† S., May 4, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 363

offer of fraternal relations between the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists in the United States. But the proposition can be renewed at any time, either now or hereafter by the Methodist Episcopal Church. And if ever made upon the basis of the plan of separation, as adopted by the General conference of 1844, the Church, South, will cordially entertain the proposition.

"With sentiments of deep regard, and with feelings of disappointed hope, I am yours, in Christian fellowship,

"L. PIERCE,

"*Delegate from the Methodist E. Church, South. Pittsburg, May 9, 1848.*"\*

The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church was asked to declare that a perfect state of amity existed at the present time between the two Churches, and that their disposition was to continue those relations. Such a declaration could not be made; and so clear was the case that the General conference was unanimous in rejecting the overture of the Church, South.

Dr. Pierce, on the 16th of May, just on his leaving Pittsburg, addressed a letter "to the Pittsburg General conference, and the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north," and sent it to the editor of the Pittsburg Advocate for publication, who declined to publish it, for reasons satisfactory to Dr. Pierce. The title of north which he gives to the Methodist Episcopal Church, he must have known to be disrespectful and insulting, as it gives a new name to the Church, and refuses to give her her proper official title. The letter shows that Dr. Pierce entered into some of the unjustifiable measures pursued by his associates. The purport of his letter is to assert that slavery is a civil institution, with which the Church has nothing to do; that the Church, South, was compelled by necessity to do as they have done, and that they did so by the permission of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He complains that his overture was rejected †

3. The alteration of the sixth Restrictive Article occupied, as a matter of course, the attention of the conference, as this was connected with the present difficulties. On the 8th of May the following resolution was passed:

"That the Committee on Itinerancy be instructed to ascertain and report, with the least possible delay, the action of the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in reference to the alteration of the sixth Restrictive limitation of the Discipline, as recommended by the General conference of 1844."‡

The Committee on the State of the Church presented a report, May 18th, on the state of the vote to alter the sixth Restriction, to the effect that the number of votes required by the Discipline to change said Rule had not been given. The report was adopted.¶

4. On the 12th of May Bishop Soule addressed a letter "to the Bishops and Members of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, now in session," dated Pittsburg, May 10, 1848. In this long letter of three pages and a half, octavo, when in print, he took occasion to instruct the conference in reference to the new Church, to complain loudly of C. Elliott and of J. B. Finley, and asked the conference to try him.

He assumes, in detail, that the new Church was formed in conformity to and by the authority of the General conference of 1844; that his official connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church ceased in May, 1846, and that he held himself responsible to this General conference for his conduct up to May, 1846. He especially complains of the declaration of the Western Advocate, of June 12, 1846: "But Bishop Soule has withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church *under grave charges*, or liable to them. Charges, we learn, were officially laid in against him previous to the convention." He complains that he expostulated with the editor to no purpose, demanding the charges. He now requests to be tried on them before the conference, but that the case should not go before the Episcopal Committee. After this he complains that fraternization was not awarded to his Church, claims it to be a branch of the Wesleyan family, and finishes with his old, invincible argument, the increase of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in four years, of 41,358 members.\*

When the letter of Bishop Soule was read, Rev. J. A. Collins offered a resolution, asking to refer it to a committee of five with instructions to report that, as Bishop Soule has withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, it is improper to act on his communication. Rev. A. Griffith offered a substitute to the same amount, but more in detail. The following resolution, after brother Griffith's substitute had been laid on the table, was carried unanimously:

"Resolved, That it is the sense of this General conference that they have no jurisdiction over the Rev. Bishop Soule, and can exercise no ecclesiastical authority over him."

The secretary was ordered to send Bishop Soule a copy of the resolution.†

All were agreed that Bishop Soule had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that, therefore, the General conference had no cognizance of his case. And, considering the former relation of the Bishop to the Methodist Episcopal Church, none were disposed to do or say any thing respecting his present anomalous position, or even his unjustifiable administration while he was yet a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

But as he brought up so prominently the intended charges of Mr. Finley, the latter deemed himself called upon to remark. He said Bishop Soule had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church at the Louisville convention, in presiding in it and signing its journals. If we were now to exercise jurisdiction over him, and were to try him, and suspend him, he would not stay suspended; or if we were to expel him, he would not stay expelled. As to the charges, they were these: That he had called Bishop Andrew to work, which was an act of contumacy, and that he disregarded the decision of his colleagues; and that he would not have said this much had not Bishop Soule urged this measure himself, in vexatiously introducing it to the conference. We have now a copy of these charges; and the reason why Mr. Finley did not present them was that Bishop Soule, in May, 1845, had withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church in becoming an official actor in the proceedings of the convention.

On the 31st of May Bishop Soule addressed a

\* C., May, 24, 1848, Vol. XXIII, p. 82. Scraps, VI, p. 423.

† S., May 26, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 391-393.

‡ Journal, p. 30.

¶ Id., p. 66.

\* Journal of 1848, pp. 134-137.

† Id., pp. 45, 46, 47.

letter to the conference, requesting an extract from the journals of the entire proceedings on his letter:

"REVEREND AND DEAR BRETHREN,—If your journals contain any record of the proceedings of the conference in reference to my communication to your body, I respectfully request a copy of such record.

"I received from your secretary a copy of a resolution passed by the conference in the words following: '*Resolved by the delegates, etc.,* That they have no jurisdiction over the Rev. Bishop Soule, and can exercise no ecclesiastical authority over him.' But as this resolution makes no reference to my communication, I have no official assurance of its reception, or of any action of the conference in reference to it.

"You will confer a special favor by furnishing me with a copy of all recorded on the journal in reference to the case.

"Very respectfully, JOSHUA SOULE.

"Pittsburg, May 31, 1848."

The secretary was ordered to give such an extract, and there the matter ended. Bishop Soule's letter was considered by all as a vexatious procedure, calculated to throw discord into the conference. But as all were of the same mind—every one, from his heart, disapproving of the Bishop's entire course from May, 1844, to May, 1848—there was not found in the General conference a single individual to espouse, in whole or in part, the cause of the Bishop. All treated him with due courtesy, in self-respect, but all considered him the principal mover in producing the secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church.\* The Southern Advocate states that the Bishop attended the conference to meet the charges, and having waited nearly two weeks he at last addressed the conference.† The circumstances go to say that the Bishop had no objection to give the conference trouble, unless they acquiesced in his administration.

5. The Book Committee of the Canada conference sent a memorial to the General conference, in which they ask a modification of the former arrangements. This will appear in its best form by the following report on the case, adopted May 15:

"The Committee on the Book Concern, to whom was referred 'the memorial from the Book Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada,' have carefully considered the same, and respectfully submit the following report thereon:

"The Book Committee, in their memorial, ask a modification of the plan adopted by the General conference in 1836, for the settlement of the claim of the Canada conference upon the property of the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and also that the General conference direct the Book Agents at New York to remit the balance due upon the obligation given them by the Canada commissioners, amounting to some \$400, and return the bond to the commissioners.

"After an examination of the facts and reasons presented in the memorial, and from the statements made by the representatives from Canada and the Agent at New York, your committee are of opinion that the requests of the 'Book Committee of the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Canada' should be granted, and recommend to the General conference the adoption of the following resolutions:

"(1.) *Resolved, etc.,* That in view of the fact that our Canada brethren have derived but little

advantage from the arrangement of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, adopted for their benefit in 1836, the Book Agents at New York are hereby directed to let them have books at the cost prices during the ensuing four years.

"(2.) *Resolved, etc.,* That the Agents at New York be directed to release the Canada commissioners from the amount due on the obligation given by them to the Agents in 1836, and that the said obligation be returned to the commissioners."\*

The British conference never divided the funds of their Book Concern with any of the branches of the Wesleyan Methodists that sprung from them, and with whom they were on friendly and intimate relations. We instance the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Irish conference, the Canadian conference, the French conference, and the Australian conference. The parent body kept and managed their Concern themselves, as this was manifestly necessary for the preservation of unity, as well as to give no countenance to unnecessary separation. The Methodist Episcopal Church deemed any such decision hazardous, and, after a full consideration of the subject, declined to do it with the Canada conference, though they granted them advantages equal to a division of funds.

Although the General conference of 1844 recommended such a course, the result of it was so manifest, in encouraging division, that the annual conferences refused to assent to the measure; and the events since that time only confirm the wisdom and justice of their course. The Canadian Church is as well provided for as if a partition of funds had taken place. And the privileges already granted to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and that would in future be granted, would be more than an equivalent for a *pro rata* distribution of funds. Beside, these funds, in *design* and *intention*, were placed in *trust* of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and she is, therefore, bound to preserve the trust, with the *intention* of spreading religious knowledge over the world. And this she can do better for all concerned, by managing the funds herself, than by transferring them to others. And then let it be considered that, prospectively, there will be many Methodist Episcopal Churches, such as the African, the German, and others; so that, considering the efficiency of our present undivided Concern, for the general benefit of all Methodist bodies, the distribution of the funds would be an unwise step. And this is more especially the case when the Book Concern is on the eve of the time, through the surrounding circumstances, in which no dividends will be appropriated to superannuated preachers, their widows or orphans, but all of it will be employed in spreading religious knowledge. So that viewing the *intent* of the book fund, it can best be carried on, for the benefit of all concerned, without division.

6. As the resolution of the General conference of 1840, connected with the Westmoreland petition, had been misinterpreted by the south, so as to declare that a bishop, as well as others, might own slaves, a resolution was passed, May 18th, to refer this subject to the Committee on the State of the Church.† This committee had not time to consider it. On the 31st of May we find a note in the Journal, page 119, which says: "Conference ordered all action relative to the Westmoreland case to be struck from the Jour-

\* See Debates on May 13th. Scraps, VI, pp. 442-444.

† S., May 26, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 393.

\* Journal, p. 49.

† Id., p. 59.

nal." On the 1st of June the following action took place:

"J. Steadman offered the following:

"Whereas, the following resolution is found appended to the report on the Westmoreland petitions, and was adopted by the General conference of 1840, namely:

"Resolved, That under the provisional exception of the General Rule of the Church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or the mere ownership of slave property, in states and territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election and ordination of ministers to the various offices known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and can not, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture or right, in view of such election and ordination;"

"And whereas, said resolution is liable to misconstruction, and has been misconstrued greatly to the prejudice of our beloved Methodism. Therefore,

"(1.) Resolved, That said resolution be, and is hereby rescinded.

"(2.) Resolved, That, in rescinding said resolution, we contemplate no interference with the section of the Discipline on slavery; but wish simply to leave it without note or comment."

"Moved to lay the above resolution on the table. Lost.

"Voted to take the previous question.

"The resolutions and preamble were adopted."\*

7. The condition of *adherents* to the Methodist Episcopal Church occupied the attention of the conference. Petitions from various parts of Kentucky, Missouri, and Arkansas, to the amount of several thousand signatures, were presented to the General conference, and referred to the Committee on the State of the Church. Some complained that their Church property had been wrested from them by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and asked for indemnity. All of them complained loudly against the report of the committee on the declaration, or the so-called plan of separation.

In regard to the complaint of *depriving of membership*, the following report was adopted, May 31st:

"The Committee on the State of the Church beg leave further to report, in part, as follows:

"Among the papers referred to them for examination, they find memorials from different places in the slaveholding states, praying for recognition as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for ministers to be sent to them, for the reorganization of conferences, districts, etc., which memorials are signed, in all, by two thousand, seven hundred and thirty-five persons.

"In regard to these memorials we recommend for adoption the following:

"Resolved, That we recognize all persons in these United States, who were members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1844, who have not been separated from said Church by withdrawal or expulsion, according to Discipline, and who express a desire to be recognized, as still under our care and jurisdiction as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that we regard it as our duty, as far as practicable, to supply all such with the preaching and ordinances of the Gospel.

"GEORGE PECK, Chairman."

"The secretary was ordered to give Dr. Akers a copy of the above report.

"Report No. 7, in relation to St. Louis and Maysville difficulties, was adopted, and reads as follows:"\*

In regard to those who complained of *loss of property*, and asked for a portion of the funds of the Book Concern, the following report of the Committee on the State of the Church was adopted, May 31st:

"Your committee have had under their consideration the various claims referred to them, and recommend to the General conference the adoption of the following resolutions:

"(1.) Resolved, That while this conference deeply sympathizes with those who have been deprived of their houses of worship, in various places, under the operation of the so-called plan of separation; yet there is no power to draw upon the funds of the Book Concern to indemnify them for their losses. Nevertheless, all such claims will be duly considered and urged in the final adjustment of the alleged claims of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, should such adjustment take place.

"(2.) Resolved, That this conference has no power to draw upon the funds of the Book Concern to meet any claims which any of our local brethren in Arkansas, as set forth in some petitions, may have, for services rendered to the Church.

"(3.) Resolved, That the annual conferences, within whose bounds any traveling minister may reside, who have suffered from the plan of separation, be, and they are hereby authorized to examine and determine the nature and amount of said claims; and to make such arrangement for their settlement, through their boards of stewards and their mission committees, as they may judge best.

"Respectfully submitted.

"GEORGE PECK, Chairman."

The report, No. 7, of the Committee on the State of the Church, in reference to St. Louis, Hannibal, and Maysville, was adopted, May 31st:

"Whereas, the plan of separation, as it is called, passed by the General conference of 1844, has, in its operations, deprived a large number of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, situated in the state of Missouri, of the ministry and the privileges of the Methodist Episcopal Church during the last three years;

"And whereas, this portion of the Church has also been deprived of their houses of worship, from the same cause, greatly to their pecuniary injury; and whereas, one society in St. Louis has, at great expense for them, erected a new house of worship, for which, after having entirely exhausted their means, they are considerably in debt for it; and two other societies, in the same city, have commenced suits to obtain their houses by law; for which object it is necessary to have means successfully to prosecute said suits to a final decision; and in other places they are destitute of sufficient means to build new houses to worship God in; therefore be it

"(1.) Resolved, by this General conference, That the societies belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the city of St. Louis, and in the town of Hannibal, all in the state of Missouri, be, and they are hereby authorized to appoint an agent to travel and solicit aid from the Church, for the purpose of their relief from their pecuniary embarrassments, and the ministry and



membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church are requested to render said agent all the aid and facilities in their power to accomplish this object.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That the several annual conferences be requested to take such measures to assist the brethren in those places as they, in their wisdom, may see proper.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That the petitions of brother J. Armstrong and brother Savage be referred to the Ohio annual conference, to adopt such measures as they may deem proper to assist said brethren.

"Respectfully submitted.

"GEORGE PECK, *Chairman*."\*

8. The Wyandott Indians addressed a petition to the General conference, dated April 18, 1848, asking them to appropriate funds to enable them to finish their church, basing their claim on the moneys received from the United States Government, in lieu of the missionary farm at Sandusky, Ohio. Their petition was read on the 12th of May, and a select committee of three was appointed to consider it and report.† On the 22d of May the committee, by their foreman, Rev. J. B. Finley, reported as follows:‡

"Your committee are of opinion that the General conference have no power to refund the money, but that it is only at the disposal of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved*, That this General conference do most earnestly recommend to the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to refund to the Wyandotts the whole, or five hundred dollars of the amount, to pay the debt incurred in building their church, provided the Methodists, in the above tribe of Indians, are recognized as belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That the decision of this General conference, in relation to this matter, be conveyed to the chiefs and council of the Wyandotts, by the secretary, as soon as possible.

"All which is respectfully submitted.

"J. B. FINLEY, *Chairman*."\*

The report was adopted. The Wyandotts sent in a petition to claim their membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

## CHAPTER XLVIII.

### GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1848, CONCLUDED.

1. WE continue the proceedings of the General conference, by presenting the reports of the Committee on the State of the Church, on the general principles of our government, in regard to the rights of members, the annulment of the plan, the Church property, and the infractions of the plan by the south, as comprised in the final report of the committee.

The report on the state of the Church, taken up on the 24th of May, and passed by the General conference, is in these words:

"*First declaration*. There exists no power in the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to pass any act which either directly or indirectly effectuates, authorizes, or sanctions a division of the Church."

Yeas, 146; nays, 3.

"*Second declaration*. It is the right of every member of the Methodist Episcopal Church to remain in said Church, unless guilty of the violation of its rules, and there exists no power in the ministry, either individually or collectively, to deprive any member of said right."

Yeas, 148; nays, 1.

"*Third declaration*. That right being inviolably secured by the fifth Restrictive Article of the Discipline, which guarantees to the members, ministers, and preachers, the right of trial and appeal, any acts of the Church, otherwise separating them from said Church, contravene the constitutional rights and privileges of the membership and ministry."

Yeas, 142; nays, 6.

"*Fourth declaration*. This comprises eight sections.

"*Sec. 1*. The report of the select committee of nine, on the declaration of the delegates in the

slaveholding states, adopted by the General conference of 1844, of which the members complain, and the operation of which deprived them of their privileges as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was intended to meet a necessity which it was alleged might arise, and was given as a peace-offering to secure harmony on our southern border."

Yeas, 133; nays, 5.

"*Sec. 2*. It was further made dependent, first upon the consequence of three-fourths of the members of annual conferences in reference to a part of its regulations."

Yeas, 124; nays, 16.

"*Sec. 3*. And secondly, upon the observance of certain provisions respecting a boundary, by the distinct ecclesiastical connection separating from us, should such a connection be formed."

Yeas, 129; nays, 10.

"*Sec. 4*. Without waiting, as this conference believes, for the concurrence of the anticipated necessity, for which the plan was framed, action was taken in the premises by the southern delegates."

Yeas, 130; nays, 6.

"*Sec. 5*. The annual conferences by their votes, officially received, have refused to concur with that part of the plan which was submitted to them."

Yeas, 122; nays, 15.

"*Sec. 6*. And the provisions respecting a boundary have been violated by the highest authorities of said connection, which separated from us, and thereby the peace and harmony of many of the societies on our southern border have been destroyed."

Yeas, 135; nays, 4.

"*Sec. 7*. Therefore, in view of these facts, as

\* Journal, p. 117.

† *Id.*, p. 42.

‡ For petition, see *Scraps*, XVI, p. 466.

\* Journal, p. 68, and *Scraps*, VI, p. 467.

well as the principles contained in the preceding declarations, there exists no obligation to observe the provisions of said plan."

"Sec. 8. And it is hereby declared null and void."

Yeas, 133; nays, 9.\*

The foregoing is the report as amended and as passed by the General conference, with the number of yeas and nays on each declaration and section of the report. From this it will be seen how great the unanimity was that prevailed.

2. The foregoing report called forth a good deal of discussion; and though there was some variety of opinion on minor points, there was a remarkable agreement on every thing material, as the final votes showed.

Dr. G. Peck, chairman of the committee, said, that the present report was merely the basis of a final report in process of preparation, which will furnish the reasons for the action of the conference upon the so-called plan of separation, and its practical results, and fix the relations of the two parties concerned in the question which it involves.†

On the first declaration in the report the following sentiments were expressed:

Dr. Durbin could vote for the general principles of the report; though he thought they did not bear on the action of the last General conference.

Mr. Kennaday said the first declaration asserted an abstract principle, not involved in the doings of the last General conference, as this body did not divide the Church. It only stated its course toward those who declared for future separation. The brethren in Canada separated, but the Methodist Episcopal Church remains undivided. So the south have separated, and we still remain the same old, undivided Methodist Episcopal Church.

G. Filmore said the principle set forth in the first declaration was recognized in the action of the last General conference, and by the committee of nine, of which he had been one.

On the second declaration there was no debate.

On the third declaration we furnish in brief the following sentiments from the various speakers:

Dr. Durbin observed that the fifth Restriction referred only to privileges where members are accused of some immorality or violation of Discipline. In such cases they must have a trial and the privilege of appeal. The General conference did not infract this restriction. It did not divide or authorize a division of the Church. The only ground the last General conference allowed of separation, was necessity—and such a necessity as would prevent the south from exercising their ministry in the south.

G. Filmore, who was one of the committee of nine, said that, on presenting the plan, the difficulties were not, that the ministers drove away the people, but that the people would drive away the ministers. This was the only difficulty presented, and it was upon this the General conference acted.

G. W. Walker thought the plan cut off both members and preachers. Suppose, in a society of one hundred members, fifty-one voted to go south. The plan forbids to send a minister to the forty-nine who remain. I will not say the plan expelled them; but it withdrew the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it

withdrew the ministers, it withdrew the sacred ordinances.

Mr. S. Comfort said the declaration recognizes a principle which secures the privileges of the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the practical operation of the plan members have been separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and deprived of the jurisdiction and all the sacred immunities of the Church.

On the fourth declaration there was much debate. This declaration, as reported by the committee, was now under consideration. It is as follows; and we here quote it, though Dr. Simpson's substitute, containing eight sections, was passed in its place:

The fourth declaration, as originally reported, is as follows:

"The report of the select committee of nine upon the declaration of the delegates in the slaveholding states, commonly called the plan of separation, adopted by the last General conference, of which the memorialists complain, and the operation of which separated them from connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, having been intended to secure peace and harmony in our southern boundary, and having been designed to be dependent upon the occurrence of a specified necessity, upon the concurrence of three-fourths of the members of the annual conferences, and upon the observance of a specified boundary by the distinct ecclesiastical connection separating from us, should such connection be formed, and the said necessity, in the opinion of this conference, not having arisen, the annual conferences having refused the necessary concurrence, and said provisions respecting a boundary having been infracted by the highest authorities of said connection; therefore, in view of these facts, as well as for the reasons before specified, there exists no obligation on the part of this conference to observe the provisions of said plan respecting a boundary, and said plan is hereby declared null and void."\*

J. Davis was opposed to pronouncing the plan null and void; because,

*First.* This conference has not the right to do so. The plan involves the right peaceably to separate, without revolution, without violent disruption.

*Secondly.* It involves the right of separation without the reproach of schism.

*Again.* It involves the right of peaceable and unmolested occupation of territory.

On constitutional grounds, this conference has no right to pass upon the acts of 1844. The plan may be unconstitutional, but we have not the right to pronounce it so.

Mr. N. Wilson argued that, though the plan was wrong in itself, yet the boundary line ought not to be abolished, as its preservation will promote peace along the borders. The feeling for emancipation now is once more diffusing itself in the slaveholding states. It is almost as prevalent as in 1832. The unhappy interference of abolitionists has thrown this excellent work back more than fifty years. Some brethren think that those laboring in the slaveholding states have the power to liberate the slaves. We rely on the progress of liberal and Christian principles to effect that which we think would be unavailing for us to attempt, or otherwise to accomplish. We adopt the lan-

\* Journal, pp. 68, 73-85. † Scraps, VI, p. 492.

\* Journal, p. 75.

guage of Watson to the West India missionaries, "We meddle not with the relation of master and slave, but go on in our peculiar work of preaching the Gospel."

J. Drummond thought that the three-fourth votes of the annual conferences was not necessary to authorize the plan.

Mr. Cartwright said, the question is, if the General conference had a right to pass such a law, can we not declare it null and void? We have just as much power as any General conference ever had. If they had a right to pass a law in 1844, we have a right to repeal it now. As we have not had a three-fourth vote of those who are the constitutional judges, we have nothing to do but annul it. We have a right to declare it null and void. So far as the constitutional question is concerned, there can be no doubt.

J. A. Collins proposed the appointment of three commissioners to confer with a like board from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to make provision for the extension of either Church over all societies who desire it. Mr. Collins made a speech in favor of this plan, but his measure did not prevail.

J. B. Finley said, the plan declared how we would act provided the south would separate. It was a rule to guide us, not them. And if they must view it as a compact, they have violated its provisions so as to render it obligatory on the Methodist Episcopal Church.

D. Holmes said, the plan had been carried through the last General conference by a blind sympathy. It was introduced by the artifice of southern delegates, and carried through by the force of sympathy. When Dr. Durbin proposed to commence with Kentucky, in asking for the alteration of the sixth Restriction, a perfect storm was raised against the motion, and it was withdrawn. I attempted to renew it, but in vain. And so far from its being entered into in good faith, it was the dictate of *bad* faith on the part of the southern delegates. I wish a formal vote on this line, declaring it null and void, because it operates a forfeiture of the rights and privileges of our members.

Mr. Kennaday was in favor of Mr. Collins's mode of adjustment, and pleaded accordingly.

Mr. Porter agreed with Mr. Finley, that the plan was obtained by the south through deception, for it was sought ostensibly for objects of peace and love, and when obtained it was converted into an instrument of war.

D. Curry denounced the plan as unconstitutional, and injurious, invading the rights and privileges of ministers and members. Its very being was wrong. It not only contravenes the sixth Restriction, but it subverts the elementary principles of the ecclesiastical compact. It was obtained by false pretenses; the necessity for it never existed. The southern delegates used means to produce secession on their return from General conference. It should, therefore, be pronounced null and void.

S. A. Roszel declared his opposition to the principles of the plan. Yet, as it had been made, it were better to adhere to it. He thought the fourth declaration, as presented by the committee, was poorly composed, and on this account very faulty.

At this stage of the debate Dr. Peck offered the following substitute for the fourth original declaration:

"The report of the committee of *nine*, commonly called the plan of separation, adopted

by the General conference at its session in 1844, having in its results practically contravened the above-named principles, and having been dependent upon conditions which have not been fulfilled, it is hereby declared that said plan is and has been null and void."

G. Peck, in offering his substitute, made a very able speech on the merits of the question. He said the plan provides as if the division were history. The strong declarations of the south were received as truth. The conference reposed all confidence in their declarations. The error of the General conference was to provide a remedy for the hypothetical case. He voted for the plan. In confessing that act wrong he only acknowledges himself wiser now than he was four years ago. And though it was not anticipated at the time, it now appears that thousands of members have been separated by its operation from the Methodist Episcopal Church, without their consent. The consent of the annual conferences was necessary, as the greater part of the plan depended on that action. But the ordinary rules of constitutional principles could not apply so as to form a remedy to cases of revolution. For such cases recourse must be had to the great principles of natural right.

J. T. Peck followed, and showed, from the measures and infractions of the south, that the plan was justly a nullity.

W. Hamilton observed, that to pronounce the plan null would interfere with the settlement of the Book Concern. He was a man of peace, and desired much that the unnatural war, now going on upon the border, should cease.

G. W. Walker maintained with unanswerable argument, that there is no foundation for the declaration of the south, that the plan is a compact between two parties, or, as Bishop Capers calls it, a deed of separation; for it requires two parties to form treaties and compacts and give them force. The General conference acted under a written constitution, binding them to preserve the unity, peace, and prosperity of the Church: They have, therefore, no authority to divide into parties and then enter into a contract to divide the Church.

But to test the argument, allowing there was a contract, Mr. Walker quotes from Kent's Commentaries—pages 173, 174—showing that treaties of every kind bind mutually the parties; and if one party break the treaty, the other party may pronounce it broken, and therefore null. Thus, in 1798, the Congress declared that the treaties with France were no longer obligatory on the United States, as France had repeatedly broken them. Hence, the General conference can pronounce the plan null and void.

Beside, there is a necessity, Mr. Walker argued, to pronounce this plan null. The Church, in sustaining it, is rapidly hastening to a revolution or dissolution. The Church has come to a point in the progress of events, in which the administering of the government as exercised by the legislative and executive departments is working the destruction of the very ends of government. And this dissolution is in consequence of the observance of the so-called plan, which is now entirely perverted from its original design.

3. In reference to the property question the following documents were presented to General conference May 12th:

"To the Bishops and Members of the General con-

ference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General conference assembled—Reverend and Dear Brethren,—The undersigned, commissioners and appointee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, respectfully represent to your body, that pursuant to our appointment, and in obedience to specific instructions, we notified the commissioners and agent of the Methodist Episcopal Church of our readiness to proceed to the adjustment of the property question according to the plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844. And we furthermore state, that the chairman of the Board of Commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church informed us they would not act in the case, and referred us to your body for the settlement of the question as to the division of the property and funds of the Church. And being furthermore instructed by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in case of a failure to settle with your commissioners, to attend the session of your body in 1848, for the settlement and adjustment of all questions involving property and funds, which may be pending between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, take this method of informing you of our presence, and of our readiness to attend to the matters committed to our trust and agency by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and we desire to be informed as to the time and manner in which it may suit your views and convenience to consummate with us the division of the property and funds of the Church, as provided for in the plan of separation adopted with so much unanimity by the General conference of 1844. And for our authority in the premises, we respectfully refer you to the accompanying document, marked A.

"A. L. P. GREEN,  
"C. B. PARSONS, } Commissioners.  
"L. PIERCE, }

"JOHN EARLY, Appointee.  
"Pittsburg, May 11, 1848."

Extract from the Journal of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at its session held in Petersburg, Va., 1846:

"(1.) Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in General conference assembled, That three commissioners be appointed, in accordance with the plan of separation adopted by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1844; and to act in concert with the commissioners appointed by the said Methodist Episcopal Church; to estimate the amount due to the south, according to the aforesaid plan of separation; and to adjust and settle all matters pertaining to the division of the Church property and funds, as provided for in the plan of separation, with full power to carry into effect the whole arrangement with regard to said division.

"(2.) Resolved, That the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, shall forthwith notify the commissioners and Book Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of their appointment as aforesaid, and of their readiness to adjust and settle the matters aforesaid; and should no such settlement be effected before the session of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in 1848, said commissioners shall have power and authority, for and in behalf of this conference, to attend the General conference of the Methodist Episc-

opal Church, to settle and adjust all questions involving property or funds which may be pending between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"(3.) Resolved, That should the commissioners appointed by this General conference, after proper effort, fail to effect a settlement as above, then, and in that case, they shall be, and are hereby, authorized to take such measures as may best secure the just and equitable claims of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the property and funds aforesaid.

"(4.) Resolved, That John Early be, and is hereby, authorized to act as the agent or appointee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in conformity to the plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844, to receive and hold in trust, for the use and benefit of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, all property and funds of every description which may be paid over to him by the Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The conference then proceeded to appoint, by ballot, the three commissioners provided for in the report. On the first balloting, H. B. Bascom, A. L. P. Green, and S. A. Latta, were elected to that office.

"(5.) Resolved, That should a vacancy occur in the board of commissioners, or in the office of appointee, herein before provided for, by death or otherwise, in the interim of the General conference, then and in that case the remaining members of the board shall have power to fill such vacancy with the approbation of one or more of the bishops."

A true copy. In behalf of the board of bishops, JOSHUA SOULE, Chairman.

J. A. Collins moved that so much of these documents as relates to the division of the funds be referred to the Committee on the State of the Church. Carried.\*

On May 13th the Committee on the State of the Church reported as follows:

"The Committee on the State of the Church beg leave further to report in part:

"(1.) That they have had under consideration a communication from the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in relation to a division of the property of the Book Concern, and the Charter Fund, and that they can not act advisedly upon the communication in question till they receive the official reports of all the annual conferences in relation to the change of the sixth Restrictive Rule, as recommended by the last General conference.

"(2.) The committee would ask the attention of the conference to the necessity of an order pointing out some plan of conference with the aforesaid commissioners, either by appointing a committee of — to confer with the commissioners and report the result to this conference, or by authorizing the Committee on the State of the Church to invite them to a conference. The former plan would save time, and would, in the judgment of your committee, be preferable.

"Respectfully submitted.

"GEO. PECK, Chairman."

The report was adopted, and the committee instructed to invite the commissioners to a conference with them, or a committee of their own number, as they shall deem best.†

The following report on the foregoing was

\* Journal, pp. 43, 44.

† Id., p. 47.

presented by the Committee on the State of the Church:

"The Committee on the State of the Church beg leave to report in part,

"That they have had under consideration the claims preferred by the Church, South, to a portion of the property of the Book Concern and Chartered Fund; and pending the discussion of the subject, the question of proposing to refer the whole matter to disinterested arbiters was proposed and considered. Whereupon the committee agreed to recommend to the General conference for adoption the following resolutions:

"(1.) *Resolved*, That it is the sense of this conference, that we have no authority independently of the annual conferences to enter into arbitration with the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in relation to the claims set up by them to a division of the vested funds of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That this General conference recommend to the annual conferences so far to suspend the sixth Restrictive Rule of the Discipline, as to allow the appointment of commissioners for the purpose of arbitrating what is technically called the property question, with the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"By order of the committee.

"Respectfully submitted.

"GEO. PECK, *Chairman.*"

During the debate on the report, J. F. Wright offered a substitute, which was laid on the table.\*

Dr. Holdich then offered another substitute.† Another was offered by Messrs. J. T. Peck and Finley.‡

Finally, the following substitute was offered by Messrs. Curry and Simpson, which carried. This embodied the principal elements of the foregoing substitutes:

"Whereas, it is now ascertained that the recommendation of the General conference, at its session in 1844, to change the sixth Restrictive Article so as to allow of a division of the property of the Book Concern, with a distinct ecclesiastical connection, which might be formed by the thirteen annual conferences in the slave states, has not been concurred in by a vote of three-fourths of all the members of the several annual conferences present and voting on said recommendation;

"And whereas, the thirteen protesting annual conferences in the slaveholding states have formed themselves into a separate and distinct ecclesiastical connection, under the title and name of the 'Methodist Episcopal Church, South,' and their General conference, in 1846, did authorize three commissioners—whose credentials have been received by this General conference—to present and adjust their claim on the funds of the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church;

"And whereas, our common and holy Christianity prescribes and enjoins the most pacific measures for the settlement of all matters in dispute between individuals, as well as associations of professing Christians, and the whole Christian world will expect ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ to adopt the most peaceful and conciliatory measures for the settlement of any claim that may be urged against them;

"And whereas, this conference desires to advance, as far as its constitutional powers will authorize, toward an amicable adjustment of this difficulty; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved*, by the delegates of the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in General conference assembled, That we hereby authorize the Book Agents at New York and at Cincinnati, to offer to submit said claims to the decision of disinterested arbiters, provided that if said Agents, on the advice of eminent legal counsel, shall be satisfied that when clothed with all the authority which the General conference can confer, their corporate powers will not warrant them to submit said claims to arbitration, this resolution shall not be binding upon them.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That, should the Agents find, upon taking such legal counsel, that they have not the power to submit the case to voluntary arbitration, and should a suit at law be commenced by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, said Agents are hereby authorized, then and in that case, to tender to said commissioners an adjustment of their preferred claims by a legal arbitration, under the authority of the court.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That, should the Agents find that they are not authorized to tender a voluntary arbitration, and should no suit be commenced by the commissioners aforesaid, then and in that case the General conference, being exceedingly desirous of effecting an amicable settlement of said claim, recommend to the annual conferences so far to suspend the 'sixth Restrictive Article' of the Discipline, as to authorize our Book Agents at New York and Cincinnati to submit said claim to arbitration.

"(4.) *Resolved*, That in the occurrence of the above specified contingencies, the bishops are requested to lay the foregoing resolutions before the several annual conferences for their concurrence.\*

4. We will now present the leading sentiments of the speakers during the debate on the original report and on the various substitutes.

On the meaning of the original report Dr. G. Peck made the following explanations in behalf of the committee. He said the report was constructed upon the ground that arbitration was the best method of settling the question; and the more especially as there was no prospect of an amicable adjustment with the south in any other way. As the annual conferences had already refused to vote for the distribution, there was no hope of success at present, in a second trial. If the claim of the south should be ever so just, it would be a greater moral evil to contravene the constitution, and thus disrupt the Church. The state of the question is this, between the General conference and the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South: the commissioners came to the General conference, putting in their claim under the provision of the plan; that they had no new propositions to make, but if the General conference had any they would return them a respectful answer.

Dr. Tomlinson made an elaborate and able speech. He argued that neither *legal* nor *moral* obligation called for the distribution of the funds. There was no legal obligation, because the sixth Restriction prevented the distribution. And the south, in common with others, referred the decision to the annual conferences, and that

\* Journal, p. 86.

† Id., p. 87.

‡ Id., p. 86.

\* Journal, p. 94.

with the implied understanding that they would abide by the award whatever it might be. But afterward they refused to abide the decision that they themselves had chosen. As to the moral obligation, all, both north and south, had previously promised to abide the decision of the Discipline. Now the south asks to do this thing in a way that is morally wrong. There is a *principle* involved in this matter. On a former occasion the applicants prevailed on the General conference to yield a measure that excluded members from the Church without fault. Now we have another demand of like sort. It is more proper to use this property in another way than in the support of a pro-slavery Church. Already we are entitled to heavy damages for the injury they have inflicted on the good name of Methodism. If it be correct that they should receive remuneration because they have contributed to the funds, then this must effect the subversion of all ecclesiastical organizations in the country. An arbitration under the circumstances would make the impression that we doubt the rectitude of our own cause.

Dr. G. Peck, after explaining the report, said that we are ready to meet the south before an impartial tribunal, and submit to a righteous decision. There is nothing in the connection of the south with slavery which neutralizes their rights as men, or our obligation to respond to a just claim.

Rev. J. F. Wright said that as the Restriction stood now, the General conference could do nothing. He contended for the process of arbitration, and presented a substitute for the report, the principal part of which was contained in the substitute offered by Messrs. Curry and Simpson.

Mr. Holdich offered a substitute, and argued that the civil law would take cognizance of our ecclesiastical laws and control them. He went for arbitration.

Mr. Finley observed that, according to the plan, there can be no claim, because the annual conferences refused to alter the sixth Restriction. But there is a *claim* which may be referred to our business agents to transact. He went for arbitration, because, 1. Such a way is Methodistical. 2. It would be a plain manifestation of our honesty and Christianity.

Dr. Durbin observed in his argument, 1. That the last General conference, by a vote of 153 to 13, adjudged that the south, in case they organized, should have a *pro rata* share of the property. 2. The votes of the annual conferences show that 2,135 votes were given in favor of making the payment, and 1,070 against it. Even in the north there was a majority, 1,164 voting for it, and 1,067 against it. 3. As the matter now stands it is simply a claim—a matter of debt. We may, therefore, take measures as to the claim and provide to meet it.

Dr. Bond contended, also, for the arbitration in a very strong speech on the subject.

Rev. E. H. Pilcher opposed the arbitration.

5. The final report will place the whole subject of the unconstitutional character of the plan, its nullity, and infractions, in a proper light. We give this entire, as it is expressed in such concise terms, and, withal, comprises such important principles, reasons, and facts, that we can not afford to abridge it:

#### FINAL REPORT ON THE STATE OF THE CHURCH.

"The Committee on the State of the Church, after a full and careful examination of all the

sources of information within their reach, including, as they believe, all that are essential to a just understanding of the subjects hereinafter named, do recommend to this body the adoption of the following as their final report:

"(1.) We claim that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, exists as a distinct and separate ecclesiastical communion, solely by the act and deed of the individual ministers and members constituting said Church.

"In support of this position we set forth the following facts: On the fifth day of June, one thousand eight hundred and forty-four, John Early, W. A. Smith, Thomas Crowder, and Leroy M. Lee, of the Virginia conference; H. B. Bascom, William Gunn, H. H. Kavanaugh, Edward Stevenson, B. T. Crouch, and G. W. Brush, of the Kentucky conference; W. W. Redman, William Patton, J. C. Berryman, and J. M. Jameson, of the Missouri conference; E. F. Sevier, S. Patton, and Thomas Stringfield, of the Holston conference; G. F. Pierce, William J. Parks, L. Pierce, J. W. Glenn, J. L. Evans, and A. B. Longstreet, of the Georgia conference; James Jamieson, Peter Doub, and B. T. Blake, of the North Carolina conference; J. Stamper, of the Illinois conference; G. W. D. Harris, Wm. M'Mahan, Thomas Joyner, and S. S. Moody, of the Memphis conference; John C. Parker, Wm. P. Radcliffe, and Andrew Hunter, of the Arkansas conference; William Winans, B. M. Drake, John Lane, and G. M. Rogers, of the Mississippi conference; Littleton Fowler, of the Texas conference; Jesse Boring, Jefferson Hamilton, W. Murrab, and G. Garrett, of the Alabama conference; Robert Paine, John B. M'Ferrin, A. L. P. Green, and T. Maddin, of the Tennessee conference; and W. Capers, Wm. M. Wightman, Chas. Betts, S. Dunwoody, and H. A. C. Walker, of the South Carolina conference, did present to the General conference, then in session in the city of New York, the following declaration; namely, 'That the continued agitation of the subject of slavery and abolition in a portion of the Church; the frequent action on that subject in the General conference, and especially the extrajudicial proceedings against Bishop Andrew, which resulted, on Saturday last, in the virtual suspension of him from his office as superintendent, must produce a state of things in the south which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of that General conference over these conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states,' from which it is evident that they sought their remedies for alleged grievances, not in any constitutional acts, but in a violation of the integrity of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"And further, on the sixth day of June, in the year above written, the above-named gentlemen, and N. C. Berryman, of the Illinois conference; I. T. Cooper, W. Cooper, T. J. Thompson, and Henry White, of the Philadelphia conference; E. W. Sehon, of the Ohio conference, and T. Neal, and T. Sovereign, of the New Jersey conference, in addition, presented a protest to the above-named General conference against its action in the case of Bishop Andrew, in which they assert: 'If the compromise law be either repealed, or allowed to remain a dead letter, the south can not submit, and the absolute necessity of a division is already dated.' Now, while we wholly deny the existence of any 'compromise law,' in the sense here claimed, the indication in this extract, and, indeed, in the whole document, of a purpose upon the part of these protesting brethren

ren to secure a division of the Church is too plain to be mistaken.

"And further, at the close of the General conference, on the eleventh day of June and year above mentioned, fifty-one of the above-named brethren assembled in the city of New York, and by formal resolution recommended to the southern conferences the appointment of delegates to a convention, to commence in Louisville, Kentucky, on the first day of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five, said delegates to be instructed 'on the points on which action is contemplated, conforming their instructions, as far as possible, to the opinions and wishes of the membership within their several conference bounds.' And the said brethren issued from this unauthorized meeting an address, in which they call the attention of southern Methodists 'to the *proscription and disability* under which the southern portion of the Church must, of necessity, labor in view of the action alluded to, unless some measures are adopted to free the minority of the south from the oppressive jurisdiction of the majority in the north in this respect;' and they declare 'that they regard a separation at no distant day as inevitable.' There is, therefore, no room to doubt that the appointed Louisville convention was one of those leading 'measures' adopted by these fifty-one brethren for the express purpose of freeing the minority of the south from what they are pleased to term 'the oppressive jurisdiction of the majority in the north,' and that the contemplated separation, if it actually occurred, must be the legitimate result of these premature preliminary arrangements.

"And further, the several annual conferences now included in the Church, South, did, at their meetings, successively, of their own free will and accord, vote to approve the holding of the Louisville convention, for the purposes proposed by the members of the aforesaid meeting at New York, appointed delegates to said convention, and, in various forms of expression, directly assumed, as far as they were able, the responsibility of the dismemberment of the Church, evidently contemplated in the appointment of said Louisville convention.

"In the mean time Bishop Soule wrote to Bishop Andrew, requesting him to resume episcopal functions, and, in the character and office of a bishop, to attend the sessions of annual conferences, which he did, though said act was clearly in contravention of the expressed will of the General conference, 'that he desist from the exercise of the' episcopal 'office so long as the impediment' of slaveholding 'remained.' By which acts both Bishop Soule and Bishop Andrew openly repudiated the authority of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"And further, in the convention assembled at Louisville, May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five, delegates from the following conferences; namely, Kentucky, Missouri, Holston, Tennessee, North Carolina, Memphis, Arkansas, Virginia, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, Georgia, South Carolina, Florida, and Indian Mission—Bishops Soule and Andrew presiding—did formally resolve, 'That it is right, expedient, and necessary to erect the annual conferences represented in this convention into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as at present constituted,' and they did 'solemnly declare the jurisdiction hith-

erto exercised over said annual conferences by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church *entirely dissolved*; and that said annual conferences shall be, and they hereby *are constituted* a separate ecclesiastical connection,' Accordingly a delegated General conference from the annual conferences above-named, held at Petersburg, Virginia, May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-six, did assume the powers and privileges of authorized representatives of a separate ecclesiastical connection, under the style and denomination of 'the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,' to which Church many of the former ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, some evidently from choice, and others from the force of circumstances which they felt themselves unable to resist, did, formally or informally, attach themselves, thereby withdrawing themselves from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Finally, while a clearly-marked line of history, extending from the first-named declaration to the final action of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, shows the independent action of the ministers and members of said Church in its organization, we affirm it to be impossible to point to any act of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church erecting or authorizing said Church, nor has the said General conference, or any individual, or any number of individuals, any right, constitutional or otherwise, to extend official sanction to any act tending directly or indirectly to the dismemberment of the Church.

"(2.) In view of the formal declaration of the brethren herein first-named, that certain acts of the General conference, especially the act in the case of Bishop Andrew, 'must produce a state of things in the south which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of that General conference over these conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states'—fearing that ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church would, according to the opinion expressed in the declaration above quoted, deem it necessary to erect themselves into a separate and independent Church, in the intervals of General conference sessions, when no remedies for so great an evil could be provided in time, and desiring, as far as practicable, in accordance with suggestions made by brethren from the south, to adopt measures calculated to pacify our members and ministers in the south, the General conference, at its session in New York, A. D. one thousand eight hundred and forty-four, did *propose* a plan for the adjustment of relations between the Methodist Episcopal Church and her separating members and ministers, when such separation should, by their own act and deed, if at all, occur. Said plan, based entirely upon the above first-named declaration of the delegates from thirteen specified and above-written conferences in the slaveholding states, having relation to those conferences, and to no others, *proposed* an amicable division of territory between them and the Methodist Episcopal Church, as follows: 'The northern boundary' of the prospective new Church to be fixed at the northern extremities of those 'societies, stations, and conferences,' a majority of whose members should, of their own free will and accord, vote to adhere to the said southern Church; and ministers, traveling and local, to be allowed to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church, or attach themselves to the 'Methodist Episcopal Church, South,' at discretion. And said plan

further *proposed* to make over and give to the prospective 'southern Church so much of the capital and produce of the Methodist Book Concern as will, with the notes, book accounts, presses,' etc., in the south, due, and belonging to the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church—the transfer of which is provided for in the fourth article of said plan—'bear the same proportion to the whole property of said Concern that the traveling preachers in the southern Church shall bear to all the traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church.' And said plan further *proposed*, that 'the Book Agents at New York be directed to make such compensation to the conferences south for their dividend from the Chartered Fund as the commissioners to be provided for shall agree upon.'

"But the whole of this plan was expressly or otherwise conditional, as follows, namely:

"*First.* That the asserted 'state of things in the south, which renders a continuance of the jurisdiction of that General conference over these conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states,' should be '*produced*' by the action of the General conference in the cases referred to.

"*Second.* That three-fourths of the members of all the annual conferences should, 'at their first approaching sessions,' concur in the vote of at least two-thirds of the General conference so to alter 'the sixth Restrictive Article' of the Discipline as to add to it the following words, namely: 'And to such other purposes as may be determined upon by the votes of two-thirds of the members of the General conference,' it being certain that should such vote be refused by the annual conferences, the financial part of the plan could not go into effect, which financial part was deemed by both parties essential to the plan; and it being probable that those who were opposed to the plan as a whole would vote against the change in the sixth Restrictive Article.

"*Third.* It was clearly and necessarily implied that the friendship and fidelity of the parties should be evinced by voluntarily keeping inviolate the principles and ordinances of the plan, pending the settlement of the important conditions upon which its validity and binding force depended.

"In support of the above statement of facts, we refer expressly to the aforementioned declaration of the fifty-two southern brethren, and to the report of the committee of nine, presented to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the 7th day of June, 1844.

"And further, it will be observed that the *declaring* brethren of the south did not claim that a state of things *already existed* that required any separation of the south from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or that required the positive enactment of any unconditional plan of such separation. They only asserted that—in their opinion, of course—certain acts of the General conference '*must produce*' this state of things; and hence, they did not proceed upon the supposition that they were the official judges of the facts, which might require the separation of the southern ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church from her jurisdiction. It is true that the report of the committee of nine, as it was first presented, made these delegates from the thirteen conferences, south, the judges of that necessity; but it was so changed as to leave the question to the annual conferences

from which they came, thus showing that the General conference would, by no means, allow this question of necessity to be decided by these men. From all of which, it appears that the plan proposed rested, not upon the present or future *existence* of any state of excitement in the south, which might be produced by causes entirely apart from the General conference, but upon the *production of such a state of things* as was predicted by the acts of the General conference alone. Certainly, if, upon returning to their charges, our southern brethren had found that no such 'state of things' as they had supposed existed, and hence no separation had occurred, they would not assert the validity of the proposed plan; and if it would have been of no binding force, in the absence of the predicted necessity, produced solely by the action of the General conference, it follows inevitably that such necessity, so produced, was an indispensable condition of the plan; and, though this necessity had actually been so produced, and the southern ministers and members had actually separated on this ground alone, in this case one of the conditions of the plan would have been met, we, nevertheless, affirm that, in failure of this condition, the plan became invalid, though *every other condition* of it had been literally fulfilled.

"And further, in proof that the proposed alteration of the sixth Restrictive Article of the Discipline was a fundamental condition of this plan *as a whole*, we refer to the third resolution of the report of the committee of nine, in which it is expressly asserted; also, to the published speech of Rev. Dr.—now Bishop—Paine, from which the following language was reported: 'This separation would not be effected by the passage of those resolutions through the General conference. They must pass the annual conferences, beginning at New York, and when they came round to the south, the preachers there would think, and deliberate, and feel the pulse of public sentiment, and of the members of the Church, and act in the fear of God, and with a single desire for his glory.' Every word of which, in its connection, would be entirely incompatible with the idea that he referred merely to an extension of the power of the General conference in relation to the appropriation of funds; but it is perfectly consistent with the doctrine here asserted, that a vote on the change of that Restrictive Article was understood to be a vote on the merits of the plan *as a whole*. So, we believe, many of the members of the annual conferences regarded it, and, hence, so many of them voted against it as to defeat the measure. Indeed, so essential to the plan did our southern brethren consider this change of the sixth Restrictive Article, that they never have, in any way, signified their willingness to accept of the plan without it. With this agrees perfectly the Address of the above-named fifty-one brethren, from their meeting in New York, held the 11th day of June, 1844, in which they hold the following language: 'It affords us pleasure to state that there were those found among the majority who met this proposition—the plan, not "of formal and specific separations," but to provide for the results of separation, should it occur under the necessity above explained—with every manifestation of justice and liberality. And should a similar spirit be exhibited by the annual conferences in the north, when submitted to them, as provided



for in the plan itself, there will remain no legal impediment to its peaceful consummation.

"But 'if a similar spirit should' not 'be exhibited by the annual conferences in the north, when submitted to them, as provided for in the plan itself,' then, of course, by the showing of these fifty-one southern brethren, 'there will remain a legal impediment to its peaceful consummation' as a plan. It is true that the question of a ratification of the plan was not *directly*, and in so many words, submitted to the annual conferences; but it is evident that, in the honest opinion of these southern brethren, it was, *in effect*, so submitted. Nor could it by possibility have been otherwise from the language of the plan, which submits an amendment of the Discipline absolutely essential to the plan as a whole, the preachers being obliged to vote upon said amendment in view of its bearing upon the whole plan; and the failure of said amendment rendering the plan, as a whole, entirely unsatisfactory to the south; therefore, in the event of a failure of three-fourths of the members of all the annual conferences—the southern conferences included—at their first approaching sessions,' to vote for the change proposed in the sixth Restrictive Article, said plan would be *as a whole*, and, hence, of necessity, in its details, rendered null and void.

"And further, we claim that the position that a sacred, though voluntary, observance of the requirements of the proposed plan by the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the brethren south who should separate from her, was a fundamental condition of the plan, is a clear and undeniable inference from the whole design and scope of said plan. It was, as its friends openly claimed, *a peace measure*. It was designed to prevent aggressions from either party, and thus to prevent unchristian feelings and angry collisions between those who claimed to be brethren. If, therefore, this great object, lying at the very foundation of the scheme, and in the light of which alone any part of it has the least significance, were disregarded, or trampled under foot, by either party, the other, as a whole, and every individual of them, would be entirely absolved from all obligations to it whatsoever. If, therefore, this shall be found to have been done, then, though all other conditions of the plan were certainly fulfilled, it will be, to all intents and purposes, null and void.

"Finally, it has fully appeared that to meet, in what was then supposed to be the best manner possible, the disastrous results of a violent dismemberment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, should it occur, and provide for an amicable adjustment of all relations between the two parties, this provisional plan was adopted by the General conference at its session in the year 1844—that to provide for, or sanction, a division of said Church was, therefore, no part of the intentions of said General conference; and that it rested upon three distinct and fundamental conditions, the failure of *either of which* must be fatal to its validity and binding force. And though, in the light of four years' history, we are fully convinced that the act implied a degree of faith in men not justified by the facts, and, under all the circumstances of the case, it was not adapted to secure its intended results, we can not for a moment question the Christian liberality in which it had its origin.

"(3.) It is evident to us that the acts of the General conference complained of, did not produce a state of things in the south which rendered a continuance of the jurisdiction of said conference 'inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states.' Three-fourths of the members of all the annual conferences did not concur in the vote to alter the sixth Restrictive Rule, and thus sanction the plan, for the accommodation of which said alteration was asked. And the conditions and requirements of said plan have been violated, and hence said plan is—and, from the first failure of the conditions of said plan, or either of them, *has been*—null and void.

"In support of which we offer the following facts:

"After the adoption of the proposition for a peace measure, and providing for its final ratification and use, in case the predicted separation should occur, it would, as we humbly conceive, have been in perfect conformity to said peaceful arrangement for the southern delegates to have used their utmost endeavors, as some of them assured us they would do, to quiet the public mind in the south, and, entering instantly upon their regular work, to have met every act of resentment, and every appearance of insubordination to the authorities of the Church, with a calm, dignified, and determined resistance—to have defended the General conference, so far as they could conscientiously do so, and themselves to the utmost, for doing which their motions, speeches, votes, declaration, and Protest furnished ample materials. To have adopted this course would, we believe, have been doing no more than to meet the just expectations excited by their peaceful protestations upon the conference floor, and elsewhere, both before and after the vote upon the proposed pacific plan, and their avowed attachment to the Church of their choice, in its uninterrupted integrity. But if *active* peace measures had been either incompatible with their private opinions or self-respect, or inconvenient under their peculiar circumstances, they, as we verily believe, might have avoided all acts preparatory to the excitement of the public mind, and leading, directly or indirectly, to the division of the Church, by doing which they would have given to the world an example of moderation under circumstances confessedly difficult and trying, worthy of all commendation, and afforded an opportunity for a free, spontaneous, and, in due time, decisive verdict of southern Methodists, upon the question whether the action of the General conference had, and 'must necessarily' have, 'produced a state of things in the south, which rendered a continuance of the jurisdiction of that General conference over these conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states.' This, we claim and assert, the Methodist Episcopal Church had a right to exact of them, in order to *a just estimate* of the circumstances under which the conscientious and legitimate action of her highest judiciary had placed her in relation to her southern ministers and membership. But, instead of this, these fifty-one brethren, by character and position highest in rank and influence among southern Methodists, did, at a meeting called and had before leaving the seat of the General conference, only ten days after the principal action, and five days after the final action, in the case of Bishop Andrew, virtu-

ally appoint a convention to be held in Louisville, Kentucky, to commence on the first of May, one thousand eight hundred and forty-five, to take into consideration the question of a division of the Church; and thus superinduce the very excitement which they should have deprecated, and attempted, by every laudable means in their power, to allay. Indeed, it is evident, as it should have been foreseen, that the appointment of that convention alone was, under the circumstances, decisive of the very question which should have been left to the decision of time under the action of all the conservative elements available in the case.

"Moreover, from the said meeting in New York, which, if it occurred at all, should have given utterance only to counsels peaceful in their nature and tendency, and strictly loyal to the Methodist Episcopal Church, an address was issued 'To the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states and territories,' in which these *fifty-one* brethren say that the 'various action of the majority of the General conference, at its recent session, on the subject of *slavery and abolition*, has been such as to render it necessary, in the judgment of those addressing you, to call attention to the *proscription and disability* under which the southern portion of the Church must, of necessity, labor in view of the action alluded to, unless some measures are adopted to free the minority of the south from the oppressive jurisdiction of the majority in the north in this respect. The proceedings of the majority, in several cases involving the question of slavery, have been such as indicate most conclusively that the legislative, judicial, and administrative action of the General conference, as now organized, will always be extremely hurtful, if not finally ruinous, to the interests of the southern portion of the Church, and must, necessarily, produce a state of conviction and feeling in the slaveholding states entirely inconsistent with either the peace or prosperity of the Church. The opinions and purposes of the Church in the north on the subject of slavery are in direct conflict with those of the south; and, unless the south will submit to the dictation and interference of the north, greatly beyond what the existing law of the Church on slavery and abolition authorizes, there is no hope of any thing like union or harmony.

"Further similar quotations might be made from this address, but we deem it unnecessary. We submit it to a candid world, whether language less respectful to the Church of which they were members, or more inflammatory to southern minds, in the midst of slavery, could well be used. Surely there is no room for surprise that the most excited meetings soon occurred in all parts of the south, and the most indignant resolutions were passed, leading to a degree of public agitation, alarming to the peace of the Church and the nation.

"But one more quotation shall be made, to show that these *fifty-one* brethren did not hesitate formally to take the initiative in the work of deciding the question which they had raised, and thus *actually*, as they had already done *virtually*, give the full weight of their influence to counteract the pacific measures which they had asked at our hands, and for which they had just voted: 'As the undersigned have had opportunity and advantages, which those at a distance could not possess, to form a correct judgment in

the premises, and it may be expected of them that they express their views fully on the subject, they do not hesitate to say that they regard a separation at no distant day as inevitable.' After this declaration, of what avail was it to 'beseech their brethren of the ministry and membership in the slaveholding states to examine this matter carefully, and try to reach the conclusion most proper under the circumstances?' or 'disposed, however, to defer to the judgment of the Church, we leave this subject with you?' The result was what must have been expected. The voice of remonstrance, though sincere and beseeching, against the revolutionary measures urged on by such powerful talents and influence, was too feeble to be heard till the confusion was over, and it *was too late*. The act of separation was consummated, as we have already seen, and many thousands hurried out of the Methodist Episcopal Church into the new organization, with scarcely an opportunity to know what it was for.

"We thus see clearly that the way for separation was prepared, not by a state of things in the south '*produced*' by the action of the General conference, but by revolutionary measures adopted by the southern delegates at the very seat, and nearly at the time, of our General conference session. The success of the ministry could not have been hindered by our action; for not only was there no instance of the kind alleged, but there was a want of time to produce any such result, before these *fifty-one* brethren, by taking the lead of the southern mind, anticipated their decision. In view of the whole of which, we claim and affirm that the southern organization was consummated in direct contravention of the plan proposed to meet the results of separation, thus reducing it to a nullity, by the violation of its first great and fundamental condition. And we moreover claim and affirm that the very acts of calling the convention and issuing the said address, by which southern opinion was forestalled, was an abandonment of the plan proposed by the General conference, and hence that, for the reason above alleged, the plan has been of no real force since the date of said call and address; namely, the 11th day of June, 1844.

"And further, it appears, from official returns made from all the annual conferences voting thereon, including those now embraced in the Church, South, obtained since this session commenced, that the required three-fourths majority of the members of the said annual conferences has not been given, and hence, that for this reason, as shown above, the plan is null and void.

"And further, from information officially given by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in answer to a call upon them by the General conference for a statement of facts in the premises, that in numerous instances the plan proposed in the event of a separation has been openly violated by the southern Church, and hence that the peace upon the border and elsewhere, which it was designed to promote, has not been secured. The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have claimed a movable line, thus transferring from one place to another the scenes of strife and confusion as fast as society majorities could be obtained, which we regard and affirm to be in direct contravention of the most obvious principles of the said provisional plan. And it is in evidence before us, that, in numerous instances, the sense of members on the proposed border has been taken

by southern preachers, privately, and in various other illegal and inconvenient ways, and hence that societies have been reported and claimed for the south, which, by suitable tests, would have given large majorities in favor of adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church. And, in numerous instances, influence has been applied, and often varied, and obstinately persevered in, to secure a decision in favor of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and contrary to the wishes of many of our people. And also, in some instances, houses of worship, built at the expense, in whole or in part, by members adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church, have been taken from them without their consent, and without compensation, and they have been discommoded by vexatious lawsuits, costs, and in various other ways, by preachers and members attached to the Church, South, all of which we claim and affirm is in direct violation of the most sacred objects and conditions of the said proposed plan, showing that it has long since, in this way also, been rendered a nullity by our brethren of the south; and this, notwithstanding the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, waiving all conclusions which this General conference were entitled to draw from the numerous ascertained infractions of the proposed plan, resolved, 'as far as their administration was concerned,' to adhere to it strictly, which, for the sake of the magnanimous Christian example it exhibits, and in view of the right of the General conference alone to assert the facts of the infraction and consequent destruction of the plan, we are happy to find they have scrupulously done.

"Finally, having thus found, upon clear and incontestable evidence, that the three fundamental conditions of said proposed plan have severally failed, and the failure of either of them separately being sufficient to render it null and void, and having found the practical workings of said plan incompatible with certain great constitutional principles elsewhere asserted, we have found and declared *the whole and every part of said provisional plan to be null and void.*

"(4.) In view of the above-named principles and facts—as well as the constitutional rights already referred to—we regard those who have, by their own act and deed, become members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as having withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church. And whereas those who are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in good and regular standing, can not be deprived of such membership without due form of trial, all those members who have not attached themselves to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are, and have been members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and as such they are entitled to its care and privileges, as provided for in another report of this committee.

"Respectfully submitted.

"GEORGE PECK, *Chairman.*"

#### 6. The following report is on

##### "INFRACTIONS OF THE PLAN.

"The attention of the committee has been directed, by sundry memorials submitted to their consideration by the General conference, to numerous infractions of the provisions of the so-called plan of separation, upon the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and upon this subject present to the conference the following statement and facts:

"I. *The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has officially and authoritatively taught the infraction*

*of the plan by her convention, her General conference, her bishops, her annual conferences, her editors, and leading ministers.*

"(1.) *The Louisville convention taught the violation of the plan.*

"In the report on organization, passed Saturday, the 17th of May, 1845, the new Church is declared to be formed out of the conferences represented in the convention.\* But while the convention, in their formal acts of organization, on Saturday, the 17th of May, make this declaration, we find them on the Monday following passing these resolutions:†

"*Resolved, That, should any portion of an annual conference, on the line of separation, not represented in this convention, adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, according to the plan of separation adopted at the late General conference, and elect delegates to the General conference of the Church in 1846, upon the basis of representation adopted by the convention, they shall be accredited as members of the General conference.*

"*Resolved, That, in the judgment of this convention, those societies and stations on the border, within the limits of conferences represented in this convention, be constructively understood as adhering to the south, unless they see proper to take action on the subject; and in all such cases, we consider the pastor of the station or society the proper person to preside in the meeting.*

"Thus, although the convention, in their formal organization, confine themselves to the original limits, yet, two days after, when the way was prepared for further inroads, they enlarge the provisions of the plan, and extend it into the boundaries of the Philadelphia, Baltimore, and other conferences. And in all societies within the border where no votes would be taken, these societies must be *constructively* understood as adhering to the south. Hence their preachers have generally prevented any voting wherever they could by any means hinder it, although the plan of the General conference required the societies to vote. The conclusion is, that the convention taught the infraction of the plan in two very important respects:

"*First.* They exceed the provisions of the plan by extending it into the territory of the Baltimore, Philadelphia, Pittsburg, and other conferences. Thus they teach to cross the line.

"*Secondly.* And in all societies where no vote would be taken, they claim them constructively as belonging to their Church.

"(2.) *The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have taught the infraction of the plan.*

"Bishop Soule, in his letter, dated Lebanon, Ohio, August 4, 1845, and published in the Western Christian Advocate of August 22, 1845, or Vol. XII, p. 75, col. 2, teaches the breach of the plan. It is addressed 'to the preachers and border societies of the Kentucky and Missouri conferences, and of other conferences bordering upon them.' The Bishop here calls on the societies on the southern verge of the Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, and Iowa conferences, to vote whether they will, or will not, remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Bishop Soule, however, makes these regulations in reference to his own administration. But this same course was sanc-

\* History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, p. 186.  
† W., Vol. XIII, p. 42, col. 7.

tioned by Bishop Andrew immediately, and afterward by their General conference, and by all their bishops. And indeed Bishop Soule, in his letter to the Rev. Wesley G. Montgomery, dated Nashville, April 30, 1847, and published in the Western Christian Advocate of May 21, 1847, hints broadly enough that minorities had best be accommodated. He says: 'Minorities, on either side of the line of division, are entitled to a kind and respectful consideration, and should be treated accordingly. And I should think it far better for such minorities, being on the borders, to receive preachers from the Church to which they desire to adhere, provided they believe themselves able to support them, than for majorities to be interdicted the exercise of a right plainly secured to them by the provisions of the law, or rule, in the case.' Now, with this instruction about minorities, as well as the maintenance that the line is a sliding one, and no limits of time are given in which its sliding operation ceases, southern preachers will find little difficulty in passing over any limits which may be in the way.

"But Bishop Capers's letter to Rev. Mr. Moorman, and published in the Christian Advocate and Journal of April 21, 1847, claims all the territory in the slaveholding states, and this, too, according to the plan, or, as he calls it, the 'deed of separation.' Now, as Bishop Capers claims all slaveholding territory, and Bishop Soule as much of the territories of the free states as the accommodation of minorities and the sliding line will transfer, it would be difficult indeed to fix any line at all.

"It were useless to insist, in a matter so clear, that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have taught officially the violation of the plan.

"(3.) *The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has taught the infraction of the plan.*

"For proof of this, we need go no further than the famous Report on the Episcopacy, in which the conference sanctions the breaches of the plan, as taught by the convention, and as was taught and practiced by Bishops Soule and Andrew, from the session of the convention, in May, 1845, to the session of the conference, in May, 1846. This document will be found in the Western Christian Advocate of June 26, 1846, and in the Richmond Advocate of May 21, 1846. The Report fully clears Bishops Soule and Andrew of any blame for occupying Cincinnati, the Kanawha district, etc., and gives such full latitude of interpretation, that the limitations of the plan became a perfect nullity. Our limits will not allow us to quote the Report, but it can be perused in the papers, as cited above, as well as in all the southern papers.

"(4.) *The annual conferences, editors, and leading members of the new Church, maintain the infraction of the plan in perfect accordance with the acts of their convention, their General conference, and their bishops.*

"It were useless to make quotations on this point. Their press teems with approving acts of annual conferences, and the labored essays and constant admissions of editors and correspondents, upholding fully their conventional, episcopal, and General conference decisions and acts. And from all this there is no dissent in any quarter.

"11. *The bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in their official administration, have actually broken the plan.*

"As undoubted and official testimony on this point, we need only quote the report on this subject, by our excellent and devoted bishops, which, at the request of the General conference, they furnish the committee. This official document is as follows:

"*To the Committee on the State of the Church,*—In compliance with a request of the General conference, made on the 6th instant, the superintendents present to you such information as they possess in regard to alleged infractions of the 'plan of separation,' on the part of the constituted authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by which the Methodist Episcopal Church has been injuriously deprived of portions of its territory and members. They must be understood as giving the most authentic statements which have come to their ears, without vouching their own personal knowledge for the correctness of every item thus presented. They are, nevertheless, impressed with a conviction of the truth of the statements generally, as hereinafter made.

"They commence first with *Baltimore conference.* Within its bounds there is a portion of the state of Virginia, situated between the Potomac and Rappahannock rivers, commonly called the 'Northern Neck,' embracing the counties of King George, Westmoreland, Richmond, Northumberland, and Lancaster. These counties contained the following circuits—having a membership of eight hundred to a thousand—namely, King George, Westmoreland, and Lancaster, each having preachers annually appointed to it from the Baltimore conference. At different times each of those circuits determined to attach themselves to the Methodist Episcopal Church, not as border societies, but as circuits. To all of them preachers have been sent from the Virginia conference, who are there at present, to the exclusion of the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. From the conference of 1847 preachers were sent to this portion of the Baltimore conference, who found on their arrival the circuits under the pastoral care of ministers of the Virginia conference. The ministers sent from the Baltimore conference, not being able to have access to the preaching-places or societies, were withdrawn after suitable time, and sent to places where they were needed, except one, who was left in the charge of the whole field of labor. At present this place appears on the Minutes, 'to be supplied.' No minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church is now in this ancient portion of the Baltimore conference.

"Warrenton circuit has been occupied between one and two years with preachers from the Virginia conference; but as the circuit did not go to the Church, South, in whole, a portion thereof continuing in the Methodist Episcopal Church, a preacher from the Baltimore conference has been continued there. Some of the societies which voted to go to the Church, South, were strictly border societies, but others also went which were as strictly interior societies. One of the churches—Wesley Chapel—where a majority adhered to the Methodist Episcopal Church, was forcibly entered, and new locks were attached to its doors; and the Church, South, has it in possession at the present time, unless the civil court has recently decided a suit, which was instituted for the property, in favor of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

"Harrisonburg, in Rockingham county, Virginia, unquestionably an interior society, having by a majority of votes determined to connect

themselves with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a preacher from the Virginia conference has been appointed to labor there. A minority adhering to the Methodist Episcopal Church are under the pastoral care of one of its ministers. The church was in a course of litigation a few months since, and probably the case has not been decided by the court. An attempt was made to get possession of the parsonage in Harrisonburg, for the Church, South, but with what success there is no information.

"Leesburg, a station belonging to the Baltimore conference, clearly an interior society, has been visited by a preacher from the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, much agitation produced in the society and in the community, and a suit at law commenced for the church edifice. Whether the effort is still persisted in to occupy this place, is not certainly known. That which makes this case even a glaring one, is the fact, that the majority of the society voted to adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church. There are other instances of the violation of the plan of separation, in the opinion of some equally apparent with the instances given in this paper, of which more certain information may be obtained from Rev. Messrs. William Hamilton, New Jersey; B. Morgan, S. A. Roszel, John Bear, and J. A. Collins, members of this General conference.

"*Kanawha District*, in the north-west part of Virginia, is a part of Ohio conference. In 1845 that work was supplied from the Ohio conference, as usual. The preachers were received, with one exception, as far as we know; namely, Parkersburg station. A part of the members there refused to receive any preacher from the Ohio conference. They rejected the preacher sent to them, not for any objection to him personally, but because he came from Ohio; and by threats of violence, and preparation to execute those threats on a given day, compelled him to leave the place, and took possession of the chapel. He, however, returned after some weeks, and in connection with the preacher of the adjoining circuit, to which they were transferred, served the remaining members of the scattered flock in another house. These outcast members have since erected a chapel for themselves, in which they worship undisturbed; while the old chapel is supplied from Kentucky conference, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Parkersburg is not a border station. It is the county-seat of Wood county, situated at the junction of Little Kanawha and Ohio rivers, and is about seventy-five miles from the nearest point of the Kentucky state line; so that the Kentucky preachers had to travel that distance through our work to reach it, though they now occupy other places through our work between that and Kentucky. No preachers were appointed from the Kentucky conference of 1845 to the Kanawha district; but some were sent there, as we learn, during that conference year, by a presiding elder, that made breaches in some of our circuits. In 1846 the Kanawha district was all supplied from the Ohio conference, as usual, though the societies in some places were divided by southern influence. A few weeks afterward a second supply was sent from Kentucky conference, as we learned from the newspapers. Since that time there have been two presiding elders, and two sets of preachers there—one from Ohio conference, and the other from Kentucky conference. Indeed, it is alleged that, at the last session of the Kentucky conference, they divided

the district; so that the old Kanawha district is now occupied by three presiding elders—one from Ohio, and two from Kentucky.

"These are the most material facts which have been reported to us, bearing on the point of inquiry submitted to us, so far as Kanawha district is concerned.

"*'Soule Chapel,' Cincinnati.*—In 1834 Cincinnati, which had previously been one charge, was divided into two, 'Wesley Chapel' and 'Fourth-Street.' Each had definite bounds, within which the stationed minister had exclusive pastoral functions. Private members were advised to observe these limits in fixing and holding their membership, but were not considered bound to do so, and did not in all cases practice it. But class meetings, etc., were held in strict regard to this provision.

"New preaching-places have been opened in these charges, under the direction and countenance of the presiding elder and preachers in charge, have matured societies, and have been finally formed into stations by the presiding bishops and received preachers.

"In 1844 the first city missionary was appointed, and was supported by a City Missionary Society, whose object was to carry the Gospel to the destitute. The first year, with the approbation of those having authority to direct him, he formed three societies; namely, the Bethel, Ebenezer, and Maley Chapel, and succeeded in erecting two small chapels for Ebenezer and Maley, in the north-west part of the city and suburbs. By permission, he exercised pastoral authority in some, or all of these societies.

"In 1845 the same brother, Rev. G. W. Maley, was reappointed to the same mission. At the same time two of the aforesaid societies, Bethel and Ebenezer, were made stations, and Rev. J. W. White and Rev. Joseph A. Bruner were appointed to serve them. These two stations were marked out by metes and bounds, as had been invariably done when new stations were formed in Cincinnati. This was done in council with the presiding elder of Cincinnati district, two or three days after conference closed, it having been forgotten in the pressure of conference business. Letters were written by the presiding bishop to brothers White and Bruner, defining by streets, etc., the bounds of the new charges; and the city missionary had Maley Chapel, and the region around it, set apart from all the stations as his special field of labor, within which, and no where else, he was to exercise pastoral functions. As the superintendent, however, was in haste, he did not write to the missionary, but requested the presiding elder, brother Marlay, to give him the information.

"Three objects were sought in this arrangement:

"*First.* As the city mission had lost two principal appointments, it seemed proper to encourage the missionary by assigning him the pastoral charge of this precinct territory, which was fast filling up, and which must, of course, receive most of his labors.

"*Second.* Ebenezer station bordered on Maley Chapel, and the population and territory were enough to be under the pastoral care of one man, after Maley Chapel and its territory were taken off.

"*Third.* It seemed to the presiding bishop proper that each city preacher should have exclusive pastoral authority within his own charge; and, though no rupture was then dreamed of, it was thought the exercise of pastoral functions

by the missionary, within the different charges, would derange and disorder the work.

"Within three or four weeks after these arrangements were made, the city missionary obtained leave from the City Missionary Board to preach in 'Vine-Street church,' an old, deserted building, within the bounds of Morris Chapel charge, from one-half to three-fourths of a mile from Maley Chapel charge, and in the heart of the city. If we understand correctly, both the presiding elder and the Board deny that the missionary received any authority to form a society there, or do any other act which belonged to the pastoral oversight. He received no such authority from the bishop.

"A number of brethren, however, obtained certificates, and presented them to the city missionary, not in his own charge, but at 'Vine-Street,' and in the heart of the city he proceeded to take possession of his brother's territory, and form a society. Having increased it to a company of several scores, it voted to go south, was created 'a charge,' by the authority of Bishop Andrew, and Revs. E. W. Sehon, G. W. Maley—the missionary—and S. A. Latta, were appointed to serve it as ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Bishop Andrew named it 'VINE-STREET CHARGE, a border society,' etc. In a short time this society purchased a church in the heart of 'Wesley Chapel charge,' so that between it and the border, or the Ohio river, interposes one whole charge—the Bethel—which makes Soule Chapel as truly an interior station as though it were in Columbus or Cleveland.

"*Andrew Chapel, Cincinnati.*—'Andrew Chapel' was purchased a few months since by the 'Soule Chapel' society, and stands within the bounds of Ninth-Street charge, having, like 'Soule Chapel,' one whole charge—'Morris Chapel'—between it and the border, or river. It is understood to have regular preaching, but whether placed on the Minutes of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as a distinct charge, we know not, but understand that pastoral authority is exercised there in the formation of classes, receiving members, and exercising discipline.

"*Statement of encroachment on the territory of the Philadelphia conference, by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.*—Accomac and Northampton counties, Virginia, are separated from the Virginia conference by a broad Bay—the Chesapeake—in every place from fifteen to thirty miles wide. The first place that voted to unite with the Church, South, was Capeville, in Northampton, about seven miles north of Cape Charles. The next place at which the vote was taken was Salem, eight miles north of Capeville, which, by a strong majority, had previously determined to stay with us. The next place was Johnson's Chapel, about ten miles north of Salem, which, by a small majority, preferred the Church, South. The next place reported to have chosen the Church, South, was Bethel, in Occahannock Neck. Here no vote was taken, but some friends of the Church, South, went round to the houses of the members, and reported that they had obtained a majority for the new organization. These were all that had declared for the south, before Mr. Moorman was sent over. Some time after his arrival, Franktown, five or six miles north of Johnson's, gave a majority of one vote for the south, by getting together members who had not attended class for years. Pungotraque, in Accomac county, about ten miles further north, after giving a majority to remain in the

old Church several times, at length chose the new Church by a small majority. And, finally, Craddockville, a few miles south-east of Pungotraque, in a neck, gave a majority for the Church, South. There is no appointment between any of the above and the Chesapeake Bay.

"Signed,

E. HEDDING,

"B. WAUGH,

"THOMAS A. MORRIS,

"L. L. HAMLINE,

"EDMUND S. JAMES.

"Although the plan could have no reference to the Philadelphia, Baltimore, or Ohio conference, nevertheless, allowing that these conferences could be the theater of the operations of the plan on their southern verge, the framers of the plan, in reference to majorities of societies or stations, as well as to internal societies, have been overlooked by the southern bishops. At first, by the concession of all, the plan was confined to the thirteen conferences in the slaveholding states. Next, it was extended by the south to the other conferences; and even in these the border regulations were disregarded, and southern encroachment stopped at nothing. While our bishops, individually, in laudable submission to the Episcopal Board, have, on their part, most scrupulously observed the regulations of the plan, the bishops of the new Church have trampled under foot the provisions of the plan, while at the same time they have professed to be governed by it; and although the authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church did their utmost to preserve the line unbroken, it was unavailing. The authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by precept and example, have broken over the barriers, and the line, by their doing, has no longer any being. They themselves have destroyed the plan, and have placed it now beyond the reach of the Methodist Episcopal Church to restore the boundaries. Nor is there now any hope that measures could be taken to restore the line or continue it, did it exist. The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by the following resolution, in their report on the administration of their bishops, have decided this point. They say,

"*Resolved*, That after a full and patient examination of the particulars of the administration of the southern bishops, in relation to the plan of separation, the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, consider the charges so repeatedly made by the editors and correspondents of the Western Christian Advocate, and the Christian Advocate and Journal, against Bishops Soule and Andrew, as entirely groundless, and that, on the contrary, the administration aforesaid has been strictly conformed to the rule set forth by authority of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in its legislation on this subject in 1844.'

"Thus, the administration of the southern bishops has been sustained by their General conference. They have, therefore, in advance of the Methodist Episcopal Church, overthrown the plan, and have left none of it remaining for us to overthrow, and now, in pronouncing it null and void, the south have compelled to this action.

"Respectfully submitted.

"GEORGE PECK, *Chairman.*"

7. The following paragraphs respecting the relation of our Church to the existing difficulties, we find in the Pastoral Address of the bishops. We publish them to show the light in which the

decisions of the General conference were surveyed by our excellent bishops:

"You are, no doubt, aware that we have received numerous petitions and memorials from individuals and societies residing in the southern states, praying that we would take some measures whereby they might remain in the Church of their early choice. The petitioners thought the cause of separation not sufficient, and believed it to be their duty to continue in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. For the reasons, moreover, which are assigned in the report of the Committee on the State of the Church, which we have not time here to enumerate, we felt perfectly at liberty to declare the plan of separation, as it was called, null and void. We felt not only at liberty to do this, under existing circumstances, but we also believed that we could not otherwise fulfill the obligations of the Church to those who still claim her fostering care.

"But while we felt in duty bound to provide for our adhering members in the southern states, we still felt disposed to do all we could constitutionally to adjust, in some amicable way, the difficulty in regard to the invested funds of the Church. You will easily perceive that this was a question of peculiar delicacy. On the one hand, as the permission required in order to divide the funds had been refused by the annual conferences, and we had, therefore, no constitutional power to meet the claims of the Church, South, neither, on the other hand, were we disposed to reject them if they are founded in jus-

tice and equity. Moreover, we felt neither disposed nor competent to decide this question for ourselves, and on our sole responsibility. We have, therefore, made arrangements for submitting the whole question to an arbitration, for amicable adjustment, which will ultimately, we trust, give satisfaction to all concerned.

"If the measures we have taken in this whole subject, do not seem to you the most judicious, we trust you will duly consider the extreme delicacy and difficulty of our position. We were of different opinions on some points, and yet we have been enabled to exercise a great degree of forbearance and kindness toward each other, so that our differences of opinion have led to no alienation of feeling. We trust it will be so with you. Be calm and prayerful. If you do not at once see the propriety of our course, be patient. Wait till you shall have had time naturally to weigh the matter, and, above all, take no rash step that may cause agitation or tumult in the Church, or in the community. We trust the God of love and peace will be with you, and that he will, out of apparent evil, bring forth good, and make every thing ultimately redound to his own praise and glory."

The bishops thought they felt themselves bound to observe the plan in their administration, declared it to be the duty of the Church to annul it, and that she could not do otherwise. In regard to the vested funds, they declare that it would be unconstitutional to divide them; yet they were fully prepared to leave the matter to the decision of arbiters.

## CHAPTER XLIX.

### EVENTS FROM MAY TO DECEMBER, 1848.

1. DURING the session of the General conference, and after it, the southern papers indulged in the most serious, though unfounded charges against the General conference.

Dr. Lee, during the session of the conference, which he attended, wrote several letters, published in his paper, denouncing the conference with as much severity and unfairness as language could express.\* Dr. Wightman, with more courtesy than Dr. Lee, uttered, perseveringly, from time to time, the same unfounded allegations, aided by a Pittsburg correspondent.† The Nashville Advocate followed in the wake of the other southern papers, with, however, less denunciation.‡ The new paper, called the Expositor, rather exceeded the southern papers for uttering unfounded charges.¶ We will not furnish specimens of the extravagant utterances of the southern press. In the citations in the margin, should they be consulted, there will be found samples enough of such as we mention, and which we have stated above in the mildest terms possible. The notes upon which the editors rung their charges, and in which they were agreed, are the following:

\* R., June 1, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 562-568; June 8th. Scraps, VI, pp. 581-587; see also, pp. 592, 633.

† S., June 2, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 570-574; see also, pp. 695, 619, 621, 662.

‡ N., June 1, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 575-578; see also, pp. 588, 597, 762.

¶ C., August 30th. Scraps, VI, pp. 703-705.

*First.* That the General conference of Pittsburg practiced a stupendous and nefarious fraud, by repudiating the claims of the south on the Book Concern. We will give one specimen from the Methodist Expositor:

"They not only nullify that part of the plan only which provides for a boundary line between the two jurisdictions of the Church, as some have vainly imagined, but they declare the whole, and every part of it, null and void, demonstrating clearly enough their total disregard of the written, printed, and signed and sealed obligations of the General conference, for a *pro rata* division of property and funds; and yet, strange as it may seem, they declared themselves exceedingly anxious to settle this property question, and to make the declaration obvious, they propose arbitration."

Such is the extraordinary statement, though the General conference of 1844 neither wrote, printed, nor sealed, any *obligation* to divide the property, because they had neither right nor power to do so. They recommended the measure, which was the utmost of their power. All the southern editors knew very well that the plan made no provision for the division of the property, except upon the decision of the votes of three-fourths of the annual conferences. The editors knew, too, that the requisite majority was not obtained, though they made such unfounded charges as the above without any apparent scruple.

*Secondly.* They also complain that they have been most grievously persecuted by the General conference and the press. We must here appeal to the publications on both sides, and we are persuaded that the presses of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with some exceptions, have acted justly toward the new Church. Still, the mere statements of facts have been exceedingly offensive to the south, such as that the Methodist Episcopal Church was not divided by the authority of the General conference; that the south is a secession; that the postfix *north* is inapplicable to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

*Thirdly.* The southern press affirm that the proposition of the General conference to arbitrate the matter was a mere ruse, which meant nothing more than to deceive. To such an unfounded charge no answer need be given, except that the asserters of the allegation assume to know what they can not know; that is, the secret motives that influence men's actions.

*Fourthly.* The southern press, after the close of the General conference, manifested great disappointment and mortification that the public mind in the north was so well satisfied with the action of the Pittsburg General conference in regard to the property question. The southern press had predicted nothing but disagreement and division in the ranks of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and they were not backward to lend their influence in that direction. Now that the whole north are perfectly satisfied, in spite of the means used to divide them, their unity is construed into a sinful one.

2. That there was a very strong purpose in the new Church to disconcert the Methodist Episcopal Church, we have full proofs in the establishment of the Methodist Expositor in Cincinnati. Bishop Soule had been very industrious to gain friends in the north; and some northern men flattered him that this was not only possible, but probable and certain. He aided in organizing a Southern Church in Cincinnati. After the extinction of the Expositor, his southern friends said it was gotten up by the influence of Bishop Soule. The Nashville paper, of June 16th, says, "The principal object of the publication is to defend the ecclesiastical organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South."<sup>\*</sup>

The Expositor itself avows, "The Expositor and True Issue is not an individual concern, as might be inferred, although it can not at present be considered official in the strictest sense; yet it has the approval of those officially connected with the publishing department, who have pledged its support till it can support itself. Neither did the enterprise originate in Cincinnati, as might be supposed, but with those connected with the publishing department, who, with the counsel and advice of some of the most experienced in the Episcopacy, and many of the most experienced in the ministry, advised and authorized the issue without delay."<sup>†</sup>

This paper was far less scrupulous in unfair attacks on the Methodist Episcopal Church than any of the southern papers. It received no patronage in the north; was too violent even for the south. It never paid its expenses, and, after a short, inglorious, meteoric glare, it died for want of patronage.

3. But the most extraordinary issue of the times, or of any time or place, was the "Brief Appeal to Public Opinion," in exceptions to the Methodist Episcopal Church by the southern commissioners, Bascom, Green, and Parsons.\*

This is among the most extraordinary productions we ever read for false accusations, misrepresentation of facts, arguments, and principles. It possesses all the unfairness, scurrility, and vileness that can characterize the lowest issues of the perverted press. Dr. Bascom was the writer, and he, Mr. Green, and Mr. Latta were the indorsers of the evil thing, with all its slanders, bitterness, and absence of Christian spirit. We must not defile our page with a single quotation from its venomous pages. It were well had it never seen the light, and the sooner it will pass to the grave of oblivion the better.

Dr. Peck gave it a brief review on its appearance, giving many quotations from it, which fully shows it to be what we have said above concerning it. Dr. Peck says of it, that "it is a mass of assumptions, tintured with an infusion of wormwood. The filling is a conglomeration of assumption, contemptuous sneer, and bitter reviling. It is itself a most fearful commentary upon the taste and Christian character of the writer, and the reverend gentlemen who have been so incautious as to indorse it by annexing their names to his on the title page. What man of sense and candor, either north or south, can persuade himself that there is a particle of sober truth in one of these wholesale denunciations?"<sup>†</sup> This is a true picture.

The southern editors, however, praised the book beyond any other issue of the press; and from time to time, for several months, said all they could in its favor. We must not quote their language, for the sake of human nature; we can only refer to the places in the papers where the eulogies of this vile work are to be found.<sup>‡</sup>

4. Bishop Soule, in a communication dated July 4, 1848, addresses the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in a long and labored review of the doings of the General conference. The article is a calm one, as to its style and manner, and is, withal, one of the ablest that came from his pen. He exhorts the Church, South, to peace and the cultivation of the Christian graces. He censures the General conference for refusing fraternity to the south through Dr. Pierce, and thinks himself, and the other southerners present, ought to have had the privilege of addressing the conference. He regrets that the conference gave no reasons for refusing fraternity; yet he makes out a reason himself, or borrows it from Mr. Stevens; namely, that because there was slavery in the south the Southern Church must be denounced. Mr. Stevens was barely of the opinion, while others differed from him,

\* Brief Appeal to Public Opinion, in a series of exceptions to the course and action of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from 1844 to 1848, affecting the rights and interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. By H. B. Bascom, A. L. P. Green, and C. B. Parsons. Southern Commissioners for the settlement of the Property Question between the two Churches. Louisville, Kentucky. Published by John Early, Agent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. Morton & Griswold. pp. 202 octavo. See collection of Pamphlets, XLVI, pp. 367-368.

† C., October 18, 1848, Vol. XXIII, p. 166, col. 4, 5.  
‡ S., July 23d and August 11th. Scraps, VI, pp. 621, 718, 725, 780, 814. R., July 20th. Scraps, VI, pp. 437, 642, 787, 795. N., September 22d. Scraps, VI, p. 749.

\* N., June 16, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 603.  
† Z., July 19th. Scraps, VI, p. 686.



that the pro-slavery character of the Southern Church formed the barrier; and this was changed by the Bishop into the assertion that the cause was because slavery existed in the south. He then prophesied, with italicized emphasis, that the northern abolition portion of the Church would exclude all slaveholders that were such even by law. But the nullification of the plan was the worst of all. The Bishop stoutly adheres to all the premises laid down by the radicals, Henkle, Bascom, and others, in reference to all the new theory instituted to make out secession to be only a constitutional division of the Church. He even goes out of his way to fix the title *north* on the Methodist Episcopal Church. He further advises adherence to the plan, and gives some three questions to be answered by his preachers on the border. The Bishop's Pastoral was a very necessary anodyne to give some softening to the coarse assault of Dr. Bascom.\* It may, at least in its manner, and some of its matter, be considered as a rebuke on the course of the southern editors, and on the authors of the "Appeal to Public Opinion" by the southern-commissioners.

5. The frequent and unjust denunciations of the southern press called forth some strictures from the pen of Dr. G. Peck, the new editor of the *New York Advocate*. Charges were incessantly rung by the south on the treatment of Dr. Pierce. Accordingly, in the *Advocate* of July 12th, the editor explained the case as follows: Dr. Pierce asked the General conference to settle the question of fraternal relations, as a preliminary measure, before presenting his credentials. He professed to have no power to settle difficulties; the conflicts for territory and Church property were beyond his reach. These and other questions connected with them, must be disposed before fraternization could take place. Dr. Pierce had no authority to settle such questions. The two bodies were not in a state of amity, and, therefore, a messenger for that object alone could not be received. To receive Dr. Pierce would be considered as acknowledging the course of the Southern Church, and even to give a pledge to submit to such proceedings in future. Some few, no doubt, considered the relation of the Church, South, to slavery as a sufficient reason, though the greater number were influenced by the hostile measures of the south on the border.

Dr. Pierce, in the *Southern Advocate* of August 11th, addressed a letter to Dr. Peck, which was also published in the *New York Advocate*, in which he asserted that he possessed general power to settle all difficulties. He said, too, that there was no desire to settle these difficulties manifested in the General conference, and that the Church, South, was rejected beforehand.† The latter statement has much of truth in it, because no one in the General conference had the least hope that the south would assume a fraternal course. It was not supposed that Dr. Pierce could assure the General conference that Bishops Soule and Andrew would confess their offenses, and promise amendment; that the south would retract the decisions of the Petersburg General conference in approving their bishops; that all claim to the Book Concern would be relinquished, except on the terms originally entered into by the whole Church; that the

southern editors should publicly retract their course. These, and many unsound doctrines connected with them, it was believed, would not be retracted by the south; and to ask even such things would be received as an insult by the south, because they had committed themselves so fully that they could not be supposed to change their ground. Yet Dr. Pierce was a most amiable man, though a southerner in full in all the measures of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

In another letter of Dr. Pierce's, of October 20th, he complains grievously of his treatment, and states: "I allege that the Southern Church was denounced chiefly because her location was in the south."\* Indeed, this excellent man was so fully imbued with the new theories adopted in the organization of the new Church, that he appears to be entirely unaware that, as the Methodist Episcopal Church had not commenced on the work of ecclesiastical revolution, she could not so hastily even affiliate with the south on the principles of revolt that our southern brethren had adopted. Indeed, all the declarations of Dr. Pierce, and his southern friends, at and after the Pittsburg General conference, went to say that the differences between the two bodies were so great that no ecclesiastical union could exist between them.

6. Dr. Dixon, it seems, by denouncing slavery before the General conference, and especially his abolition story, gave great offense to the south. It was contended that it was both out of good taste and out of character to name the existing topic at all. Indeed, the editor of the *Richmond Advocate* would not report the course of Dr. Dixon, as he considered it proper to exclude it from his columns as unfit for southern ears.†

Though we have good reason to believe that Dr. Dixon's course was satisfactory to his English brethren, he made no report to his conference. Probably the press of business prevented this in due time, and on that account Dr. Dixon, out of respect to his American brethren, declined to do it at a period of the conference that would be out of place. Mr. Corderoy, in a letter to the *New York Advocate*, explains it as follows:

"I am glad," says Mr. Corderoy, "Dr. Dixon pleased you; but not more so than America and American Methodism pleased him. It is very unfortunate that the business of conference was so arranged as to drive off the reception of his message till a time when he thought it would be derogatory to his transatlantic friends to deliver it, and so he left, *much to the consternation of his brethren*. The Doctor felt that both he and you deserved to have been heard earlier. The conference calculated, day after day, on finding a fitting time for the fair and full consideration of American matters, and thus the affair was delayed, *much to the grief of all parties*. Be assured that no slight to our brethren in the States was, in the least degree, intended by our conference, and that nothing was further from Dr. Dixon's thoughts than any desire to grieve the friends who showed him so much kindness. The matter was unhappy, but perfectly unintentional."‡

7. The Wyandotts were much aggrieved, in consequence of the position in which they were

\* N., July 21st, and S., August 18th. *Scraps*, VI, pp. 691, 724.  
† S., August 11th. *Scraps*, VI, pp. 716, 753.

\* S., October 20th. *Scraps*, VI, p. 791.

† P., July 5, 1848, from Z. *Scraps*, VI, p. 648.

‡ S., October 13, 1848, from C. *Scraps*, VI, p. 761.

placed in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The Wyandott mission was taken into the care of the Ohio conference in 1819. In 1821 J. B. Finley was their missionary, and in 1822 C. Elliott. Mr. Finley was reappointed in 1823, and continued several years to be their missionary. In 1843-44 they moved to their present location, and were attached to the Indian Mission conference. They were very determined from the first not to unite with the Southern Church, and that not by the instigation of Messrs. Finley, Elliott, and others, but of their own accord. After the Louisville convention they wrote to C. Elliott, asking advice. They did the same to Mr. Finley. Neither of these wrote any thing to render them discontented with their relation to the Indian Mission conference.

When Mr. Wheeler, the missionary who went with them from Ohio, left them, the missionary from the south came, against the will and protest of the Wyandott Church. His family were moved during his absence, and, had it not been for that, he would not have come to labor among them. The Wyandott society only wanted a suitable opportunity to declare its true position. All the official members of the Church determined to remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Church records were always in the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church.\* Yet the Wyandotts had no opportunity of enjoying the privileges of the Methodist Episcopal Church till after the General conference of 1848. Accordingly, the entire body of official members, except one, sent a communication, dated Wyandott Nation, to the Ohio conference, in these words:

"WYANDOTT NATION, INDIAN TERRITORY, July 29, 1848.

"TO THE REV. J. B. FINLEY,—The undersigned, official members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Wyandott Nation, wish to make known to you, and through you to the Ohio conference, that we have this day officially to ask our old friends to take us under their pastoral care. We have heretofore determined not to go with the southern secession, and officially informed the Church, South, of our intention, to which decision we still adhere. It is unnecessary to state our views farther than to say that we consider it our natural right to belong to the Church of our choice. We, therefore, respectfully petition the Methodist Episcopal Church to send us a missionary to take charge of the Church among us. We subscribe ourselves your brethren,

"SQUIRE GREY-EYES, *Local Deacon.*

"GEORGE J. CLARK, *Local Preacher.*

"JOHN HICKS, SEN.,

"LITTLE CHIEF,

"JAMES BIGBEE,

"J. M. ARMSTRONG,

"BATEES,

"JOHN VAN MEETER,

"W. JOHNSON,

"JOHN SOLOMON,

"WHITE-CROW,

"GEORGE SPYBUCK,

"FRANCIS ASBURY HICKS,

"JAMES F. CHARLOE,

"MATTHEW MUDEATER,

"JAMES WASHINGTON,

"GEORGE ARMSTRONG,

"LEWIS CLARK,

"To the Ohio conference."†

The foregoing is the true state of the question; but, through the influence of some members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the Indian territory, of pro-slavery principles, and others of like sort, a portion of the Nation were enlisted against the measure. Accordingly, an irregular meeting of the Nation was called, and a protest was published against the measure of the society for belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Many groundless allegations were alleged;\* but the Church spurned the interference as a mere political measure, with which the Nation had no right to interfere, and they consequently pursued their course, and received a missionary, Rev. William Gurley, from the Ohio conference.

8. The representations of infractions of the plan, as presented by the General conference of 1848, gave great offense to the south. The Richmond Advocate, and its correspondents, deny this, and assert the contrary.† The Southern Advocate calls the statements of our bishops "gross misrepresentations," and, with the Richmond Advocate, says that these statements were a "tissue of fabrications, with which the venerable men [the bishops] were most grossly trepanned."‡ Bishop Capers complains, most grievously, that the Methodist Episcopal Church pronounced the plan null and void.§ Bishop Andrew complained loudly of appropriating missionary funds in the support of missions by the Methodist Episcopal Church in Missouri.¶ Various writers in the southern papers made some ado to show, but to no purpose, that the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church had been misled as to Parkersburg, and other places.

9. The property question became, all along, so involved in constitutional questions, that the principal difficulties of the controversy were, more or less, connected with this topic. A brief survey of the views entertained at the General conference, and its action on the subject, may be proper. There were three sets of views entertained at this time among the members of the General conference.

Some were disposed to admit the equity of the south. Others contended that, as the south had organized an independent Church after the constitutional vote of the annual conferences failed, and is now a secession, they have no claim either in equity or law to the vested funds of the Church.

There were others who would, as a matter of high expediency, to avoid all charges of mercenary motives, divide the property in some constitutional way.

Though varying in opinion, the General conference decided to leave the whole to the process of arbitration, so that competent and unprejudiced judges might decide the whole matter.

The commissioners of the Church, South, by the authority of their General conference, were possessed of full powers "to settle and adjust all questions involving property or funds," and to take any measures which, in their judgment, "may best secure the just and equitable claims of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." In view of this power of the southern commissioners, as the General conference of the Meth-

\* W., October 11, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 791, 792.

† R., August 24, 1853.

‡ S., September 1, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 748.

§ S., December 15, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 834.

¶ S., December 22, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 835.

odist Episcopal Church had no power to dispose of these funds, they provided to leave the subject to arbitration. We may now notice the various steps in the adjustment.

In pursuance of the proceedings of the General conference, the following notice appeared in the Nashville Advocate:

"In consideration of the acts of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, recently held in the city of Pittsburg, it is believed to be necessary that the bishops, commissioners, and appointees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, should meet, as early as practicable, for consultation on the important matters involved in these acts. I have, therefore, with the advice of said commissioners and appointee, notified the meeting as aforesaid, to be held in the city of Louisville, on Wednesday, the 6th day of September, next. A full and punctual attendance is much to be desired.

JOSHUA SOULE.

"Hill Grove, Tennessee, June 16, 1848."\*

The commissioners, appointee, and bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had their meeting on the 6th of September, all being present. Mr. Early, in sending a copy of their proceedings to the Southern Advocate, remarks, among other things, that the bishops do not intend to violate the plan of separation on the border. He said "the commissioners have not received any proposition from the Book Agents at New York or Cincinnati to adjust the property question; and believing, as they do, that the only way to get an equitable division of the property is by a suit at law, accordingly they have determined, as soon as practicable, to resort to such mode."

The commissioners, in their meeting of the 6th of September, complain loudly that they could get no settlement from the northern commissioners; that the General conference of 1848 refused to divide; and, after reciting many grievous charges, such as have been current in the south, they passed the following resolution:

"Resolved, That it is expedient and necessary, in view of the rights and interests in controversy, that the necessary suits be instituted, as soon as practicable, for the recovery of the funds and property falling due to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, under the contract of the plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844."†

The Agents at New York published the following statement in the New York Advocate of October 4th.

"The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, having, at their late meeting in Louisville, determined, with the consent and approbation of the bishops and Book Agent of said Church, that the 'necessary suits be instituted, as soon as practicable,' etc., we deem it due to ourselves, and to those for whom we act, to make a simple statement of facts as to what we had done, in order to carry out, in good faith, the expressed will of the late General conference touching this matter. On Wednesday evening, May 31st—the evening before the adjournment of the conference—we had a meeting with the Agents at Cincinnati, the design of which was to confer together as to what the General conference required of us, and what was the proper course

to be pursued in order fully to meet their wishes. The case appeared to us to be a plain one, the terms of the resolution of the conference being scarcely susceptible of being misunderstood, and we unanimously agreed that we should proceed, with as little delay as possible, to comply with the first resolution in the series. We foresaw, indeed, that it would be difficult, if not utterly impracticable, to do this immediately, or for several months, as the press of business, during the period of the sessions of the conferences, would be so great as to prevent our giving the subject that attention which its importance required. Still, we resolved to do the best we could. The first thing to be done was to obtain the opinions of eminent counsel as to whether we, as Agents, could constitutionally propose a voluntary arbitration. Opposite views were entertained on this point, and it was deemed essential to our personal safety, and, indeed, was required by the General conference, that this point should first be settled. Accordingly, very soon after the General conference, we engaged a legal gentleman to prepare a statement of facts, and to collect the necessary materials, in order to obtain the required opinion. A like step was taken by the Agents at Cincinnati. The statements were drawn up, and the materials collected. Our statement was sent to Cincinnati; theirs to us. But, as these statements were both thought to be defective in some points, it was suggested by our brethren at Cincinnati that the Agents have a joint meeting, that they might, out of the two, prepare one embodying more clearly and fully the facts in the case; and, also, as it was utterly impracticable, from press of business, for them, especially, to be ready to report the final result of our action to the commissioners of the Church, South, at or before their meeting of September 6th, that the senior Agent here should write them to this effect, at the same time stating the reasons of our delay, and assuring them that we would be ready as soon as practicable. The senior Agent wrote accordingly to the commissioners. His letter is dated August 24, [1848.] The commissioners, in their report, make no reference to this communication. They say, indeed, that they had not received 'any communication from the Church, north;' but we suppose they mean by this that they had received no formal proposition for arbitration. They say, also, that they 'informed the Rev. George Lane, the principal Agent north, at his own request, in May last, that they could not, under their instructions, consistently delay bringing suit to a period later than the date of the action now had,' September 9th. Rev. George Lane is certain that, in the conversation to which they refer, no specific time was mentioned.

"Having made this statement, we deem it unnecessary, as the case now stands, to proceed any further in compliance with the first resolution of the General conference, and must calmly await the action of our brethren south, hoping, at the same time, that, for the sake of our common Christianity, and our common Methodism, they will resort to no harsher measures than are absolutely necessary to a just and equitable settlement of the case."\*

The Agents at New York, on the 26th of October, made the following explanation:

"THE PROPERTY QUESTION.—In our statement

\*N., July, 1848, and Z., July 12th. Scraps, VI, p. 658.

†N., September 15th. S., September 22, 1848. Scraps, VI, pp. 766, 776.

\*C., October 4, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 782.

published in the Christian Advocate and Journal of the 4th, we took for granted that, as the commissioners of the Church, South, had decided to institute suits, as soon as practicable, they would commence them *immediately*; and, from certain statements in the preamble to the decision, that they had definitely and finally decided against voluntary arbitration as a mode of settlement. We, therefore, observe in that statement, that we deem it unnecessary, as the case now stands, to proceed any further in compliance with the first resolution of the General conference, and must calmly await the action of our brethren south. But, as the commissioners of the Church, South, have delayed bringing suit thus far, and it is thought they

may delay some time, we have concluded, with the concurrence of the Agents west, to resume our preparations with reference to the offer of a voluntary arbitration.

"LANE & SCOTT.

"October 26, 1848."\*

10. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, prosecuted her missions among the colored people with great vigor. Their missions for 1848 were as follows: Missions, 133; missionaries, 130; members, 36,894; children instructed catechetically, 15,883. There were also 931 colored members scattered among the missions for the whites, which make, in all, of colored members in the missions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, 37,825.†

## CHAPTER L.

### EVENTS OF 1849.

1. THE arbitration question, as far as the powers of the Agents were concerned, was decided by the Agents at New York and Cincinnati; and the conclusion was, after legal advice, that the thing could not be done. The following is their decision:

"New York, December 22, 1848.

"GENTLEMEN,—Having taken the advice of eminent legal counsel, in compliance with the direction of the late General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we are satisfied that no power which we possess, whether corporate or otherwise, will warrant us to submit the claim made by you in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to a portion of the property of the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the decision of arbiters.

Yours truly,

"GEORGE LANE,

"LEVI SCOTT,

"LEROY SWORMSTEDT,

"JOHN H. POWER.

"To Rev. H. B. Bascom, D. D., A. L. P. Green, D. D., S. A. Latta, M. D., Commissioners of Methodist Episcopal Church, South."\*

2. When the proposition for arbitration failed, the subject was then carried to the annual conferences, in view of obtaining a constitutional vote to divide. The Baltimore and Philadelphia conferences passed the recommendation unanimously.† There were some, however, in the east who opposed the arbitration, as even this would give encouragement to secession.‡ The southern papers, too, denounced every thing that did not agree with their new doctrines respecting the plan and their entire movements.¶ Indeed, the claims of the south were such, as to principles, that many in the north either declined to act at all in the matter, deeming action useless, while others opposed any adjustment of any sort. Nevertheless, the bishops continued to lay the matter before the annual conferences till the suit was instituted, in August. After this event they deemed it unnecessary to carry it to the conferences, and they therefore ceased to present it.

3. The following is the notice of the suit as instituted by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"It is deemed necessary to give notice to the several annual conferences, the ministry and membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, that under the management of able counsel, suits have been brought in the United States circuit courts, for New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio, in view of a fair and final adjustment of the property question, so long in controversy between the northern and southern Methodist Churches, and growing out of the plan of separation adopted by the General conference of the whole undivided Church in 1844. We have no action to report in the courts, as the term time of the courts has not allowed of any since the bringing of the suits. The Church may be assured that her interests shall be faithfully guarded, and attended to, so far as such service can be rendered by the commissioners.

"H. B. BASCOM,

"A. L. P. GREEN,

"C. B. PARSONS.

"August 20, 1849."‡

4. Much was said in the southern papers against the arbitration measure of the General conference, and that, too, in the severest terms of reprobation. Yet the sole design of the General conference, in their action on this subject, was an amicable adjustment of the difficulty, and that mode was by arbitration. 1. "Voluntary arbitration," without the concurrence of the annual conferences, if, upon taking legal advice, the Book Agents would find that course practical. 2. If that should not be found practicable, and a suit of law should be commenced by the south, then a legal arbitration by the authority of the court. 3. If arbitration without the consent of the annual conferences could not take place, and a suit of law should not be commenced by the south, then the General conference recommends the annual conferences so far to suspend the sixth Restriction as to allow the Book Agents to submit the matter to arbitration."

As the General conference had no power to distribute these funds, they could do no more

\* Examiner, January 6, 1849. Scraps, VII, p. 18.

† R., April 26, 1849. Scraps, VII, p. 68.

‡ Z., June 20, 1849. Scraps, VII, pp. 64, 91, 115, 116, 127.

§ S., May 18, 1849. Scraps, VII, pp. 83, 89.

\* C., October, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 813.

† S., August 18, 1848. Scraps, VI, p. 724.

‡ N., September, 7, 1849. Scraps, VII, p. 149.

than to refer the subject to the annual conferences, asking their concurrence. The southern papers, therefore, charged very unjustly the General conference and northern commissioners, in condemning them for not doing what was beyond their constitutional powers.

5. The Rev. Mr. Gurley, who had been appointed to serve the Wyandotts, reached his appointment in due time, and was most cordially received by the Wyandott Church. But through the influence of the pro-slavery party, in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, aided by some of the Nation who were intemperate, a portion of the Wyandotts were induced to join the new Church, though nearly two-thirds remained in the Methodist Episcopal Church. The opponents of the Methodist Episcopal Church made out to get the informal action of a part of the nation to petition the Southern conference for a preacher, which was granted. The Indian sub-agent was also employed in this interest. A temporary persecution was raised against the Methodist Episcopal Church members and their preacher, Mr. Gurley. For the time it was deemed prudent for him, for the sake of peace, to leave the Nation. The Wyandotts belonging to our Church, however, were true to their purpose. They could not be induced to unite with a pro-slavery Church. They maintained their relation to the Methodist Episcopal Church. After a few months they again were favored with a preacher, and they continued to enjoy this privilege, and with it an encouraging share of spiritual prosperity.\*

6. As an index to the general sentiment on slavery now obtaining among the southern leaders, we may present the following from the pen of Dr. Smith, in a letter from him, dated *Camp-ground*, Stafford county, Virginia, August 22, 1849:

"That slavery, in the abstract, or the general abstract principle of slavery is, *per se*, right; and that the application of this general principle to the African race in this country, in the form of government known as domestic slavery, was equally correct in the circumstances of the case; and further, that the northern and southern divisions of the Methodist Episcopal Church held very different relations to the domestic slavery of the African—and relations which are calculated to affect, in an essentially different manner, the domestic peace of southern citizens, and the political destiny of the whole country."<sup>†</sup>

Dr. Smith went through much of Virginia, delivering lectures on the subject of slavery, agreeably to the avowed principles in the above declaration. The great aim was to show that the Methodist Episcopal Church was an abolition Church, whose principles and practice were inconsistent with toleration in Virginia. His success was by no means equal to his zeal and rashness, as very few members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the bounds of the Baltimore conference, were sufficiently pro-slavery to unite with the new Church.

7. During the year 1849 Dr. Dixon published his book on America, which was read very generally by the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as well as by the public at large. Few writers from England have done equal justice to America. As our business with the book is to consider what it says concerning the topic on which our history treats, we omit any refer-

ence to it except on this subject alone. With the highest respect for Dr. Dixon, we are grieved to say that he has not done justice to our Church in reference to the southern difficulties. Before we mention the points of mistake, we may state some reasons which will show that his errors in this may be easily accounted for.

Dr. Dixon's book was evidently composed in haste. A large part of the book is made up of quotations; this would be no fault, were the quotations documentary proof; but some of them are by no means of that character.

He seems to be entirely guided by the documents or authorities of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and those of the followers of Mr. Scott. The History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and other documents of like sort, seem to have been his only guide in the preparation of his book on southern affairs. His narrative of the separation is entirely from southern publications. He gives the fallacious Protest of the south, filling thirteen closely-printed pages, and coolly says in a note that the Reply to it "had not fallen into his hands." The Life of Orange Scott and the History of Matlack were his textbooks in the controversy between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the ultra-abolitionists. It is no wonder that he concluded from these sources of information that the general conferences of 1836 and 1840 were pro-slavery in their action.

Dr. Dixon seems to have no documents of any kind on the side of the Methodist Episcopal Church. He had not the journals or debates on the subject, nor the Reply to the Protest. He had not Dr. Peck's conclusive reply to Dr. Bascom. Who can wonder, then, that his narrative in reference to the south and the abolitionists is a partial one, though the production of a candid and noble mind?

Beside, Dr. Dixon left the seat of the General conference before the southern affairs were discussed. He heard none of the reports of the committee on the subject, nor of the speeches which they called forth, and, probably, he never saw them in print.

Add to the foregoing that his intimate intercourse with leading southern men and those who fraternized with them, had a manifest influence with him. The former relation in which he stood to Bishop Soule while in England was renewed in Pittsburg. He traveled from Pittsburg to Cincinnati with several southern men, and the Canadian brethren. These latter were, manifestly, from sympathy on the southern side, and Dr. Dixon's intercourse with them at Pittsburg, on their journey to Canada, and in Canada, we may well suppose, tended to give a southern bias to his mind.

The following version is given of Dr. Dixon's views in regard to the south, in Dr. Pierce's report to the southern General conference, dated St. Louis, May, 1850. He stated that at Baltimore he "communed fearlessly with Dr. Dixon on the points in dispute between the north and south." While they were descending the river from Brownsville to Pittsburg, Dr. Pierce says: "I remarked to him that although we were delegates sent to the same body, from different portions of one great family, I feared a very different fate awaited us. 'You will be received and welcomed a messenger of the Church, while I shall be refused and rejected.' To these remarks he warmly said, 'I hope not;' adding, 'If you are rejected it will be the occasion of everlasting regret to me.'"

\* See references in Scraps, VII, pp. 28-30, 31, 26, 43, 51.  
<sup>†</sup> R., August 30, 1849. Scraps, VII, p. 140; see also p. 159.

As Dr. Pierce accompanied Dr. Dixon from Pittsburg to Cincinnati, he says:

"While on this passage I found the Doctor intensely engaged in reading the books which had been given him by the southern preachers, on the causes of division between the north and the south. The facts contained in these records made a deep impression on his mind and led him to converse more freely on this, to him, painful occurrence.

"On this trip to Cincinnati I had the pleasure of the company of brother Ryerson, one of the delegates from Canada, and the traveling companion of Dr. Dixon. His more natural and close relation to the Doctor contributed no little to the assurance I felt that he sympathized with us in feelings of tender regard. The opportunity was so good, and the pleasure which fraternal intercourse with any, and with every legitimate organization of Wesleyan Methodists would impart, that I could not fail to ask brother Ryerson how he thought an offer from us, of friendly relations with the Canada conference would be received; to which he replied, 'Most cordially—our sympathies are all with the south.'"

With such partial documents and associations on the one side, and an absence of official replies and defenses on the other, it is not marvelous that the good Dr. Dixon eulogizes the Protest of the southern minority and becomes a convert to its reasoning, without having seen the confutation of it. Hence, with the Protest, he concludes that the majority trenched on great constitutional and fundamental principles. In short, he adopts the sweeping misrepresentations of the General conference by the Protest, and expresses the opinion that the sooner "the north returns to the old soundings of the Church the better." We will now briefly refer to some of the special mistakes of Dr. Dixon, into which he was undoubtedly led for want of the proper means of information.

8. The exceptionable portions of Dr. Dixon's book are found in his *fifth Part*, entitled "The measures adopted in the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery." In this part there are four chapters. Chapter I, on the laws of the Methodist Episcopal Church on slavery; Chapter II, on the Wesleyan Methodist connection; Chapter III, on the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; Chapter IV, on the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The guides of Mr. Dixon on these topics, were the Life of O. Scott, by Luther Lee, the History of Matlack, and the History of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. All of these are partisan in the highest sense of the word partisan. And then there was an absence of all documents of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The fifth part of Dr. Dixon's volume, in all its leading points, is written under the direction of these guides. Nevertheless, the good, the noble, and pure-minded man breaks loose frequently from these trammels, and utters great truths in opposition to the statements of his only guides.

Of the Scottite party Mr. Dixon says, they "turned their artillery from slavery to the Church; and as they could not obtain their purpose, they vehemently assailed the constituted authorities, and the ecclesiastical organization itself."† Again he says of them, "One can not but lament this separation. The abolitionists would have done more for the cause

they had espoused by remaining in their old position. But the question became ultimately a mixed one, as is always the case, and they went out of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as much or more on ecclesiastical grounds than on those of slavery. Reformers often forget that great bodies are slow in their movements."\*

Of Mr. Scott Mr. Dixon said, "after he was gone his cause became predominant" in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Nothing is farther from the truth than this. The antislavery cause was always predominant in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and as much so in opposing Mr. Scott's cause, as in opposing the measures of the south.

The following noble sentiments of Dr. Dixon were not borrowed from the party of Scott or their defenders:

"Two things are clearly very different. Slavery in itself is one thing, and the relations of men to it another. As to slavery, in its own nature, nothing can be said, but that it is the grossest evil existing under the sun.

"But we say there is a difference between the system of slavery and men's unavoidable connection with it. Individual participation in the evil must depend on circumstances. The difficulties are prodigious. A child of white parents is born in the midst of slavery: how can he help the conditions of his birth? His parents leave him their property, at the period of their decease. This property partly consists of slaves; for real property can scarcely be found in the south; but some of these wretched creatures will be devised as a part of the inheritance. Wherever there is landed property slaves will be found. He can not help this state of things. This is his portion in life; and to strip himself, if he could, of his wretched vassals, would be to render every thing else useless. And as we have seen, in case this person should be disposed to emancipate his slaves he finds the system guarded, like the gates of the infernal regions, by protective laws of so stringent a nature that he can not possibly do it, except at the hazard of every thing he possesses in the world. Men, then, we may perceive, are obliged to participate in the evils of slavery; and, in innumerable instances, without their own choice, and in despite of their own conviction.

"The *personal* position of individuals, as must at once be seen in the midst of this monster evil, is a very different thing to the aggregate injustice which first created and now perpetuates it. No man, no individual in Europe or in America, or any where else, would dare to institute slavery, or keep it in existence for a day. Such an enormity could only be perpetrated by such aggregations as have the effect of annihilating individual volition. The whites are nearly as much enslaved as the blacks. They can not do as they would, even with what is called their property. The confederacy has left them no freedom of action. They are obliged to bow to the behests of a popular tyranny, which leaves them only the choice of three things: a participation in the public wrong, the loss of caste, honor, and property, or a flight into another region. This is more than the moral courage of most men can surmount. They are compelled to submit to the despotism which surrounds them as a

\* S., June 14, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 418.

† Dixon's America, London edition, p. 417.

\* Dixon's America, London edition, p. 418.

hopeless misery; and all which the best among them can do is to lighten the burden of the slave by treating him with individual kindness.

"In this state of things religious men are surrounded with prodigious difficulties. No doubt in innumerable cases their principles and convictions would lead them to emancipate their slaves; but how are they to do it? Their hands are tied; they can not accomplish what their consciences dictate to them as right and proper; and they are involuntarily made to participate in the evils of a system, which, in the indulgence of their better feelings, they can not but abhor. This is a great wrong done to them in their religious character, and it is unexampled, except in the regions of slavery. Good men are objects of sympathy as found in such circumstances. Their principles would produce a change if they had fair play, but as the matter now stands, they are obliged to smother their feelings, and bury their noblest sentiments in the one universal tomb of a lifeless, hopeless oppression."\*

There will be found little of the doctrines of the Protest, or of the other teachings of the south, in the two following paragraphs of Mr. Dixon's book, on the moral character of slavery:

"It is, in truth, every possible personal wrong in one. Rob a man of his watch, his clothes, his house, his purse, his lands—is not this a moral evil, a sin? If not, what of the laws of civilized communities, jails, and the gallows? But is it not a greater crime to rob a man of himself, than to strip him of his coat, to pull down his house, and to drive him from his home? The degrees of evil in such case can bear no comparison. Slavery is robbery in its highest possible enormity. But it is a lingering injury. It is inflicted for life—a life of conscious wrong; for to imagine that these wretches are not sensible of their condition, is to add calumny to injury. It is robbery, torture, degradation, misery, mental and physical, dealt out by the moment, the live-long day, the whole period of existence. It is as if, by some infernal contrivance, existence were sustained—as with the damned—while the operations of the whip, the iron, the fangs of slavery, were constantly at work upon their tortured and lacerated limbs. This is not all. The wretched is obliged to bequeath his inheritance to his offspring. That which was pronounced a blessing, the ties of family, the relations of wedded

life, the parental state, is by this system perverted into an unmitigated curse. All the political, all the social, all the municipal laws of civilized society are perverted. That cruel code which makes a man a thing, identifies him with the beast, classes him with farm stock, places him among lumber, reduces him to the condition of household furniture, treats him as the canes, the tobacco, the cotton, the indigo, which his hands cultivate, then buys and sells him in market like any other stock, or goods, is—but we are afraid to call it by its true name.

"To say that villainy like this can in any way be identical with Christianity, is to degrade our holy religion to a copartnership or a connivance with man's greatest, most concentrated, and unmitigated crimes against his fellow. There is not a truth, a doctrine, a principle, a precept, of the Gospel, which, if fairly carried out, would annihilate slavery. The very existence of the Church is fundamentally opposed to the spirit and injustice of this evil. How can a slaveholder make his servants his property, and then meet them in the church at the Lord's table, as his brethren? It would be a curious thing to see one of these gentlemen receiving the Lord's supper, the emblem of Christian brotherhood, with one of his slaves on the Sabbath, and then on Monday morning selling him as a log of wood."\*

The book of Mr. Dixon was one both of vexation and exultation to the south. They eulogized the book, as a whole, but carefully placarded all the southern doctrines it contained, in their papers. They also culled and published every thing in it which spoke on the side of Mr. Scott and his party, and made out to southern readers that the Methodist Episcopal Church was really one with the ultra abolition secession from it. By these means the book of Mr. Dixon was a very fit agency in promoting the interests of a pro-slavery Church in the south, and in lowering the character of the Methodist Episcopal Church. But the real antislavery matter in the book was a sore vexation to the south. It hit them in all their movements. No one in the south would publish it, as it would be an incendiary publication fit only to be burned, especially if it had reached Charleston. The southern men, however, never touched these parts, though they availed themselves fully of the other side.

## CHAPTER LI.

### SOUTHERN GENERAL CONFERENCE OF 1850.

1. In considering the proceedings of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, we will commence with the address of their bishops, or rather with the address of Bishops Andrew, Capers, and Paine, for their names alone are signed to it. Whether the absence of Bishop Soule's name to it was occasioned by his not being present when it was offered, or for some other cause, we are not prepared to say.

The document contains some things which

look strange as proceeding from a board of Christian bishops. We will quote below the paragraphs to which we object. The question at issue between the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has been steadily and perseveringly misrepresented by the southern editors, from May, 1844, to May, 1850. The southern bishops fully adopted their views; and these have been so often, so steadily, and so confidently presented to the southern public, that they

\* Dixon's America, London edition, pp. 495, 496.

\* Dixon's America, London edition, pp. 494, 495.

were regarded as true beyond all question. The following are the paragraphs of the southern bishops' address to which we object:

"When, in 1844, the General conference assembled in the city of New York, passed such resolutions as compelled the southern delegates, for their own protection and in view of the safety and prosperity of the work of God in the places where they labored, to protest against the illegality of the action then taken, setting forth the difficulties which that action would throw around them in the prosecution of the work, and indicating the course which necessity might compel them to pursue, that body, apparently in the spirit of kindness, adopted the plan of separation, which, looking to the prospective separation of the north and south, laid down the outlines of an arrangement by which it was hoped that peace might, at least to a great extent, be preserved, and friendly relations established between the two great divisions of Methodism. This manifestation of kindly feeling was hailed by the south as the pledge of better things in times to come; but it has turned out to have been only the show of kindness, a mere transient impulse; and at the General conference held at Pittsburg, in 1848, our northern friends pursued such a course of action as destroyed all hope on the part of the Southern Church, that she should either be able to obtain justice, or that fraternal relations would be established between the two connections.

"It will be remembered that, at your last session, with the hope of establishing such relations, you appointed the Rev. Lovick Pierce, D. D., your messenger to the General conference at Pittsburg. It was hoped that this indication of a desire for amicable relations on your part would have met a hearty response from our northern friends. If difficulties existed, it is presumed that such an arrangement might have been entered into as would have settled all such differences on a satisfactory basis. But your messenger was rejected, and your offers of peace were met with contempt. Your commissioners, charged with the management of the interests of the Southern Church in relation to the Book Concern and Chartered Fund, were treated with like discourtesy. Your claims were disposed of in a summary manner. The plan of separation was repudiated; the southern claim to any portion of the Book Concern was denied; and the very men, who, from sheer hatred to slavery, drove the south into separation, proved their sincerity and consistency by not only retaining all the slaveholding members already under their charge, but in making arrangements to gather as many more into the fold as practicable. The plan of separation was repudiated with the avowed purpose of invading southern territory; and as an earnest of their intentions in this respect, a new conference was organized entirely within the limits of the Southern Church. The only probable result of this movement must be to produce strife and contention, crippling and breaking up feeble societies, and scattering firebrands throughout communities hitherto peaceful. No sober man could have contemplated this movement at first, without anticipating this result; and it has been faithfully accomplishing its mission in this respect. In consequence of the position assumed by the northern Church, we have felt ourselves at liberty to accept invitations to occupy circuits and stations heretofore within its limits. Many such invitations have been tendered us from various portions of the

land. We have not, however, sought to disturb the harmony of the Church by sending missionaries to seek to form societies, where the people were satisfied with their present Church relations. In many portions of Virginia, particularly, the people, feeling they were placed in an anomalous and undesirable position, and wishing to connect themselves with the Southern Church, as more congenial to their circumstances and feelings, have resolved to unite with us, and invite us to take charge of them. These calls we have not felt at liberty to refuse; but we have required that in all such cases the people be able and willing to support the preachers we send them; and in no instance, we believe, have we drawn upon the Missionary Society for funds for their support.

"We have intimated that the attempts of our northern friends to invade southern territory had been productive of much trouble in some portions of our work; this, however, has not, we believe, materially affected the prosperity of our Church in those sections. We have been blessed with numerous revivals, and a considerable increase, in all the conferences thus situated. But of all their efforts in this inglorious course of action, none is more deeply to be deplored and condemned than their attempt to alienate the Indian tribes, among whom your missionaries were laboring peaceably, and with some good degree of success. These Indians were uninformed as to the true grounds of the division, and had no interest whatever in the quarrel between north and south; and the only possible result of an attempt to separate them from their pastors must be to produce strife and contention, greatly to the injury, if not the destruction, of religious influence among them. It is difficult to understand how the ministers of the God of peace should have lent their influence to the promotion of an enterprise of such doubtful character.\*"

On this address we remark:

(1.) The *spirit* of the first paragraph, copied above, is at fault. It talks of "a *show* of kindness," on the part of our "northern friends," and exhibits gloomy apprehensions that the south would not "obtain *justice*" at their hands.

(2.) It is unfair to say that the rejection of Dr. Pierce was done with "contempt." For the whole proceeding was personally respectful to Dr. Pierce, and no contempt was manifest either to him or to those who sent him. His mission was referred to a committee, and reported on in respectful terms; the grounds of the action being distinctly stated in language not only respectful, but temperate and kind.

(3.) The bishops say that their "commissioners were treated with the like discourtesy." The truth is, the southern commissioners were treated with no discourtesy whatever, unless the simple declining, upon the part of the northern commissioners to pay over the southern claim, contrary to the constitution of the Church, to the south, may be construed into discourtesy. All this matter was transacted at Pittsburg and elsewhere, according to the principles of a constitution which all, up to 1844, were led to consider as sacred.

(4.) The bishops add: "Your claims were disposed of in a summary manner. The plan of separation was repudiated; the southern claim to any portion of the Book Concern was denied." So far from disposing of the southern claim in a summary manner, it was a matter of serious



investigation for more than two weeks. But they say "the plan was repudiated." So it was; but that plan did not award to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, one dollar of the property of the Book Concern. The plan authorized the commissioners to pay over to the south the property upon a condition which never occurred. The commissioners could not pay it except on the condition of the constitutional vote of the annual conferences. This was never obtained. In 1844 southern men did not ask a division on any other terms; and General conference of 1848 could not grant the claim; and the previous General conference did not agree to do it, except on conditions which never transpired.

(5.) What the bishops say of their being invited to many portions of Virginia by the people, is their version of the matter. These invitations were given, for the most part, by dissatisfied minorities, and the entrance of southern preachers into this field was an infraction of the plan—was the signal for serious disorders, and for much injury to religion.

(6.) The attempts of our "northern friends to invade the southern territory," are set off in the same style. The General conference of 1848 were memorialized to extend their pastoral oversight to many thousand members, who, according to the plan, had been cut off from the Church of their choice. The General conference simply heard their prayer.

(7.) As to the inglorious case of the Indians, the fact is this—that the Indians whom the Methodist Episcopal Church received under their care never went with the south, and never could be induced to do so; for their temporary reception of southern preachers under protest, while they never united with the new Church, could not peril their claims to the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as soon as it could be obtained.

An Indian member of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the Wyandott Nation, in an article in the Missouri Republican, replied to the Address of the Bishops. He stated "that the Methodist Episcopal Church made no attempt to alienate the Indian tribes, and for a long time refused to recognize us as her members; and it was with difficulty we could convince her ministers that a large portion of the membership never would join the new organization, and not till then did she attempt to reestablish missionaries among us. The struggle was between the southern preachers and the Indians, as the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, according to the plan, left us and joined other conferences. When the southern preachers found that we would not go with them, they threatened us with mobs, and maltreated us in various ways. We were threatened with the civil authorities, and when, after a hard struggle, we obtained a missionary of our choice, he was arrested in the dead hour of night, dragged before a Government agent, tried, and condemned to leave that very night, and it was with great difficulty the inexorable judge could be prevailed upon to allow the missionary to stay till morning, to get his trunk and clothing. This was done at the instigation of the southern preachers. The majority of the membership were driven out of their own church, and compelled to worship in private houses and groves, and without a pastor. 'North and south.' You cry *north*. Because you have assumed the name *south*, you seek to place us in the opposite extreme. To cry *north* is equivalent with crying *abolitionist*, and to cry

abolitionist is to cry *mob and murder*. Here is a board of bishops crying *murder*." Such is a part of the reply of a Wyandott to the unfounded allegations of the southern bishops respecting the Indians.\*

2. Dr. Pierce made a report to the St. Louis General conference, in which he tells his story with abundance of coloring. He stated that he had presented the matter to the General conference, but was rejected, and complains that neither he nor any southern ministers were asked to preach, and with several other grievous complaints, he gives in detail how decidedly Dr. Dixon and Mr. Ryerson were on the southern side of the question.†

Our southern brethren have a wonderful gift of giving a one-sided version to matters between themselves and the Methodist Episcopal Church. Dr. Pierce, in his report to the St. Louis conference, declares that he sent the General conference the following note:

"To the Bishops and Members of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church—Reverend and Dear Brethren,—The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at their session in May, 1845, appointed me their delegate to bear you their Christian salutation, and through me to offer to you the establishment of fraternal relations and intercourse between us, as two legitimate portions of the great Wesleyan family; and as my state of mind must be one of painful suspense till your will shall be declared, I respectfully ask your earliest attention to the object of my mission.

"Very respectfully, yours, in the unity of Wesleyan Methodism, L. PIERCE,

"Delegate from Methodist E. Church, South."‡

The foregoing Dr. Pierce says, in his report to St. Louis conference, he sent to the General conference of Pittsburg. But in turning to the journal of the General conference of 1848, p. 16, the following is really Dr. Pierce's report:

"To the Bishops and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in General conference assembled—Reverend and Dear Brethren,—The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, appointed me as their delegate to bear to you the Christian salutations of the Church, South, and to assure you that they sincerely desire that the two great bodies of Wesleyan Methodists, north and south, should maintain, at all times, a warm, confiding, and brotherly fraternal relation to each other. And through me they make this offer to you, and very ardently desire that you, on your part, will accept the offer in the same spirit of brotherly love and kindness.

"The acceptance or rejection of this proposition, made by your southern brethren, is entirely at your disposal; and, as my situation is one of painful solicitude till this question is decided, you will allow me to beg your earliest attention to it.

"And I would further say, that your reply to this communication will most gratify me if it is made officially in the form of resolutions.

"I have the honor to be, very respectfully, yours, in the unity of Wesleyan Methodism,

"L. PIERCE,

"Delegate from Methodist E. Church, South.

"Pittsburg, Penn., May 3, 1848."§

\* W., June 26, 1850. Scraph, VI, p. 447.

† S., June 14, 1850. Scraph, VII, pp. 416-418.

‡ S., June 14, 1850. Scraph, VII, p. 416.

§ Journals of 1848, p. 16.

In comparing these two letters, we might inquire, *First*. Did Dr. Pierce know that he was reporting to his conference an incorrect copy of his letter to the conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church? *Secondly*. If he did not know this what confidence can we place in his version of other matters, however honestly made? Beside, the words "painful suspense," in his letter to his conference, seem to refer to his reception as delegate; while in the other its reference was to the acceptance or rejection of fraternal relations. Furthermore, Dr. Pierce did not report to his conference the action of the General conference of 1848, or his proposition, but on the contrary goes on to misrepresent it. While the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church rejected fraternal relations with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, while the present difficulties existed, they left the way open for further negotiations; but Dr. Pierce abruptly broke off the negotiation himself, by virtually refusing to look at any difficulties unless his fraternizing proposition had been first accepted. And of course, had this been accepted, there would be neither propriety nor place for adjusting difficulties, as the very act of fraternization must have superseded any such adjustment.

As to his not being asked to preach, the true state of the question was, that both he and the other southern ministers refused to preach, though solicited, because their favorite act of fraternization—dictatorially and captiously presented—was not received without examination. The report of Dr. Pierce to the St. Louis conference was unfair to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and must be classed with the general unfairness manifest on the side of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in this whole matter.\*

3. The southern commissioners in their report to General conference declare "that after all other methods of fair and honorable adjustment had failed, as shown by the action of the northern General conference of 1848, they proceeded in one form to enter suit in the circuit courts of the United States for New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio." They also state that one or more persons were appointed, well acquainted with the whole subject, to be in free and frequent consultation with counsel, for the purpose of correct information with regard to facts, the proper arrangement of evidence, the selection of suitable witnesses, and the more effectually to secure the ends for which the suits were instituted.†

On the 11th of May it was unanimously resolved, that "H. B. Bascom, A. L. P. Green, and C. B. Parsons be requested and instructed, and also furnished with the necessary means to prosecute the claim with vigor till the final decision of the Supreme Court of the United States be had on the suits now pending."‡

At the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, these funds were to be applied in a certain way unless both the General conference, by a two-third vote, and the three-fourth vote of the annual conferences would order otherwise. To this constitutional test the plan left this matter, and the southern preachers all solemnly agreed to it. Now, however, they go to law in direct violation of the constitutional compact to which they had been a party, which they agreed to adhere to, and which they even incorporated

into their new Church. They censure and condemn the Methodist Episcopal Church as dishonest because their General conference refused to do openly, knowingly, and schismatically, an unconstitutional act. Our apology for our southern brethren is, that they had commenced the work of revolution, they had committed themselves to revolutionary principles, and, therefore, were led to a step which, if acceded to by the Methodist Episcopal Church, would revolutionize her to her very foundation, and may yet be an element of revolution in the new Church. As to the mere money, this was and is a small matter to the Methodist Episcopal Church; but for her to enter on the work of revolutionizing herself, in order to be in company with other revolutionists, would be a strange thing, indeed.

4. A pretty bold step, indeed, at revolution was attempted by Dr. Smith, who had now become the principal leader in the Southern Church. On the opening of conference he proposed to discuss the subject of a two house plan. This was not at first approved of. At a subsequent day he made a long speech on this subject, which is based on the two following propositions:

(1.) The lower house shall be constituted as the present General conference now is, and invested with the same authority, so far as may be judged necessary to conform its relative powers to those of the other branch of the legislature.

(2.) The upper house shall be constituted of not less than *one*, nor more than *two traveling elders* for each annual conference, to be elected by those laymen who are of mature age, and in full connection with the Church. It shall be invested with authority to pass upon all the acts of the lower house, and shall constitute a high court of appeals in the case of the trial and condemnation of a bishop, and to determine all questions of ecclesiastical law that may arise in the administration of the Discipline.\*

The pressure of the new position of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, led, no doubt, to the plan of Dr. Smith. It was not acted on by the General conference. Had not the cholera shortened the session, it is hard to say what would be the result. Especially so, as he was clearly, in 1836, the projector of the secession; and though at first opposed, his measure carried. And, indeed, he may yet succeed in the two house scheme. It was afterward opposed by Dr. Henkle in the columns of the Nashville Advocate in a succession of numbers.†

5. The part of Methodist Discipline on slavery had well-nigh been expelled the book, in letter, as it had really been done in meaning. One speaker wanted it out because it contradicted the Bible. The South Carolina delegates came up instructed to vote for the expurgation. Dr. Boyle, of Missouri, trembled lest its expurgation should compel him to redeem his pledge—to return to the old Church in the issue of such an event. The act of the conference was to retain the section on slavery, while they introduced the following note:

"This section was inserted by a majority of votes when the Methodist Episcopal Church embraced the whole country; and, as the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, still embraces a wide extent of country, with various views and conflicting interests, it is not removed, though it has long since become inoperative, and ceased, by common consent, to set forth a practical rule of Discipline."‡

\* W., June 26, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 442.

† Journal of May 9th. Scraps, VII, p. 375.

‡ Scraps, VII, p. 387.

\* N., May 30, 1850. Scraps, VII, pp. 401-408.

† N., July 5, etc., 1850. Scraps, VII, pp. 458, 477.

It can hardly be doubted that at the next session of the General conference, the obnoxious section will be expunged. The Church, South, is the only one in the world founded on the slave principle alone. Even southern politicians seem to be ahead of southern ministers. From the position taken in 1844 and 1845, in favor of slavery, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, can not retreat. The whole matter is accurately delineated by Rev. Mr. Holliday in his review of the proceedings of the General conference. He says, "That action is marked by three successive steps.

"The first step was a resolution to authorize the general Book Agent to publish *two editions of the Discipline*—one as it now is for general use; another for such conferences as might request it, with all that relates to the subject of slavery omitted, except what is found in the General Rules. This, it was urged, was necessary to the prosperity of Methodism in some of the southern conferences, and was nothing more than what South Carolina had already done. Conference, however, would not entertain the resolution; it was in itself too glaring. An expurgated copy of the Discipline for the south, and how long before expurgated copies of Watson and Wesley would be required, and finally of the BIBLE itself?

"The second step was the calling up of that part of the report of the Committee on Revisals, referred to above, recommending to strike out the entire section on slavery. This subject was not disposed of quite as coolly and quickly as the official reports might seem to signify. Though it was a late hour of the last session, members of conference would not suffer this question to go to a vote without some expression of opinion and interchange of sentiment. A debate was sprung upon it, warm in its nature, and which, but for want of time, would no doubt have been protracted. Dr. Wightman, editor of the Charleston Christian Advocate, and a South Carolina delegate, stated that his delegation came there with express instructions from their conference to urge this change; that it was essential to the salvation of Methodism in the south. Bishop Capers said this section bore a falsehood upon its very face, in regard to their Church, 'the extirpation of slavery.' This he must disclaim—it was not the case. Dr. L. Pierce, late delegate from the Church, South, to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1848, distinctly favored the report. This section should never have been in the Discipline. It had wrought ruin in the Church heretofore, and why still retain it? Its removal was called for by the state of society in the south, and the wishes of all, or nearly all the southern conferences. To be consistent with our Protest in the conference of 1844, and our declaration in the Louisville convention, we must remove it. Dr. Smith, of Virginia, fully and entirely indorsed the sentiments of Dr. Pierce. That section should never have been in the Discipline—it was and ever had been inconsistent with *reason*, the *Bible*, and *expediency*. On the other hand, others as warmly opposed it. But the distinct and sole ground of this opposition was that it *would seriously injure if not ruin the border*. Dr. Lee, editor of the Richmond Christian Advocate, said he would prefer an expurgated copy for the south. Unfortunate was it for the Church when she saw fit to legislate on this subject. But it was

now ingrafted upon our Discipline, and perhaps could not be cut off without danger to a portion of our Church. Dr. Drake, of Mississippi, regarded the retaining it as doing no harm. It has long since become a dead letter. To remove it might be productive of evil. Crouch and Selon, of Kentucky, hoped the conference would not touch that section. Remove it and you *ruin* the Church in Kentucky. Dr. Boyle, of this state, was opposed to this change. At the Louisville convention they had been pledged that the proposed alteration should not be made. If the conference wish to ruin the Church in Missouri, let them adopt this report. Dr. Winans, of Mississippi, said it should never have been in the Discipline. It was overstepping the boundaries of ecclesiastical legislation to place it there. It had resulted in evil and only evil. But it could not at present be removed with safety. It was like a wen or fleshy excrescence on the human frame; however inconvenient or unsightly, it must be borne. To remove it would be extremely dangerous, if not fatal. He saw not why brethren from the south should desire the change. That section was entirely inoperative—it was covered by the proviso. It only expressed a principle that slavery *per se*—in itself—was not right, which he believed, and laid down regulations which, did not circumstances forbid, should be regarded. These are the germs—the essence of the brief but pointed speeches made upon this question. Time would not allow a protracted discussion. The vote was taken, and of 81 voting, 38 were for striking out and 43 against it. When it is remembered, also, that the entire Florida delegation were sick, and with several others absent, who no doubt would have favored the change, we can scarcely be in doubt as to how this question would have been decided had this been a test vote. As it was, the section was saved by a majority of only five. What a change has been effected in the brief space of six years! Can there be the least shadow of a doubt as to the fate that must befall it in the conference of 1854? It was saved by a bare majority of five. And this not for any merits of the section itself, but confessedly to prevent border commotion. The motion, it is true, was lost, but what was lost in form was gained in fact. Mark the third step. On motion of Dr. Hamilton, it was resolved that the following note be appended to said section: 'This section was inserted by a majority of votes, when the Church embraced the whole country; and, as the Church, South, still embraces a wide extent of country, with various views and conflicting interests, it is not removed, though it has long since become inoperative, and ceased, by common consent, to set forth a practical rule or principle.'

"This was adopted as a kind of quietus to South Carolina especially, and for the southern conferences generally. It is to be appended as a note to ninth section, to be printed and incorporated with the Discipline, by which to interpret the whole section."<sup>\*</sup>

6. The presence of the cholera in St. Louis, hastily brought the proceedings of the conference to a conclusion. The Rev. Isaac Boring was severely and fatally attacked; and a number of the members of General conference were attacked, some with premonitory symptoms, and

\* Holliday's Appeal to the Methodists of Missouri, pp 8-10. SERAJS, VII, pp. 500-502.

others violently. Some of the physicians advised that night meetings should be discontinued. After a session of fourteen days the conference adjourned. It is probable that several innovations peculiar to the position of the Southern Church would have been enacted, had not the cholera interfered, in leading to so early an adjournment.\*

7. The Rev. Mr. Holliday, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, stationed in St. Louis, and

who attended the sittings of the conference, published an able review of its proceedings, in an appeal to the Methodists of Missouri. In this pamphlet he described the pro-slavery proceedings of the conference, as the extract above will show; and he further showed the Missourians that the innovations on Methodism by the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, gave no very certain guarantee in reference to the preservation of its future purity.\*

## CHAPTER LII.

### THE SLAVERY QUESTION IN 1850.

1. A GENERAL SURVEY of this question, as it concerns the Church, and the relations between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, may be considered in this place.

The statistics of slavery, in decades, have been presented in the following table, from the best authorities:

The slave population of the United States was, in

1776.....	502,144
1800.....	893,041
1810.....	1,104,364
1820.....	1,638,964
1830.....	2,009,031
1840.....	2,486,355
1850.....	3,204,313

It is not at all marvelous, in considering the increase of slavery, that both Church and state were greatly influenced by it. Its civil character affected the state; while its moral character had reference to the Church. These two traits of the system were nearly related, and hence misunderstandings and interferences existed, or were supposed to exist between Church and state, or between the moral and civil features of slavery. And the Methodist Church, from its organization in 1784 up to the present time, had been strongly antislavery. Even its disciplinary regulations, though strictly moral, were considered as a reproach on the civil powers; which the latter often took occasion to misrepresent, and even to restrain.

Up, however, to 1832, the evils of slavery in its moral character had been generally acknowledged. To counteract this moral influence several southern men entered the lists, and denounced the antislavery sentiments of Washington, Jefferson, Franklin, and others. Of course the Methodist Episcopal Church, the leading powerful antislavery Church of the United States, came in for its full share of rebuke and censure. In 1832 Professor Thos. R. Dew, of William and Mary College, Virginia, wrote an elaborate essay to prove that slavery was innocent and useful. In the year 1837 W. G. Simms, Esq., of South Carolina, wrote an elaborate essay on the morals of slavery, which was published in the Southern Literary Messenger, and in pamphlet form in 1838, and in 1852 a revised edition of it, addressed to members of Congress from South Carolina. This was in answer to Miss Martineau. Then we had Governor Hammond's letters, of South Carolina, in

1845, to Thomas Clarkson; nor must we overlook Chancellor Harper's elaborate defense of slavery. All these were republished in one volume, in 1853. All of them are elaborate essays, written by men of talents. Other statesmen in the south, as Mr. Calhoun, Mr. M'Duffie, during the same period, wrote in favor of slavery. The southern religious papers followed in the wake of the statesmen; or, perhaps, both the religious and political men of the south, at the same time, united to maintain as just and moral that system which their predecessors, both in Church and state, pronounced to be morally and politically wrong.

As to the merely moral character of slavery, we will give here only one well-authenticated case, occurring in 1850:

Mrs. Nancy Cartwright, of New York, was once a slave at Alexandria. Aided by friends she purchased herself and several of her children. She was compelled to leave an amiable daughter, a young woman of great personal beauty. The daughter, Emily Russel, wrote her the following letter:

"*Alexandria, January 22, 1850.*

"MY DEAR MOTHER,—I take this opportunity of writing you a few lines, to inform you that I am in *Bruin's jail*, and aunt Sally and all her children, and aunt Hagar and all her children and grandmother is almost crazy. My dear mother, will you please to come on as soon as you can? I expect to go away very shortly. O, mother! dear mother! come now and see your distressed and broken-hearted daughter once more! Mother! my dear mother! do not forsake me, for I feel desolate. Please to come now.

"Your daughter, EMILY RUSSEL.

"P. S. If you do not come as far as Alexandria, come to Washington, and do what you can."

The case was brought before the Antislavery Society, and Mr. Harned, their agent, immediately wrote to Bruin, to know the terms of sale for the slave Emily. The following is the answer:

"*Alexandria, January 31, 1850.*

"DEAR SIR,—When I received your letter, I had not bought the negroes you spoke of, but since that time I have bought them. All I have to say about the matter is, that we paid very high for the negroes, and can not afford to sell the girl, Emily, for less than EIGHTEEN HUNDRED DOLLARS. This may seem a high price to you

\* N., May 24, R., June 13, 1850. *Scraps*, VII, pp. 401, 408.

\* See for this pamphlet, *Scraps*, VII, pp. 407-510.

but cotton being very high, consequently slaves are high. We have two or three offers for Emily from gentlemen from the south. *She is said to be the finest-looking woman in the country.* As for Hagar and her seven children, we will take \$2,500 for them. Sally and her four children, we will take \$2,800 for them. You may seem a little surprised at the difference in prices, but the difference in the negroes makes the difference in price. We expect to start south with the negroes on the 8th of February, and if you intend to do any thing you had better do it soon.

"Yours, respectfully,

"BRUIN & HILL.

"WM. HARNED, Esq., *New York.*"\*

The foregoing is no *abuse* of slavery, but is inherent in its very nature, and reveals its true moral turpitude. Nor did this, or such cases call for any note of disapprobation from the religious or political press of the south. Is it marvelous, we ask, that the Methodist Episcopal Church refused to sanction a system whose moral characteristics are made up of such traits as are found in the foregoing?

2. The secession of the southern part of the Methodist Episcopal Church was brought before Congress in debate before the senate, by Mr. Calhoun and Mr. Webster, in March, 1850.

Mr. Calhoun, in his speech, said:

"The cords that bind the states together are not only many, but various in character. Some are spiritual or ecclesiastical; some political; others social. Some appertain to the benefit conferred by the Union, and others to the feeling of duty and obligation. The strongest of those of a spiritual and ecclesiastical nature consisted in the unity of the great religious denominations, all of which originally embraced the whole Union. All these denominations, with the exception, perhaps, of the Catholics, were organized very much upon the principle of our political institutions; beginning with smaller meetings, corresponding with the political divisions of the country, their organization terminated in one great central assemblage, corresponding very much with the character of Congress. At those meetings, the principal clergymen and lay members of the several denominations, from all parts of the Union, met to transact business relating to their common concerns. It was not confined to what appertained to the doctrines and discipline of the respective denominations, but extended to plans for disseminating the Bible, establishing missionaries, distributing tracts, and of establishing presses for the publication of tracts, newspapers, and periodicals, with a view of diffusing religious information, and for the support of the doctrines and creeds of the denomination. All this combined, contributed greatly to strengthen the bonds of the Union. The strong ties which held each denomination together formed a strong cord to hold the Union together; but as powerful as they were, they have not been able to resist the explosive effect of slavery agitation.

"The first of these cords which snapped, under its explosive force, was that of the powerful Methodist Episcopal Church. The numerous and strong ties which held it together are all broken, and its unity gone. They now form separate Churches, and instead of that feeling of attachment and devotion to the interests of the whole Church which was formerly felt, they are

now arrayed into two hostile bodies, engaged in litigation about what was formerly their common property.

"The next cord that snapped was that of the Baptists, one of the largest and most respectable of the denominations. That of the Presbyterian is not entirely snapped, but some of its strands have given way. The Protestant Episcopal Church is the only one of the four great Protestant denominations which remains unbroken and entire."\*

To these remarks, Mr. Webster, in his speech of March 7th, refers:

"Why, sir, the honorable senator from South Carolina, the other day, alluded to the great separation of that great religious community—the Methodist Episcopal Church. That separation was brought about by differences of opinion upon the peculiar subject of slavery. I felt great concern, as that dispute went on, about the result; and I was in hopes the differences of opinion might be adjusted, because I looked upon that religious denomination as one of the great props of religion and morals throughout the whole country, from Maine to Georgia. The result was against my wishes and against my hopes. I have read all the proceedings and all the arguments, but I have never yet been able to come to the conclusion, that there was any real ground for that separation; in other words, that no good could be produced by that separation."<sup>†</sup>

In reference to these speeches, Dr. Wightman says: "The southern conferences did go, preachers and people, peaceably, since the plan of separation *allowed* them that privilege; would have gone *forcibly* had no such provision been made by the General conference."<sup>‡</sup> Here is an open declaration, that the south would secede *forcibly* had the General conference made no provision that they might do it peaceably. Nevertheless, their secession on their part was a work of *ecclesiastical force*, though the course of the Methodist Episcopal Church was eminently peaceable from first to last.

3. We have already seen that the section on slavery, though still left in the Discipline, was virtually made void by the annulling note attached to it in the St. Louis General conference, by the speeches made against it, and the absence of any voice in its favor. Nevertheless, this did not satisfy the extreme south; nor even the northern conferences of the new Church; for this section was more fiercely assailed by ministers, bishops, members, and editors of the Church whose Discipline it was, than any portion of Methodist Discipline ever was by the enemies of Methodism.

The Rev. B. T. Crouch, of the Kentucky conference, in a communication of December 25, 1849, in the Nashville Advocate, opened the attack on the General Rule and ninth section on slavery. After stating that, "now both the General Rule and the special law on slavery are without sense or meaning," he proceeds to distort the General Rule by the following process of perverse critical torture:

"The purchase of a slave, say a man, does not violate the law; for the thing prohibited is 'buying and selling,' and merely buying is not buying and selling. And the same reasoning will apply to selling, as to sell is not to buy and sell. Again: to buy and sell a man, or to buy

\* Z., February 28, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 282.

\* Z., March 20, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 290. † Id.

‡ S., April 5, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 304.

and sell a woman, or to buy and sell a child, would not amount to the violation of the law; for a man is not men, a woman is not women, nor is a child children; but the thing prohibited is, 'buying and selling men, women, and children.' Again: to buy men, or to buy and sell, or to buy women, or to buy and sell women, or to buy children and sell children, would not infract the law; nor yet would the law be broken by buying and selling men, men and women, or men and children, or women and children, or men, women, and a child, or men, children, and a woman, or women, children, and a man; because none of these cases involves the three classes of persons—men, women, and children, as required in the law." He adds: "Remember, we are not treating on what the law may be supposed to mean, but of what it says."

Mr. Crouch, in commenting on the section on slavery, derides contemptuously the part of it requiring official members and preachers to free themselves from slavery, "because they happened to own a few happy and contented slaves." He then denounces the rule a "pernicious law—non-ownership of slaves." He concludes his long article as follows:

"But to conclude, it is not our opinion that it would be best, at present, to make any changes with regard to these rules. *Just let them alone.* And, indeed, if it be thought best to honor them with a place in our Discipline in *perpetuity*—if they are considered too ornamental to our ecclesiastical organization to be dispensed with, let them remain; and let them go down to generations yet to come as a monumental remembrance of the folly of other years."\*

The ninth section was violently assailed in the extreme south, in the public papers. A person calling himself "An old Methodist," in the Columbia Telegraph, South Carolina, early in June, denounces the General conference and the southern delegates because they did not erase from the Discipline every thing on slavery.† A layman in Alabama is, without mercy, out on the section, and declares that the General conference of 1844 acted consistently with the Discipline. He says, as all impartial men have said, and will always say:

"I can not resist the conclusion, that with the book of Discipline, they had a perfect right to insist upon the application of that section to the case of Bishop Andrew. He was a slaveholder, and the law of the Church made that a disqualification for office, if the emancipation of them was practicable, and this can be done, at least in this state, if it be desired. The only regret I ever had upon that subject was, that southern men had not justified him in holding slaves, instead of placing his defense on the miserable ground that he could not get rid of them."‡

The quarterly conferences in the extreme south, immediately after General conference, took up the subject, and, generally, passed preambles and resolutions against the ninth section, censuring the General conference for not expunging it. As a specimen, we give the following from the Cheraw station, South Carolina conference, passed July 15, 1850:

"Whereas, the members of the quarterly conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of the Cheraw station, have seen, with

deep regret, that the last General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, refused to strike out and expunge from the Discipline of the Church the ninth section, which relates to slavery; and whereas, this quarterly conference are decidedly of the opinion that the said ninth section is not only highly objectionable to the majority of the members of the Church, South, but is entirely obnoxious to them, and was, in the opinion of this quarterly conference, one of the principal sources that caused the separation of the Church, north and south; therefore,

"(1.) *Resolved*, That this quarterly conference do heartily approve of the efforts made by the delegates of the South Carolina conference, at the last General conference, to have the said ninth section expunged from the Discipline.

"(2.) *Resolved*, That this quarterly conference, entertaining the opinion that the circulation of the new Discipline with the ninth section—on slavery—retained in it, will greatly injure our usefulness, and be well calculated to cast odium and reproach on us as Methodists, will not circulate any such Disciplines in our Church while the ninth section is retained therein.

"(3.) *Resolved*, That we will use all our influence in obtaining, at the next General conference, such action as shall expunge said ninth section from our Discipline.

"(4.) *Resolved*, That this quarterly conference earnestly and affectionately appeal to all the quarterly conferences within our bounds who think, with us, that the said ninth section ought to be expunged from the Discipline, to take action at our quarterly conferences on this subject; and let their desires be made public, that the delegates from all the conferences connected with us, at the next General conference, may act advisedly on this momentous subject."\*

The southern editors, as well as correspondents and quarterly conferences in the south, took an active and decided stand against the section on slavery. The editor of the Southern Advocate asks, after stating that in South Carolina all are of one mind, "But what does he [an old Methodist] know of the opinion of the membership in western Virginia, northern Kentucky, and Missouri? We are compelled to do the best we can with the difficulties of our position. It certainly would add nothing to the strength of southern opposition, to the march of fanatical frenzy, to have the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states divided. We need to have the connectional bonds drawn closer, rather than sundered rudely. This is one of those cases in which we must let *bad enough* alone lest we make it worse."†

The editor of the Richmond Advocate makes the following remarks on the subject:

"In view of facts such as we have given of the bitter fruits of the ancient testimony of Methodism, who is there that does not think our fathers might have been better employed than they were when they sowed seed to produce such a harvest of wide-spreading woe? We have studied that testimony in all its parts, its assumptions and denunciations, its advantages and retreatings, its faults and follies, its near and remote evils, its crude and ill-

\* N., January 11, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 265.

† S., June 14, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 415.

‡ S., June 28, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 456.

\* S., July 26, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 495.

† S., June 14, 1850. Scraps, VII, pp. 415, 458, 470.

digested efforts to do what it had no business to attempt, its unwise and ridiculous measures against slavery, its injuries to the great work of saving souls God had sent them to do. Taking the whole testimony, from beginning to end, in principle and practice, in cause and effect, at the time of its utterance, since, now, and hereafter, where is the good it has achieved? What but evil and bitter fruits have sprung from it? What does it promise for the future but evil, only evil continually? It is a stream whose shores are lined with sorrow. Master and slave, Church and country, had all fared better. It was a usurpation to touch it; and, like all usurpations, it has left a blight and a blot upon the whole subsequent history of the Church, and still sends its pulsations of evil from the center to the extremities of the system.\*

4. As the editors and correspondents of the new Church, their General conference, and many quarterly conferences, denounced and rejected the section on slavery, so it also received episcopal denouncement. Bishop Soule, in two long articles in the Nashville Advocate, of September 13, and October 24, 1850,† argues elaborately, in three propositions, against the section on slavery, and concludes his cumbersome essay by declaring "this provision, as it stands, as it ever has stood, is a *dead letter in the canon*;" "the legislation of the Church is *unwise and injudicious*, and consequently should be removed from the *statute book*."

The Bishop's three propositions, which he argues out in detail, and with unusual earnestness, are as follows:

"It is my opinion that the ninth section of the Discipline, containing the legislation of the Church on the subject of slavery, should be repealed, as *entirely inapplicable and inefficient* relative to the *object* it proposes to accomplish.

"The second proposition is, that the ninth section of the Discipline involves an assumption of *ecclesiastical right* to legislate on the civil institutions of the state, incompatible with the provisions of the Constitution and laws of the United States, and the constitutions and laws of the states organized under the authority of these provisions.

"The third proposition is, that the section on slavery is detrimental to the best interests of the colored population of all the states where slavery exists."

The Bishop, however, states forcibly, in passing, "I have no sympathy with *slavery* in any country, or any form." This sentiment, however, was not well received in the south, while the other portions of his essay were lauded to the skies. And even this feeble testimony of the Bishop justified the Discipline and action of the Methodist Episcopal Church on slavery, from its organization down to the present time.

The position of Bishop Soule was cordially approved by the leading men in the south. Of his performance the editor of the Southern Advocate said:

"We regard it as one of the most masterly arguments which has been produced during the last six years' controversy, and we hope it will settle the question forever about keeping the offensive section in the book of Discipline."‡

"Brother Wightman, I rejoice to see you intend publishing Bishop Soule's views on the ninth section. They are decidedly the best ever published. How contemptible in the eyes of posterity must the silly enactments of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the slavery question look! Glad am I that, from 1812 down to 1850, my vote has been recorded against this ridiculous interference with civil affairs."\*

The Bishop's argument would demolish the Discipline and every moral standard, whether the Bible or any other. It stands thus: The Discipline prohibits sin; but sin exists and always has existed in the Church; therefore the Discipline is unwise and injudicious, and should be abolished. By analogy of Bishop Soule's sophistry—for we can not call it reasoning—we must conclude, because the Discipline has not extirpated drunkenness or covetousness, it is wrong for Scripture or Discipline to denounce or condemn these sins. If the Discipline has not done all good, shall we say it has done no good?

The Rev. P. P. Smith, in the Florida Sentinel, in replying to objections raised in Florida, because the section on slavery was not stricken out, gives the following as the reason:

"In our first General conference, south, held in 1846, a majority thought to change the Discipline in any thing might, possibly, affect the lawsuit to our injury, and, as no harm could come to us for it to remain for the present, it was retained. In our General conference held last May, in St. Louis, the question was brought up, and it was proposed to strike out the ninth section entire. Some of the most sober southern men we have still believed it best to let it stand in the book till the said lawsuit was determined. So a majority of those present to vote thought, and it was retained for the *present only*; for, most certainly, as soon as that suit in law is decided, all this legislation upon the subject will be stricken from the Discipline."‡

The southern papers; are very indignant because the Christian Advocate published the foregoing and defended it, as may be seen by the references in the margin. There is little doubt but this was one of the causes, if not the principal cause, why the section was not erased from the Discipline.

5. The Fugitive-Slave law, enacted by Congress in the winter of 1850, elicited a development of southern and northern sentiment on the subject of slavery. The south maintained it strongly, and those who affiliated with them politically in the north, while the moral sentiment of the north openly revolted against it; and no doubt there was a similar revolt in the south, though there was no proper opportunity of giving open expression to it. A survey of some provisions of the bill will show its true character. We adduce the following:

(1.) Judges of United States Courts, or commissioners in territories, are the judges before the cases are tried.

(2.) Marshals and deputies are to execute all warrants, under the penalty of one thousand dollars, for the use of the claimant of the fugitive; and in case of his escape, the marshal must pay his price.

\* Dr. L. Pierce in S., October 25, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 576.

† Florida Sentinel in C., October 31, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 580.

‡ R., November 1, C., November 21, 1850. Scraps, VII, pp. 594, 611.

\* R., July 11, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 467.

† Scraps, VII, pp. 534-541.

‡ S., September 27, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 554.

(3.) The commissioners have power to call on any person or persons to assist in seizing and retaining the fugitive.

(4.) The owner of a slave, or his attorney, may seize, with or without warrant, a fugitive, and take him before a commissioner, who shall determine the case in a summary way. The testimony of the fugitive is not to be taken.

(5.) Any person who shall hinder the arrest of a fugitive, or shall conceal him, rescue him, or assist him to escape, shall be fined one thousand dollars, imprisoned six months, and liable to a civil suit of one thousand dollars for each fugitive lost.

(6.) Fugitives may be sent back at the expense of the United States treasury.

The following material objections lie against this law:

*First. It denies a trial by jury:* hence it is an engine by which free persons may be enslaved.

*Secondly. The writ of habeas corpus is refused.* This, too, is a ready way to reduce free persons to slavery.

*Secondly. A direct bribe is offered to the judge.* The commissioner, who, in his own person, combines the offices of judge and jurors, is to be paid *five dollars* if he decides that the alleged fugitive is *not* a slave. If he decides that he is a slave, he is to be paid *ten dollars*. A fee, or bribe, of five dollars is thus given to turn the scale.

*Fourthly. The people are to be taxed to return fugitives.* If the slave-owner, or kidnapper, as the case may be, shall declare that he fears a rescue, then the judge may employ as many men as he may see fit to convey the fugitive to the state whence it is alleged he has fled; and the expense is to be paid by the United States.

*Fifthly. It commands all good citizens to assist in slave-catching.* The law reads, "All good citizens are commanded to assist." Thus, all good citizens are required to act with kidnappers, or those who demean themselves in the degrading business of following and seizing their fellow-creatures in order to oppress them.

Nevertheless, though the law is a most atrocious one, the southern papers denounced those who protested against the law as traitors and bad Christians. The Nashville Advocate was fierce in the denunciation, and quoted Romans xiii, 1-5; 1 Peter ii, 13-18, and one of the Articles of Religion, to show how wicked those men were who denounced this atrocious law.\* Dr. Lee, of the Richmond Advocate, uttered similar sentiments.†

As a fair specimen of the northern sentiment on this law, we quote the two following from the resolutions passed at New Bedford, Massachusetts:

"Resolved, That any man among us who shall lend himself to the purposes of this law, shall henceforth be held to have forfeited all the confidence and fellowship of all good men, and that we will, by every lawful means, discountenance every such dereliction from the duty of a northern citizen as conduct the most infamous and unworthy.

"Resolved, That, as citizens of Massachusetts, as men, and as Christians, we protest, with our whole hearts, against this law. We protest against it for that it endangers the free as well as the bond, for that it brings all the worst horrors of an accursed system upon our

free soil, for that it arrays in opposition to our own selves the two noblest principles of free government—the love of loyalty and the love of liberty—and for that it is opposed both to the law of God and the rights of man."\*

6. The preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, stationed in New York, Brooklyn, and Williamsburg, at a meeting held November 9, 1850, passed a preamble and strong resolutions against the new bill. Their objections to the bill were that it was at variance with the habeas corpus right and the privileges of trial by jury. It is an encouragement to perjury in allowing the unquestioned testimony or assertion of the claimant of a slave. It is inconsistent with the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution of the United States, and the objects of the Federal Union. It is iniquitous and unrighteous in its provisions, and in flagrant violation of the law of God, which forbids to deliver up the fugitive.‡

The southern papers denounced unsparingly the action of the New York preachers, and there were some even in New York belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, but with southern affinities, who warmly opposed the course of the preachers.‡ Dr. Lee, of the Richmond Advocate, declared respecting the new law, as follows: "We not only regard it as wise, but eminently conservative, and as now forming the strongest, and it may be the only link in the golden chain that binds our national confederacy in glorious union. If this last link be broken our Federal Union will crumble into ruins."§

7. What was then called the *higher law* became a question of very general inquiry. The pro-slavery party contended that the law of the land had no superior, and whatever was law was of supreme authority. They failed to observe an important distinction, that when the law of the land commanded to do something wicked, it could not be obeyed. For instance, did it command murder, robbery, idolatry, or the like, no man should obey such laws. The cases of Daniel and the apostles are in point; the former refused to be an idolater, and the latter would not cease to preach the Gospel.

Burke, in his speech on the trial of Hastings, maintained that "there was a law prior to all our devices, and prior to all our contrivances, paramount to all our ideas and all our sensations, antecedent to our very existence, by which we are knit and connected in the eternal frame of the universe, out of which we can not stir. This great law does not arise from our conventions or compacts; on the contrary, it gives to our conventions and compacts all the force and sanction they can have. It does not arise from our vain institutions." In like manner taught Blackstone, and all our great jurists, whether British or American.

A citizen is not bound to obey *every* law. Every citizen must obey a law which inflicts injury on his person, estate, and civil privilege till legally redressed; but no citizen is bound to obey a law which commands him to *inflict injury* upon another. We must *endure* but never *commit* wrong. We must be patient when sinned against, but must never sin against others. The law may heap injustice on me; but no law can authorize me to inflict injustice on another. When the law forbade Daniel to pray he disobeyed it; when it commanded him to be cast

\* Z., October 16, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 566.

† Z., December 4, 1850. Scraps, VII, pp. 618, 619.

‡ R., November 28, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 616; also, pp. 627-631.

§ Z., November 27, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 614.

\* N., October 25, 1850. Scraps, VII, pp. 574-576.

† R., November 7, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 589.



into the lion's den, he submitted. A law which enjoins on a citizen the commission of a crime, has violated the confidence of a citizen, and is, therefore, invalid, according to the law of God.\*

The discussions from the pulpit and press on the subject of the Fugitive-Slave law were numerous and opposite. Many sermons were preached and published which maintained that the law of the land was either superior to the law of God, or that the civil law was sanctioned by the word of God, as far as the obedience of the citizen was concerned, whether the civil en-

actment was bad or good. Thus the advocates of slavery had a fine opportunity to plead obedience to the powers that be, though the requirement was an evil one, and required the commission of crime. There was, also, a class which seemed to set up their own law, or their interpretation of God's law as overriding all civil enactments. Thus there was much licentiousness of sentiment during this controversy. There was a mean between both, though the men of one idea of neither party could settle down in that happy mean, at a distance from injurious extremes.

## CHAPTER LIII.

### MISCELLANEOUS EVENTS OF 1850.

1. THE supposed analogy between the separation of the Canada conference and that of the south became a subject of controversy at the close of 1849, and beginning of 1850, and occasionally before and after that period. We will notice briefly the leading articles in the papers on this subject.

Dr. Bangs, in his History,† published, through mistake, as he himself acknowledges and corrects, in the columns of the *New York Advocate*,‡ that the Canada conference separated with the mutual consent of the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Canada conference, but by the authority of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The cause of the error was that a resolution was passed, May 16, 1828, without due consideration, to that effect. This resolution was afterward reconsidered and rescinded, and the whole subject referred to a committee, and a report was adopted, May 21, 1828, by 108 yeas, and 22 nays. The difference between the rescinded resolution and the report adopted was, that the one rescinded and published in the History makes the dissolution of the connection between the Methodist Episcopal Church and Canada to be effected by mutual consent; whereas, the report actually adopted by the conference left it entirely to the voluntary action of the Canada brethren "definitely to determine" to dissolve their union with the Methodist Episcopal Church; both reports contemplating the continuance of friendly relations, which have, indeed, always been maintained.

Another error was that \$10,000 was appropriated to the Canada conference as an equivalent for their share of the Book Concern. This mistake was published as correct in the debates of General conference of 1844, as was shown by Dr. Bangs.¶ These errors were fully exposed by Dr. Peck in a succession of articles.§ The editor of the *Southern Advocate*‡ assaulted Dr. Peck on this occasion in a vituperative style, and with an injustice and an unfairness truly lamentable for the honor of human nature. We must not quote the coarse and unfounded charges in his editorial; we regret even to have cause to refer to it in the margin as cited.

The following are the points made out by Dr. Peck, on the Canada case, and are sustained by the historical facts respecting it.

*First.* That the connection between the societies in Canada—at least from 1816 to 1818—was matter of mutual consent, and, consequently, could be dissolved by either party without schism.

*Secondly.* That by the authority of the General conference the bishops withdrew their supervision from the Lower Province in 1820, and the societies in that Province acquiesced.

*Thirdly.* That the societies in the Upper Province separated themselves from the jurisdiction of the General conference in 1828, and that body acquiesced in the measure, authorizing, at the same time, the bishops to ordain a bishop for Canada, should one be elected, and should the Canada conference desire it.

*Fourthly.* That the General conference of 1832 considered and decided that they had no right to divide the property of the Book Concern without the constitutional vote of the annual conferences, and thereupon originated a resolution which went the rounds of the annual conferences, but which contained no conditions as to the form of Church government which the Canada brethren should finally elect.

*Fifthly.* That the votes in the annual conferences failed—the southern conferences almost unanimously voting against it.

*Sixthly.* That an arrangement, which was considered as within the bounds of General conference powers, was finally made in 1836, to afford the Canada brethren books at almost cost. The Book Concern in New York gave books to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the same conditions.

*Seventhly.* That not a dollar of the capital stock of the Book Concern was ever divided to the Canada conference.\*

2. A law case was decided in 1850 by Judge Tyler in reference to the meeting-house of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Alexandria Virginia. A portion of the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church joined the Church, South. These claimed the meeting-house, and succeeded in having trustees appointed. Judge Tyler, however, after hearing the case in court, decided that the church should be awarded to the Methodist Episcopal Church. Accordingly,

\* Z., November 27, 1850. *Scraps*, VII, p. 614; also, pp. 622, 625, 629.

† Volume III, p. 389. ‡ C., November 22, 1849.

§ C., February 14, 1850. *Scraps*, VII, p. 239.

¶ C., December 6, 1850. *Scraps*, VII, pp. 220, 226, 261, 284.

‡ S., December 7, 1850. *Scraps*, VII, p. 234.

\* C., February 7, 1850. *Scraps*, VII, p. 284.

he decided that the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, claiming the church, had no legal right to it; so he appointed a new board of trustees, members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to hold it in trust for the use of the members and ministers of this Church. According to this decision, any members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Virginia, whether a majority or a minority, could recover any Church property belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, either before or after May, 1844. We refer to this decision.\* Dr. Lee acknowledges that according to the decision of Judge Tyler, this result would follow. But he thinks the decision of the Judge incorrect.†

3. Bishop Andrew, in two long letters, published in the Southern Christian Advocate, of September 27th, and dated Parkersburg, Virginia, September 3, 1850, proclaims aloud for southern independence, and the union of Virginia and Maryland Methodists to the south.‡ He traveled from Alexandria, Virginia, to Parkersburg, and these letters are the results of his observations.

In his first letter on southern independence, he contends that the southern people should educate their own children in the south; that they should employ southern teachers, manufacture their own books and periodicals, provide their own clothing, manufactures, and thus have as little to do with the north as possible.

In his second letter, after having given an account of his travels and entertainment on his journey, he begins with berating the Baltimore conference, and showing that Methodist people in all his journey were properly southern in their views. He says the Baltimore conference was in an unnatural and dangerous position, and should have taken southern ground. But she affiliated with the abolitionism of the east and west, and declared war with the civil institutions and laws of the south. He represents the people as entirely southern, in his sense of the word, but they were controlled by the preachers. He concludes his long letter of misrepresentations by declaring, "If Methodism is to be maintained in its efficiency in this country, it must be in connection with the Southern Church; and I beg the Virginia conference to look well to this portion of their field of labor. We must occupy this whole country, and not only must the churches of Fredericksburg and Alexandria be built, but we ought, by all means, to have a house of worship in Washington City."

No doubt the Bishop received such views from the few southern families who entertained him on his way, and he hence concluded that the family gossip of his pro-slavery entertainers was no other than the true sentiment of the masses of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Virginia. So it was trumpeted in Cincinnati; and by a hot-bed foreign, Soule Chapel was in being, and after this Andrew Chapel. The former is now the property of the Roman Catholic Church, and the latter has passed into the hands of Union Chapel; and the adherents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are now few in the Queen City. The Baltimore conference, too, is in its *natural* position, and that is in full communion with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and will doubtless remain so, while it receives the true teachings of Christianity.

4. As to the lawsuit about the Book Concern, the state of the question is about as follows:

The Book Agents, having received the advice of able counsel, declared, in pursuance of this counsel, that they could not arbitrate the matter. It was then sent round to the annual conferences for their approbation. But when it went through a few conferences, having a full majority for arbitration, the suit was entered by the southern commissioners, and this put a stop to the measure. The bishops, when the suit was entered, thought it useless to present it to any other conferences; hence the suit at law, on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was inevitable. Dr. Peck justly remarks about the course of the south, in the following words: "All they have ever done to adjust the matter is, to demand the payment of the money, then call us by all sorts of bad names for non-compliance, and finally to sue for the claim."\* The truth is, nothing could be done to satisfy the southern commissioners, except to do what would destroy all the constitutional safeguards of the Church.

5. It was predicted by the south that, after their secession, the Methodist Episcopal Church would be torn with distracting differences, divided into factions and ruined. All this prophecy came to naught, as the Methodist Episcopal Church was never more united than since the secession of the south. On the other hand, deep feeling has arisen in the south on the section in the Discipline on slavery, and the difficulties on this point are far from being settled.

This *sectionalism* manifests itself in the south, not merely in regard to slavery, but in several other respects. The ecclesiastical changes proposed at the St. Louis conference bore a threatening aspect. Mr. M'Ferrin laments this state of things. One of his correspondents writes: "Ought not you editors to wage war against the miserable *sectional feeling* that is developing itself in our connection, and which will ruin us, if it is not arrested?" On this the editor remarks: "The above letter comes from a highly-esteemed minister, and is duly appreciated by the editor of this paper. Our brother alludes to a matter that we fear is operating most seriously to the injury of our Church, in her temporal economy at least—*sectional feeling*, growing out of what are regarded sectional interests. We have seen the development and have deplored it. It must be arrested, or, as our brother remarks, *it will ruin us.*"†

A principal development of the sectionalism appears from the number and character of their periodicals. The Methodist Expositor was commenced in Cincinnati, in the fall of 1848, at the instigation of Bishop Soule and others, in order to enter into the border contests. After the St. Louis conference, it was nominally transferred to Louisville, and to be called the Louisville Advocate. After some endeavors in this way, it was merged into the Nashville paper, after having incurred, in its two years of incessant warfare on the Methodist Episcopal Church, a heavy debt.‡

The New Orleans Christian Advocate was also commenced. After the adjournment of the St. Louis General conference, the delegates of the Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Arkansas conferences met, and resolved, under the General

\* C., July 18, 1850. Scraphs, VII, p. 474.

† R., November 7, 1850. Scraphs, VII, p. 589.

‡ S., September 27, 1850. Scraphs, VII, p. 551.

\* C., November 14, 1850. Scraphs, VII, p. 507; see also pp. 579, 587, 598.

† Z., July 24, 1850. Scraphs, VII, p. 487.

‡ N., June 21, 1850. Scraphs, VII, pp. 419, 420, 453.

conference action, to establish this paper.\* The Memphis Advocate was commenced about the same time.† The St. Louis Christian Advocate was resolved on by the St. Louis conference, in July, 1850, and its publication was commenced a short time after.‡ None of these papers have supported themselves; and without unusual exertions, they can not possibly meet their expenses.

6. It is due to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to say that her endeavors to instruct the blacks have been continued after the secession as well as before it. We can not see that they gained any thing, more or less, by the secession, in regard to the blacks, while they lost much in the supplies of preachers which they were accustomed to receive from the north. Bishop Capers called attention with great zeal to the cause of colored missions,|| and complained loudly of some

mismanagemt in conducting them. Another writer in the south-west complains in like manner of similar defects.\* The editor of the Pittsburg Advocate, Rev. Wm. Hunter, reports a decrease in the colored membership of the south, and deploras it.† A survey of the annual report of the missionary society, by the Nashville Advocate, speaks encouragingly on the subject.‡

7. Several missionaries were sent to California. Bishop Andrew pleaded this cause with great earnestness. The southern conferences took up the subject with great zeal, and persevered in it.|| Subsequently, it is firmly believed by many, southern slaveholders, in view of obtaining a strong foothold in California, and for the purpose of forming a new slave state, gave great encouragement, in various ways, in the formation of the southern conference on the Pacific.

## CHAPTER LIV.

### HISTORY OF THE NEW YORK SUIT FROM 1851 TO ITS TERMINATION.

1. A PLAIN statement of facts will satisfy all candid persons that the General conference of 1848, and the Book Agents at New York, have gone to the utmost extent of their power in trying to produce an amicable arrangement without going to law.

The first effort, which was made in 1844, in anticipation of the southern secession, failed of obtaining the sanction of the annual conferences by the constitutional vote.

In the next place, the plan for arbitration was made in good faith, by the General conference of 1848; and while it was in the way of being authorized by the annual conferences, our southern brethren commenced the suit. The Book Agents at New York, and the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were obliged to make their defense before the tribunal of the law; they can not, therefore, be held responsible for the litigation.

Then the Book Agents, since the suit is commenced, feel themselves authorized to offer the southern commissioners an arbitration, "under the authority of the Court," and they therefore promptly made the offer, although no concession, by this offer, is made in favor of the claims of the plaintiffs in the question before the Court.

On the side of the Methodist Episcopal Church every thing possible was done to settle the claims made, upon Christian principles, as the Book Agents advanced to the utmost verge of their constitutional powers to accomplish this object.

2. On June 12, 1851, the Book Agents, G. Lane and L. Scott, in the Christian Advocate and Journal, published what they justly called "the true state of the case, for the information of all persons concerned."

The following is their statement:

They first quote the preamble and resolutions of the General conference, passed June 8, 1844. This is what has been called the plan, which we

need not recite, as we have already quoted it, and it will be found in our documents.

The Agents next quote the report on the state of the Church, of May 18, 1848, which shows that the sixth Restriction was not altered. The whole number for the alteration was 2,135, and against it 1,070. The whole number necessary to authorize the alteration would be 2,404; so that 269 votes were wanting to authorize the change in the Restriction.

The constitutional majority having thus failed, the Agents then quote the preamble and resolutions of the General conference of 1848, passed May 29, 1848, which may be seen by referring to Journal of 1848, pp. 94, 95.

This states that because "our *common and holy* Christianity prescribes and enjoins the most pacific measures for the settlement of all matters in dispute between individuals, as well as associations of professing Christians, that the whole Christian world will expect ministers of the Lord Jesus Christ to adopt the most peaceful and conciliatory measures for the settlement of any claim that may be urged against them, and that the conference desires to advance, as far as its constitutional powers will authorize, toward an amicable adjustment of this difficulty."

For these reasons the Book Agents were authorized to submit the case to arbitration, if this could be done legally.

And, if this could not be done, and a suit entered, the Agents were then authorized to tender an adjustment of the claims, by a legal arbitration, under the authority of the Court.

Or, if the matter could not be voluntarily arbitrated, and no suit entered, the Agents were authorized to ask the annual conferences to suspend the sixth Restriction, so as to authorize the division of the funds.

The Book Agents, after quoting in full the documents referred to above, make the following candid and truthful statements:

\* July 25, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 458.

† Scraps, VII, p. 439.

‡ N., August 9, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 531.

|| N., February 8, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 286.

\* N., April 12, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 307.

† Z., February 20, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 288.

‡ N., August 2, 1850. Scraps, VII, pp. 522-525.

|| S., September 27, 1850. Scraps, VII, p. 552; also p. 288.

"As soon as the nature of their engagements allowed, the Book Agents took legal counsel, and finding that their corporate powers would not warrant them in offering to the commissioners of the Church, South, a voluntary arbitration, as contemplated in the first of the above resolutions, notified said commissioners of this fact. No suit being yet commenced by the commissioners of the Church, South, the bishops, in compliance with the fourth of the above series, began, at the Baltimore conference of 1849, to lay the recommendation contained in the third before the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church; but, on the fifteenth day of June following, a suit was instituted against the undersigned, by the commissioners of said Church, South, and, at or about the same time, against the Book Agents at Cincinnati, and the Trustees of the Chartered Fund, Philadelphia; and so the proceeding in the annual conferences was discontinued. The trial of the case commenced on the 19th ult., before Judges Nelson and Betts, in the United States Circuit Court for the Southern District of New York, and on the 29th, at the conclusion of the argument, the Court recommended to the parties an amicable adjustment of the matters in dispute between them, and intimated that such adjustment, if made, would receive the sanction of the Court. The undersigned, in conjunction with the Agents of the Book Concern at Cincinnati, believing that the juncture had now occurred, contemplated in the second resolution of the above series, drew up and signed a paper on the 2d instant, offering to the commissioners of the Church, South, an adjustment of their preferred claims by a legal arbitration, under the authority of the Court. But before this paper was forwarded to said commissioners, the undersigned received a letter, dated New York, May 29th—the day the argument closed—and signed by W. A. Smith, on behalf of said commissioners, asking whether any proposal of amicable settlement was practicable, and, if so, that they would express it. The undersigned immediately drew up a note, acknowledging the receipt of said letter, and referring them, for their proposal, to the paper before prepared, and put both note and paper into the hands of E. L. Fancher, Esq., to be handed over, according to request, to D. Lord, Esq., to be forwarded to said commissioners. The above statement presents a true history of the case, as to its leading facts.

"G. LANE & L. SCOTT."\*

3. As the litigation about money between two religious bodies has a bad appearance, and always gives room for scandal, the Methodist Episcopal Church all along was desirous to settle the claim in some possible amicable way. In this, however, no proper concession was made either as to the *legality* or *justice* of the claim. After the case was argued, from Monday, May 19, 1851, to Thursday, May 29th, and before the decision of Judge Nelson was given, on November 11, 1851, there was still room for arbitration, but the southern commissioners repudiated any such idea.

Dr. Smith took the lead in this matter. The ground he took was, *if the Agents will concede the southern claim, then the southern commissioners will submit to arbitrate the question of the amount and mode of payment.* This the Agents could not agree to, because they had no right to con-

cede the equity of the claim. The General conference gave them no such power. The concession asked would leave nothing to arbitrate; for the parties could soon find out the subordinate questions of *amount* and *mode* if the main question of right were settled; so that the southern commissioners propose nothing at all by way of friendly, Christian compromise.

The Agents were prepared any time, from the entrance of the suit to the decision of the Judge—a space of over five months—to submit the matter to legal gentlemen, upon the evidence and arguments before the Court, with an exact printed report of the whole before them. The reasons involved in this are, 1. It would be a friendly settlement of the controversy. 2. It would involve little expense. 3. It would bring the case to a speedy termination. 4. And the decision would be final.

The difference between the two parties was this: in submitting at this time to arbitration, the Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church were willing to risk the funds of the Church for the honor of Christianity, while the southern commissioners were so certain of securing the funds by abiding their appeal to Cæsar, that they were unwilling to come to Christian terms.

Still, the public mind in the south was misled. Dr. Smith, in a letter to Dr. Wightman, published in the Southern Advocate, speaks of having exercised his "plenary powers" in the direction of an amicable settlement. All that he did was to ask the Agents if they had any thing to propose by way of a compromise; and Dr. Smith's plan was, that the Agents should acknowledge the justice and equity of the southern claim. This they could not do. It is true, the Court recommended a compromise or some settlement; but the Agents were bound by principle and constitution, and had no power or right to yield their claim. The Methodist Episcopal Church could not go in for revolution; the south did go in for revolution and the subversion of the government of the Church, and had carried out the revolution in practice. It was easy for them to submit their ill-founded claim to any mode of arbitrament, as their principles of revolution, on which they proceeded, allowed it from the moment they stepped beyond the limits of protest, as all beyond that was revolution.\*

4. A brisk controversy arose between Dr. Peck and Dr. Wightman on the arbitration measure, in the period of time elapsing from the trial of the case before the Court and the decision of the Judge. The Court had recommended a settlement in the following words: Judge Nelson said for himself and Judge Betts, "We can not resist the desire to express our concurrence in the suggestions that have been made by the learned counsel on both sides, that it would be much better for the interests of the Church, for the interests of all concerned, if, after a full and fair investigation both of the facts and law of the case, the parties could amicably take it up, and, by the aid of friends and counsel, come to an amicable decision of the controversy. There can be no doubt but that an amicable, and equitable, and honest adjustment, made by the representatives of the different branches of the Church, with the aid of their counsel, sanctioned by the Court,

\*C., June 12, 1851. W., June 18, 1851. Scraps, VII, p. 639.

\*C., July 17, 1851, Vol. XXVI, No. 29, p. 114, col. 4, 5.

would be a binding, and valid, and final disposition of the whole controversy."\* The "sanction of the Court" would be necessary for a settlement.

The Agents understood this to be an arbitration decided under the sanction of the Court; but Drs. Wightman and Smith would listen to nothing except to fix on the amount due. Dr. Wightman did not suppose that the real question at issue would be submitted to arbitration. His "understanding was, that the adjustment thus proposed was meant to settle the amount due to the southern conferences, and the mode and time of its payment."

The south generally contended that the matter of *right* was on their side, and they shrunk from any other idea, as any other would involve the result that they were seceders. The Agents denied the *right* of the south. On this Dr. Lee says: "All *right* on the part of the south is, then, denied, and the note and paper put into the hands of E. L. Fancher, Esq., as a reply to the letter of Dr. Smith, amounts simply to a proposition to settle the abstract question of *right* by arbitration." And Dr. Wightman asks, "Does Dr. Peck really think that any principles of expediency could justify the arbitrating away to a body of *seceders* rights of property which they had alienated by the act of secession?"

The appeal was made by Dr. Wightman, and the other leaders, to the feelings of the public. Dr. Wightman writes, "Come forward, ye broken down fathers! come forward, widows and orphans!" This favorite appeal was sounded every-where, but it was only to mislead; because, 1. Those who make this appeal were the very persons who led away these superannuates, widows, and orphans from the provisions which they now lament were taken from them. 2. Those who made this plea knew well that the argument, and the supplies derived from it, were much more productive of support than the proceeds of the Chartered Fund and the Book Concern. The southern superannuated preachers were much better supplied without the proceeds of the Book Concern than with it; and it is only a few weeks from the present time—February 6, 1854—that Dr. Wightman declared this in his paper. 3. Our southern brethren forget the case of the Canada conference, as they, almost unanimously, refused to divide with them the Book Concern.†

Dr. Smith sent forth a manifesto, in which he quotes Judge Nelson, and goes for an arbitration which includes two points: 1. The just proportion of property to be awarded to the south. 2. How it shall be held or conveyed. So that nothing about the equity of the case must be considered, or any regard to the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church.‡

5. In the Christian Advocate and Journal of September 18, 1851, the Book Agents, Messrs. Lane and Scott, in an article headed "The Conclusion of the Arbitration Measure," gave a full exhibition of the arbitration measure and the cause of its failure. Dr. Smith had published in the southern papers the correspondence, accompanied by a letter of explanation. The design of the letter was, to show that the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal

Church, South, have not refused an amicable adjustment of the property question now before the Court, but that the failure of that measure is chargeable upon the Book Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Agents show the absurdity of Mr. Smith's evasions, and affirm that what they proposed was "simply to adjust, in an amicable way, their preferred claims by a legal arbitration, under a rule of the Court—an arbitration rendered legal and mutually binding by the order and sanction of the Court." They then proceed to argue the justness of their course with triumphant testimony, and give the correspondence as follows:

"And what other terms could the Agents propose? They could not propose, as Dr. Smith seems to suppose they could, to 'appropriate a portion of the property in their custody to the benefit of the Church, South, without some mode of inquiry whether that Church had a right in law and equity, or both, to that portion. Nor could they propose to 'admit the claim of the Southern Church to a fair proportion of the funds in question, and merely to arbitrate what that proportion should be, and how it should be held or conveyed.' This, obviously, was out of the question, and would have betrayed a silliness which Dr. Smith himself would have condemned. What, then, could they do than they did to bring about an amicable and Christian settlement of the difficulty? The Church, South, made certain claims to the property of the Methodist Book Concern. The commissioners of that Church brought a suit at law against the Agents of the Book Concern to enforce those claims. The grounds of those claims, legal and equitable, were argued before the Court. The Court recommended that the controversy respecting those claims should be settled amicably by the parties, and promised to sanction such settlement if made. What, then, were the Agents to do, when at length the way was opened for them to do any thing in the way of amicable settlement? The claims of the Southern Church were the sole matter in dispute; and were they to yield them outright, or propose an honorable and Christian mode of settlement by arbitration, made legal and binding by a rule of the Court? They believed then, and believe still, that the latter was the only course they could consistently take, and this course they took. What, we repeat, could they, at that stage of the business, have done more?"

"But," says Dr. Smith, "we consider the northern Agents as flatly refusing the terms made by the Court." But the Court made no terms at all. It simply recommended that, "after a full and fair investigation both of the facts and law of the case, the parties should amicably take it up, and, by the aid of friends and counsel, come to an amicable decision of the controversy." This is all. The Court did not even suggest any specific mode in which it should be done. And would not a friendly arbitration, made valid and binding by the sanction of the Court, meet the kindest wishes of the Court? Most unquestionably, as we thought, and still think, it would. How, then, do the Agents flatly refuse the terms made by the Court?

"Dr. Smith, this will not do. You can not excuse either yourself, or your brethren who acted with you, before an intelligent public in this way. We made you a fair, honorable, and

\* New York Church Case, pp. 367, 368.

† C., August 7, 1851, Vol. XXVI, p. 126, col. 2, No. 32.

‡ C., September 4, 1851, Vol. XXVI, p. 142, col. 5, 6.

Christian offer to settle the difficulty between us in a becoming way; did it, too, as soon as it was practicable to do it, and you rejected it by proposing a condition which you knew we could not accept; and yet you say that the 'northern Agents' refused to modify their propositions when you had stated said condition, and assured them, at the same time, that no modification which they might make would be agreed to by the commissioners of the Church, South, which did not embrace that condition. [See below.]

"You say 'we have no motive to take this question from the courts of the country to be settled by a committee of lawyers.' The Court thought you had, and, therefore, recommended it; we thought you had, and, therefore, proposed it. We still think you had, and a *great motive*. Not, indeed, because we thought, or now think, that these lawyers, or whoever might be the arbitrators—for we named no class, as you well know—would, or might be, gentlemen of greater integrity, or greater ability, than the able jurist in whose hands the case now is; but because we thought, and still think, a board of arbitrators, whether lawyers or others, could look at all the equities of the case as even a court of equity can not, bound, as it confessedly is, by legal restriction; and because we thought, and still think, that a friendly settlement by arbitration is more in keeping with your and our character, and the character of those whom we respectively represent. Hence, we had tried, from the General conference of 1848, and by its direction, to obtain authority to propose arbitration; and when, at last, after having failed as to voluntary arbitration, and having been prevented, by your hasty bringing of the suit, when we had a fair prospect of obtaining authority by concurrence of annual conferences—when at last, we say, we obtained that authority, by the recommendation of the Court, and proposed arbitration, you rejected it, and now say, among other things, by way of justification, 'we have no motive to take this question out of the courts of our country to be settled by a committee of lawyers.' We repeat, Doctor, this will not do.

"The correspondence is now before the public, and the case, by a necessity which we could not control, before the Court. We await the result, feeling, whatever that result may be, that we have, honestly and in good faith, tried to do what duty required of us as Christian men to have this unhappy controversy properly and peacefully settled.

"G. LANE & L. SCOTT.

"MESSRS. LANE, AND OTHERS—GENTLEMEN,—In reference to the case, the argument of which is now concluded to-day, we heartily concur in the suggestion thrown out by the Court, and can not doubt they equally meet your views and feelings. The expression by the Court of their readiness to sanction any amicable adjustment, *by a decree of the Court*, and thus to preclude any personal responsibility on the part of the Agents and Trustees, seems to remove the only obstacle to a friendly termination of the difficulties between the two parts of our Church. If you entertain similar views, may we ask you if any proposal for an adjustment is practicable, and, if so, that you would express it, under the assurance that any liberal view on both sides will be deemed a just basis for a settlement?

"Please address us, to the care of our counsel and mutual friend, D. Lord.

"Very respectfully, on behalf of the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,  
WM. A. SMITH, *Chairman*.

"*New York, May 29, 1851.*"

"MESSRS. W. A. SMITH, AND OTHERS—GENTLEMEN,—Yours of the 29th ultimo came to hand this morning. Heartily concurring with yourselves in the suggestions thrown out by the Court, we had drawn up the accompanying paper, and affixed our signatures to it, before yours arrived. The legal difficulty which existed having been removed by the recommendation of the Court, we felt ourselves authorized, by the General conference of 1848, to make the proposal contained in the above-mentioned paper, which proposal, we trust, will be deemed by you as forming a just basis for an amicable settlement.

"Yours, very truly, G. LANE.

"In behalf of the Agents at New York and Cincinnati.

"*New York, June 2, 1851.*"

"To Rev. W. A. Smith, D. D., Rev. A. L. P. Green, D. D., and Rev. C. B. Parsons, D. D., Commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South—Brethren,—The General conference of 1848 having declared its desire to advance, as far as its constitutional powers could authorize, toward an amicable adjustment of the difficulty in respect to the claim on the funds of the Book Concern; and that conference having clothed the undersigned, as Agents, with all its power to tender, in the present exigency, an adjustment of such claims by a legal arbitration under a rule of said Court; and in case you advise us of your disposition to unite in the arrangement, we shall be ready, by ourselves or counsel, to agree with you upon all necessary details for a speedy proceeding in the matter—as speedy as the nature of our circumstances will admit.

Yours, truly,

"G. LANE & L. SCOTT,

"Agents of Methodist Book Concern, New York.

"L. SWORMSTEDT & J. H. POWER,

"Agents of Methodist Book Concern, Cincinnati."

"To the Rev. George Lane, and others, defendants in the suit pending in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York, in which we, as Commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are the plaintiffs—Brethren,—Your letter dated June 2d, instant, has been laid before us, in which, adopting the recommendation of the Court to settle the difficulties between the two bodies of the Methodist communion whom we respectfully represent, you propose to leave the matter to a 'legal arbitration under a rule of said Court.' Unless the terms of arbitration express whether you concede to us a part of the funds in controversy, such arbitration would have to decide this question as preliminary, and by the proposal of a 'legal arbitration,' the principles of law must be assumed as the rule of decision. Your proposal, then—as thus understood—amounts to this, that the very questions of law which, at such expense of time and money, have recently been tried and argued, should be left to the decision of lawyers, either with or without a new argument. This we could not deem useful to either party; for we suppose that both parties are satisfied that no fairer or more intelligent tribunal could be constituted than the Court which has heard the argument already made on the minds of the Judges.

Your proposals, therefore, we can only regard as illusory, although we can not suppose them so intended.

"But, on our part, we will agree that, being admitted to be entitled to our fair proportion of the funds in question, we will submit it to an arbitration, either of lawyers or others, to determine what is such just proportion, and how the property shall be held or conveyed; and we think that you, as we, would prefer an arbitration other than of lawyers, as less expensive, probably less dilatory, and more likely to embrace practical business views.

"We do not see that the proposal of your letter is in any advance toward a settlement, and are compelled to ask you to act on the ideas substituted in the present letter as being, we must frankly say, the only one which will be agreed to.

"Your early and final reply, addressed to the care of D. Lord, Esq., will oblige us.

"WM. A. SMITH,

*Chairman of the Board of Commissioners  
of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.*

*"Randolph Macon College, Va., June 19, 1851."*

"Rev. W. A. Smith, D. D., and others, Commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South—Brethren,—Your answer of the 19th of June to our communication of the 2d of that month, was received by us on the 2d instant, to which we beg leave briefly to reply.

"Although the Agents of the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church consider themselves fully authorized, by the act of the General conference of 1848, to submit to arbitration, under the direction of the Court, the whole matter in controversy between the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, they do not consider that they have authority to submit a part and not the whole. And as the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, refuse to submit the main point in controversy, if not, indeed, the only one, the Agents are of opinion that there is nothing further which they can propose toward a peaceable settlement of matters in dispute.

Very respectfully,

"G. LANE & L. SCOTT.

*"New York, July 12, 1851."*

From the foregoing it will be seen that the proposal of Dr. Smith, of May 22, 1851, was, "any amicable adjustment by a decree of the Court." The Agents, in response of June 2d, offer "adjustment by arbitration, under the rule of the Court." Dr. Smith, in his letter of June 19th, requires that the Agents concede the right of the south to these funds, and that the amount and mode only were to be adjusted. The Agents, under date of July 12th, wrote, that as the south refuses to submit the main point in controversy, the minor ones need not be submitted. In this manner the measure of arbitration terminated.

Two points here may now be briefly considered; namely, the supposed *delay* in bringing the matter to a conclusion, and the *right or equity* of the case.

6. Mr. Johnson charges on the Methodist Episcopal Church an unnecessary *delay* in adjusting the claims. On this it may be remarked: After the failure of the vote in the annual conferences nothing could be done till the next General conference. In May, 1848, the plan of arbitration was chosen which would require nearly a year for its completion. In September, 1848, the southern commissioners resolved to commence a

suit at law. The suit was commenced in June, 1849; and the case was argued as soon as the complainants were ready, which was in May, 1851.\*

7. The moral question of *equity* has been introduced into this litigation, and pleaded for stoutly by the south, and those who favor their claims. They seem to think that equity overrides law, and that courts of equity can decide questions irrespective of law, constitutions, and covenants lawfully entered into.

Courts of equity are always bound by law, constitutions, and contracts lawfully made. Mr. Wood referred to a multitude of authorities to show, that in precisely such cases as the one between the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, courts of equity have refused to divide. To award to seceders a *pro rata* proportion of a charitable fund, held and managed under a constitution consented to by the whole body when they were a part of it, would disperse all Church property, and all funds for charitable uses in the world; and would destroy, instead of sustaining the principles of equity. There can be no equity in rendering unstable the property of every religious and charitable corporation. It is a settled principle of law, that seceders who leave a voluntary association, leave the property of the society behind them. If this were not so, no voluntary association, having funds, could hold together. And none would give funds for benevolent objects which might be scattered in a short while.

The law and equity of the present case are this, that the fund in question was placed under a constitutional restriction, which was framed as much by the south as the north, and to which both parties solemnly agreed to adhere in adopting the famous report of the committee on the declaration, improperly called the plan of separation. In no case could this fund be managed but by the Methodist Episcopal Church, and its beneficiaries must belong to this Church. The south seceded, and yet, in violation of the compact, they required that the beneficiaries, in part, should belong to another Church, and the managers, in part, must, also, belong to another Church. This is neither equitable, just, nor right, according to the moral principles and precepts that govern mankind in all cases of the same sort. And this is the law of equity as established in the Bible, and adopted in the civil or Roman law, the canon law, and the British and American laws, in deciding questions of equity between man and man, and between association and association.

8. Shortly after Judge Nelson published his opinion, it was reviewed by several writers. While they took occasion to write very freely as to the reasoning and conclusions of the Court, they manifested a due regard both for his office and his character as a man.

Dr. Peck, then editor of the Christian Advocate, on publishing the decision of the Judge in his paper, accompanied it with a sifting examination. He especially showed the weakness of the Judge's reasoning in maintaining that the General conference originally had and still has power to provide for a plurality of governments entirely independent of each other. He then showed the absurdity of the position that the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were also ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church; for this is the true version of

\* C., September 18, 1851, Vol. XXVI, p. 154, col. 4.

the Judge's vague and evasive phraseology when he endeavors to place the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as beneficiaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Of course this is the same as awarding to British subjects all the privileges of American citizens, or the contrary.\*

A writer in the Washington Union denounced the Methodist Episcopal Church in no measured terms, charging her with abolitionism, and, as a thief and robber, condemned to make restitution by the highest legal authority of the land. A writer in the Christian Advocate exposed the absurdity of these unfounded charges.†

Dr. Bond, in two very able articles, dated in January and February, 1852, reviewed some statements in Hon. Reverdy Johnson's argument, the sentiment of which was embraced in the Judge's decision in that part which attributes such high power to the conference and preachers, and that they had no constituency in the people. This review is powerful and conclusive.‡

Dr. Simpson, now Bishop Simpson, then editor of the Western Christian Advocate, wrote a most searching review of the decision, continued through three numbers of the paper.¶ Dr. Simpson exposed fully, and very ably indeed, the leading positions of the Judge, especially those respecting the destruction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the substitution of two new ones in its place, the power of the convention or General conference of 1784, the powers of the General conferences down to 1808, and the powers of the delegated General conference from 1812 and downward, and the analogy raised on the Canada conference.

Rev. John H. Power wrote, for the Western Christian Advocate, ten powerful articles, under the head, "The Sovereign Power of Traveling Methodist Preachers," in which he reviewed the Judge's decision with all plainness, and overthrew all his strong positions, and showed their utter fallacy.§

The Rev. Alfred Brunson, of the Wisconsin conference, and a lawyer of superior abilities, in August, 1852, reviewed the decision with great freedom and singular acuteness. He fully showed that the decision is altogether wanting, both in justice and in its agreement with the proper and lawful decisions of the best judges in similar cases. He proves that the Judge "jumped into his conclusions," leaving behind him all those acknowledged standards of reasons and safe precedents, by whose force all sober decisions are governed.¶

9. The following from the report of the Book Agents at New York to the General conference of 1852, will give all the historical information on the state of the question that is of any value. After reciting the action of the General conference of 1848, the Agents proceed to say,

"As soon after the rise of the General conference as the other and pressing duties of the Agents would allow, they took the advice of George Wood, Esq., an eminent legal gentleman in the city of New York, and found that, when clothed with all the authority which the Gen-

eral conference could confer, their corporate powers would not warrant them in offering to submit the case to arbitration. Of this fact they notified the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in a letter bearing date December 22, 1848. No suit having been commenced by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the opening of the following year, the bishops proceeded to lay the above-mentioned resolution before the annual conferences for their concurrence, commencing with the Baltimore conference. This measure, which was proceeding with encouraging prospects of success, was broken off by the commencement of suit by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the 19th day of June. The cause was ably argued before Judges Nelson and Betts, in May, 1851, by D. Lord, Esq., and Hon. R. Johnson, for complainants; and Hon. R. Choate and G. Wood, Esq., for defendants. At the close of the argument, his Honor, Judge Nelson, stated it as his opinion, 'that it would be much better, if, after a full and fair investigation both of the facts and law of the case, the parties could amicably take it up, and, by the aid of friends and counsel, come to an amicable decision of the controversy;' assuring the parties at the same time, that 'there could probably be no reasonable doubt but that an amicable, and equitable, and honest adjustment, made by the representatives of the different branches of the Church, with the aid of their counsel, sanctioned by the Court, would be a binding, and valid, and final disposition of the whole controversy.'

"Though your Agents were aware that it belonged to the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, as complainants in the cause, to take the initiative in negotiations touching an amicable adjustment; yet, regardless of mere form, they, in conjunction with the Agents of the Western Book Concern, and with the aid of their counsel, proceeded at once to draw up and sign a paper containing a proposition to adjust the claims of the southern commissioners by means of arbitration. But before this paper was sent off, they received a communication from Dr. Smith, as chairman of the Board of Commissioners, dated May 29th, and asking whether your Agents had any proposition to make. Having drawn up a brief reply to this communication, they sent it and the paper above-mentioned to E. L. Fancher, Esq., to be forwarded to the commissioners. This paper was dated June 2d. A reply, dated June 19th, was received, in which the commissioners stated that they were willing to arbitrate, provided we would admit their claim to a full share of the property in question. As this was the very point in dispute, it could not, of course, be admitted; and so negotiations, in reference to an amicable settlement, were closed. A decision in favor of the claimants was given by His Honor, Judge Nelson, November 11th; and a decree was issued November 26th, based on this decision, adjudging and ordering that a *pro rata* share of the property of the Book Concern, including both capital and produce, should be transferred to the agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and referring the case to the clerk of the Court, to ascertain and report the amount and value of the property, etc.

"In making preparation for a showing before the clerk, your Agents soon found that they could not rely upon the ordinary annual exhibits to the conferences; that while these ex-

\* C., November 20, 1851, and January 22, 1852. Scraps, VII, pp. 656-660.

† C., January 22, 1852, Vol. XXVIII, p. 14.

‡ C., January and February 5, 1852, and W., February 11th. Scraps, VII, pp. 682-687.

¶ W., December 24 and 31, 1851, and January 7, 1852. Scraps, VII, pp. 670-682.

§ W., February 25 to April 14, 1852. Scraps, VII, pp. 687-719.

¶ C., August 4 and 11, 1852. Scraps, VII, pp. 720-727.



hibits were perhaps sufficiently accurate for ordinary purposes, when but one interest was involved, they would not answer in view of a division of the property, as they presented certain species of stock at a valuation much too high. Your Agents, therefore, found it necessary to make out two sets of inventories of the bound and sheet stock for 1845 and 1852, and of stereotype plates for 1845—one, according to the scale of prices adopted in the annual exhibits; and another, according to a corrected, and, as your Agents judged, true scale—and, laying both before the clerk, to insist that the latter alone could be taken as a true exhibit of the property. All this involved, on the part of the Agents and their assistants, an amount of care and toil which no one, perhaps, who has not gone through something of the same kind, can fully appreciate. They had to go through the entire catalogues, both general and Sunday school, and determine the value of each book separately, and to reexamine and revise the prices of the entire list of stereotype plates; and this, beside making out the inventories according to the usual scale of prices.

"Believing that a free and full conversation between themselves and the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, on the several points of difference which might arise between them in relation to the exhibit of the property of the Concern, prepared to be laid before the clerk of the Court, might not only facilitate a settlement of the business between them, but also lessen, if not wholly remove, the grounds of discussion and dispute before that functionary, the Agents suggested such interview to one of the commissioners, who happened to be in New York. The commissioner entirely concurred with them, and stated that he and his associates had felt the propriety of such a meeting between themselves and the Agents, but had doubted whether it belonged to them to make the suggestion. This interview was had on the 31st day of March. It was of short continuance, and resulted in nothing satisfactory. The examination before the clerk commenced on the 12th ultimo, and was continued day after day till Saturday, the 17th, when it closed. The case is to be argued before the clerk of the United States Court, J. W. Nelson, Esq., as Master Commissioner, by Messrs. Lord and Fancher, on the 29th instant—April—and then, if either of the parties should be dissatisfied with the report of the Commissioner, it will be argued before the Court before the final decree shall be ordered. This decree will not probably be issued before midsummer."

10. The following is the action of the General conference of 1852, on the subject, as reported by a committee on the subject, and adopted May 22, 1852:

"The Committee on the Church Suit, to whom were referred the reports of the Book Agents at New York and Cincinnati, with other papers relative to the Church property suits, beg leave respectfully to report, that,

"Whereas, the final decree in the Church suit at New York is not yet rendered, and as the suit at Cincinnati is not yet tried; and

"Whereas, in the judgment of this Committee, the General conference can not at present take any enlightened action respecting the course which it may be proper to take under contingencies yet to arise,

"Therefore, your Committee recommend the following resolutions for adoption by the General conference:

"Resolved, That the decision of the question of appeal from the decision of Judge Nelson, and the settlement of the whole business at New York, be referred to a commission of five persons, including the Book Agents at that place; and that the case in Cincinnati, in like manner, be referred to a commission of five persons, including the Book Agents at that place.

"Resolved, That the additional members of said commissions be appointed by this conference by ballot, and that each commission be, and hereby is, clothed with full powers to act.

"In behalf of the Committee.

"JOHN DAVIS, Chairman.

"Boston, May 21, 1852."

11. After the decision of the Cincinnati case by Judge Leavitt, Judge M'Lean was exceedingly desirous of having the whole matter settled. As a legal question, the Judge was fully convinced that Judge Leavitt gave the only true, just, and legal decision of the case, and that Judge Nelson did not understand the case which he decided. Accordingly, influenced by the good feelings of peace, Judge M'Lean opened a correspondence with the southern commissioners on the subject, and then with the commissioners at New York. The result was that he and the two parties met in New York, between whom the following correspondence took place, which we furnish from the minutes of the meetings held, from a copy certified to us by the secretary of the meeting:

Saturday, November 26, 1853.

A meeting of the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the Church suit at New York, having been called at the instance of Hon. J. M'Lean, with the consent of the respective commissioners, was held in the Mission Rooms in the city of New York.

Present, Hon. John M'Lean. From the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, J. Early, appointee, and C. B. Parsons, A. L. P. Green, and W. A. Smith, commissioners.

From the Methodist Episcopal Church, G. Peck, J. S. Porter, T. Carlton, and Z. Phillips, surviving members of the commission on the Church suit in New York.

Hon. John M'Lean was appointed Chairman of the meeting.

The meeting was then opened with prayer by Dr. Early, after which Z. Phillips was appointed secretary.

The proposition made by the commissioners at New York to Judge M'Lean, dated May 23, 1853, and which is in the following words, was read:

"HON. JOHN M'LEAN—DEAR SIR,—The undersigned, commissioners appointed by the late General conference to take charge of the Church suit in New York, having convened, by the request of Bishop Waugh, for the purpose of taking into consideration certain suggestions made by yourself with reference to an amicable settlement of the difficulties between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, after deliberation, have unanimously agreed in the following conclusion:

"(1.) That an amicable settlement of the said controversy is exceedingly desirable.

"(2.) That, with the concurrence of the western commissioners, we think it would be just and equal to adopt the following principles of settlement:

"First. The ratio to be settled according to the number of the preachers at the time of the separation.

"*Secondly.* The southern preachers to be benefited by the proceeds of the Book Concern equally with the northern preachers; that is, they shall receive *pro rata* according to the amount of dividends which have been made to northern preachers since the separation; and inasmuch as the payment of dividends to the south has been deferred, interest on each annual amount to be added.

"*Thirdly.* The south shall share *pro rata* in the balance of the property, or capital. If a specific partition can be agreed upon by the parties, that shall be the mode, otherwise a sale shall be effected, and the proceeds shall be divided.

"(3.) That we most readily accept your voluntary proposition to become the medium of communication between the parties concerned.

"(4.) In connection with the western commissioners, we will most cheerfully meet the southern commissioners in New York, or any convenient locality to be agreed upon, for the purpose of considering the details of a final settlement of the question, aided by your presence and counsel, at such time as may be convenient for you and the respective parties concerned.

"Your Honor will perceive that in the above conclusions we most fully consent to the basis of settlement proposed in your letters on one condition alone, and that is that the western commissioners unite with us in the proposition made by you. We regard the two Concerns as substantially one, and, consequently, consider it indispensable, in the present position of the litigation, that those who represent the two Concerns should act in harmony. And we can not but express a hope that you will be able to present to the western commissioners such views of the expediency and importance of an amicable settlement of this unpleasant and unprofitable litigation, as will induce them to enter into the proposed arrangement. Should it be necessary for the eastern and western commissioners to meet previous to the general meeting of the commissioners north and south, we will meet them at any place convenient for both parties—say Baltimore or Pittsburg. We shall be happy to hear from you as you progress in the business, and hope you will communicate with us freely, making any suggestions which you may deem important to the object had in view. Please write to Messrs. Carlton & Phillips, of New York, who will correspond with the balance of the commissioners, as occasion may require. We can not better conclude this communication than by giving you our most cordial thanks for your kind, and, as we think, wise and timely intervention with a view to a result which we have no doubt, if accomplished, will save American Methodism from serious disparagement.

"Praying most fervently that God may open the way to complete success in your laudable and Christian undertaking, we are,

"Honored sir, your brethren in Christ,

"Signed by

THOMAS CARLTON,

"Z. PHILLIPS,

"G. PECK,

"JOHN DAVIS,

"JOHN S. PORTER."

A copy of the above proceedings was forwarded to the western commissioners, and after due deliberation they declined to cooperate with the commissioners at New York.

Whereupon, the commissioners met at New York on the 11th of August, 1853, of the proceedings of which meeting the following is a copy:

At a meeting of the commissioners on the

Church suit, in New York, called on the 11th of August, 1853, there were present John S. Porter, Thomas Carlton, and Zebulon Phillips. Absent, George Peck and John Davis.

It was agreed by the undersigned—provided Messrs. Peck and Davis concur—that this commission proceed to settle the claim of the Southern Church against the Book Concern in New York, agreeably to the proposition submitted by this commission to the Church, South, through the Hon. John M'Lean, one of the Justices of the Supreme Court of the United States.

It was, also, further agreed, that if the concurrence of Messrs. Peck and Davis be obtained, as above required, that we will meet the southern commissioners at such time in this city during the months of October and November, as may accord with the convenience of his Honor, Judge M'Lean.

Signed by

JOHN S. PORTER,  
THOMAS CARLTON,  
Z. PHILLIPS.

*New York, August 11, 1853.*

Before a copy of the proceedings reached Mr. Davis he departed this life. The concurrence of Dr. Peck was duly obtained.

The foregoing papers having been read, the southern commissioners presented the following as their reply:

"The southern commissioners submit that, whereas, we informed Judge M'Lean in correspondence that we would agree to the terms of settlement proposed by the northern commissioners and now read before this meeting, and do herein state that we agree to these terms and will be governed by them in the settlement of our rights of property."

After an exchange of views, it was moved that when we adjourn we adjourn to meet at 9 o'clock on Monday morning.

On motion, adjourned.

*Monday morning, November 28, 1853.*

The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, met agreeably to adjournment at the Mission Rooms, all being present.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

The meeting was opened by prayer by Dr. Peck. The minutes of Saturday were read and amended.

After considerable discussion of the proposition respecting dividends, it was, on motion, voted to adjourn till three o'clock.

*Monday, 3 o'clock, P. M.*

Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Waived the proposition concerning the dividends for the time; when the commissioners of the Church, South, inquired respecting the next proposition.

An exchange of views followed this inquiry, When the convention adjourned till 10 o'clock to-morrow.

*Tuesday, November 29th.*

The commissioners met pursuant to adjournment, the members all being present.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Prayer by Dr. Green.

Minutes of yesterday read and approved.

An exchange of views was continued for a season, after which

The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church proposed that they would pay to the

Church, South, for their interest in the Book Concern, exclusive of the dividends, their *pro rata* share of five hundred thousand dollars.

On the presentation of this proposition, it was moved to adjourn till 10 o'clock to-morrow, that the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church may have time to propose a statement of the property of the Book Concern and its value.

The motion was adopted.

*Wednesday morning, November 30th.*

Commissioners met at 10 o'clock, pursuant to adjournment. All the members present.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Prayer by brother Porter.

Minutes of yesterday read and amended.

The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church presented the statement provided for yesterday, which was read as follows: (Document C.)

Valuation of the property of the Methodist Book Concern.

REAL ESTATE:	
House and lot on Seventh-street.....	\$9,500.00
Do. do. Sixth-street.....	9,000.00
Building and lots on Mulberry and Mott-streets, including engines, machinery, and warming apparatus.....	100,000.00
CASH:	
Stock bonds.....	49,500.00
PRINTING OFFICE:	
Eleven Adams Presses and one Cylinder do..	13,500.00
Presses, Fixtures in Drying Room.....	4,000.00
Composing rooms, Type, Cases, and Stereotype Foundry.....	3,000.00
Stereotype Plates, Engravings, Wood Cuts, Lithographs, etc.....	50,000.00
BENDRY:	
Presses, Tools, and Materials.....	6,000.00
Books and Sheet Stocks.....	100,000.00
Paper.....	8,000.00
Furniture, Horse, Wagon, etc.....	500.00
Presses held in the south.....	20,783.93
Debts.....	105,000.00

Dividends..... \$478,783.93

Dividends due south, after deducting interest on property held by the south..... \$56,089.96

Liabilities..... 57,964.97 \$113,954.93

\$364,829.00

After an exchange of views respecting the proposition and the statement accompanying it, the southern commissioners asked leave to withdraw for consideration, which being granted, they retired. On their return they presented the following paper, which was read: (Document D.)

"The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church having submitted to us a proposition to cancel all our claims upon the property of the Book Concern in the city of New York, by paying us our dividends in the same ratio they have been made, *per capita*, to the northern conferences, with interest on the same till paid, and then allow us a *pro rata* division of five hundred thousand dollars as the capital of the Concern, the number of preachers on the published Minutes of 1844 being taken as the basis of calculation, and we be charged with the value of the southern presses as so much received in payment of our portion, we respond:

"That we accept the above proposition, *provided* they strike out the charge for southern presses, as they have not fixed any value on northern presses out of this city, which presses cost them as much, or more, than the southern; and provided, further, that they pay us a dividend for the year 1852.

"Signed, in behalf of the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

"W. M. A. SMITH, Chairman."

After which, on motion, the commission adjourned till 3 o'clock, P. M.

*Wednesday afternoon, 3 o'clock.*

Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Minutes of the morning read and approved.

The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church submitted the following paper, in which they declined to accept the proposition from the southern commissioners:

"Whereas, the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have accepted the proposition submitted by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the condition that the item charged as property, held by the Church, South, and the interest thereon, be remitted; and whereas, the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church are constrained to decline according to that condition; and whereas, the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church are anxious to promote the settlement of the question occupying the attention of the respective commissioners; therefore, the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church propose, as a farther consideration, to the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to set over and assign to such commissioners all debts due from members of the conferences in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the time of its separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church, for the use and benefit of the said Church, South, with the interest accruing thereon; a schedule of which debts is hereunto annexed; provided the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, will take in payment of what may be due them from the Methodist Episcopal Church the stock now belonging to the Methodist Book Concern in the Depository at Charleston, South Carolina, with the money, notes, accounts, and other assets belonging to said Concern, in said Depository."

After an exchange of views, adjourned till 10 o'clock, Thursday morning.

*Thursday morning, 10 o'clock.*

Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Prayer by Dr. Parsons.

Dr. Smith, on behalf of the southern commissioners, submitted the following paper, which, on being read, was accepted by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and signed by the respective members of each commission: (Document E.)

"Whereas, the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church think the proposition we submitted to them should not be acceded to, and the one submitted by them not being desirable to us, we beg leave to submit the following, which we hope they will find it agreeable to their sense of justice to adopt; namely, *First*, We agree to take, in settlement of our claim, under the decree of Judge Nelson, the sum of one hundred and ninety-one thousand dollars in cash, together with the Richmond, Charleston, and Nashville printing establishments, and all the debts on books and periodicals, as per schedule submitted, marked A and B, and the New York Book Concern from individuals

residing within the geographical limits of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"*Secondly.* The debts referred to shall be assigned to Rev. Dr. Early, appointee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, by the Book Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and all reasonable assurance shall be afforded by them to facilitate their collection.

"*Thirdly.* The amount due as dividends shall be paid at an early period, as suggested by the Agents of the Book Concern, and the remainder, after deducting the amount of dividends from the sum of one hundred and ninety one thousand dollars, shall be paid in such installments as may be agreed upon between the parties.

"Signed, in behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South,

W. A. SMITH,  
"A. L. P. GREEN,  
"C. B. PARSONS."

We accept the proposition above submitted by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

G. PECK,  
J. S. PORTER,  
T. CARLTON,  
Z. PHILLIPS,

*Commissioners of M. E. Church, New York.*

After an exchange of congratulations, it was moved that Drs. Peck and Smith be appointed a committee to prepare resolutions expressive of our appreciation of the important services of his Honor, Judge M'Lean, in promoting an adjustment of our difficulties, and that the same committee prepare a statement, embracing a history of the adjustment of the case for the public press. Carried.

It was also moved that Judge M'Lean be requested to prepare a decree in the case proper, to be entered in the Circuit Court of the United States for the southern district of New York.

On motion, adjourned till 3 o'clock, P. M.

*Thursday afternoon, 3 o'clock.*

Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Dr. Smith, on behalf of the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, presented the following paper: (Document F.)

"The commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, respectfully submit further to the consideration of the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the subject of our claims upon the 'Chartered Fund,' as provided for in the 11th section of the plan of separation, whether they have any proposition to make in regard to this claim, or can give any direction to the matter which promises to be satisfactory to the parties concerned.

"Wm. A. SMITH, *Chairman.*"

To the paper submitted by Dr. Smith, relating to the interest of the Southern Church in the Chartered Fund, we reply that we have no official connection with the question, nor authority to make any proposition respecting it.

Voted, that when we adjourn we adjourn to meet at 10 o'clock to-morrow morning.

Dr. Peck, from the committee to prepare a statement for the public press, reported as follows:

"The undersigned, a committee appointed for the purpose of preparing a statement for publication of the action of the commissioners upon the question in litigation between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in relation to the

property of the Book Concern in New York, report the following:

"The Hon. John M'Lean, having voluntarily undertaken a correspondence with the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church and those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and having received assurances from both parties of a disposition to come to an amicable settlement of the matter in litigation, and having been invited to be present at a meeting of the aforesaid commissioners, and to aid them with his counsel, met with them at the Mission Rooms, 199 Mulberry-street, New York, on the 26th ultimo, and, by the unanimous request of the commissioners, acted as chairman.

"After a careful and most friendly examination of the whole question, the southern commissioners made a proposition for a settlement of their claim, which the commissioners of the New York Concern accepted. Nothing now remains to be done to consummate this desirable adjustment of a most troublesome litigation, but the execution of the necessary papers and the arrangements for a final decree of the United States Court for the Southern District of New York, now in session in this city. This settlement has been agreed upon by the parties without the arbitrament of a third party, and is to each entirely satisfactory. The conclusion of this settlement was followed by thanksgivings to God, and most hearty expressions of Christian love and mutual confidence. The feelings which prevailed among the commissioners of the two Churches we may hope is a true type of that which will prevail hereafter throughout the bounds of our common Methodism north and south.

"Much credit is to be awarded to his Honor, Judge M'Lean, for his agency in the completion of this important and desirable arrangement; and we doubt not but that this act will stand prominently among those of his long and brilliant career which have given him so enviable a position before the Christian public.

"The details of the settlement will be made known to the public when the final decree of the Court shall transpire.

"GEORGE PECK,  
"WM. A. SMITH."

The above report was unanimously adopted.

*Friday, December 2, 1853.*

Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Prayer by Z. Phillips.

It was moved and carried, that the commissioners of the Church suit at Cincinnati be officially informed of the settlement of the suit at New York by the respective commissioners.

It was agreed, also, that of the sum due to the Church, South, for dividends, should be paid as follows: Ten thousand dollars at the time of executing the bonds; forty thousand dollars on the first of January less the amount due the Methodist Book Concern from Rev. John Early; and two thousand dollars on the first of March thereafter; and for the remaining sum due the said Church a bond for sixteen thousand dollars, payable on the first of February, 1855, and seven bonds of fifteen thousand dollars each, payable on the first day of February, in 1856, 1857, 1858, 1859, 1860, 1861, and 1862, with interest on each annually.

Adjourned till 3 o'clock, P. M.

*Friday afternoon, 3 o'clock.*

Commissioners met pursuant to adjournment.

Members all present.

Judge M'Lean in the chair.

Judge M'Lean read the copy of the decree which he had prepared, to be entered in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York, which was signed by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the Church suit at New York, and by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

After prayer by T. Carlton, commissioners adjourned.

Signed, Z. PHILLIPS, *Secretary.*

12. The following is the decree of the Court, given December 8, 1853, as published in the newspapers generally,\* and entered on motion of the counsel of both parties:

"DECREE.

"William A. Smith, a citizen of the state of Virginia; Alexander P. Green, a citizen of Tennessee; Charles B. Parsons, of Kentucky, on behalf of themselves and others, vs. George Lane, Levi Scott, George Peck, and Nathan Bangs, citizens of New York.

"This case having been heard in May, 1851, and argued by the counsel for both parties, and the Court having continued the case under advisement, to a subsequent term, at which term an interlocutory decree was entered sustaining the right of the complainants, and referring all matters touching the property, to the clerk of the Circuit Court, as master, who was required to report thereon, and who made a report at a previous term, and exceptions being made to said report, they were argued by the counsel for both parties, and the Court being divided on certain points, they were certified to the Supreme Court for decision, under the new act of Congress, and which points are still pending in the Supreme Court.

"And the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north, and the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which commissioners having met in the city of New York, and being duly authorized by their respective General conferences, north and south, to represent the parties in this case, entered into an investigation of the matters in controversy, with the view to an amicable adjustment of the same, and the following terms were agreed upon:

"Whereas, the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church think the proposition we submitted to them should not be acceded to, and the one submitted by them not being desirable to us, we beg leave to substitute the following, which we hope they will find it agreeable to their sense of justice to adopt, namely:

"First. We agree to take in settlement of our claim, under the decree of Judge Nelson, the sum of \$191,000 in cash, together with the Richmond, Charleston, and Nashville printing establishments, and all the debts on the books and periodicals, as per schedule submitted marked A and B, due the New York Book Concern, from individuals residing within the geographical limits of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"Second. The debts referred to shall be assigned to the Rev. Dr. J. Early, appointee of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and all

reasonable assistance shall be afforded by them to facilitate their collection.

"Third. The amount due us as dividends shall be paid us at an early period, as suggested by the Agents of the Book Concern; and the remainder, after deducting the amount of dividends from the sum of \$191,000, shall be paid in such installments as may be agreed upon between the parties.

"Signed on behalf of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"WILLIAM A. SMITH,  
"A. L. P. GREEN,  
"C. B. PARSONS.

"We accept the proposition above submitted by commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"New York, December 1, 1842.

"GEORGE PECK,  
"THOMAS CARLTON,  
"JOHN S. PORTER,  
"Z. PHILLIPS,

"Commissioners, Methodist Episcopal Church.

"And it is further agreed by the parties, that \$70,000 shall be paid as follows: Ten thousand dollars on the filing of this decree, forty thousand dollars on the 5th day of January next, and the remaining twenty thousand dollars on the 1st of March next. The residue of the \$191,000, amounting to the sum of \$121,000, shall be paid as follows: Sixteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1855; fifteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1856; fifteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1857; fifteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1858; fifteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1859; fifteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1860; fifteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1861, and fifteen thousand dollars on the 1st of February, 1862; all of said payments to be made by the defendants to the legally-constituted agent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; the defendants to pay the interest every year on all deferred payments, at the rate of seven per cent., and at the same rate on the payments to be made on the 5th day of March next.

"And the Court having duly considered the arguments of the parties, as before stated, do hereby order and decree the several payments as above stipulated, and the interests thereon, to be made by the Methodist Episcopal Church, through their legally-constituted agents, to the agent of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, at the terms specified. And the Court do further order and decree, that the several sums above specified, shall be a chance upon the real estate described in the bill, till full payment shall be made. And the Court do further order and decree, that the defendants shall pay the taxable costs of this suit within ninety days from the filing of this decree.

"And it being suggested that the western commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church may be desirous of voluntarily appearing in this suit, for the adjustment of their controversy with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, this cause is ordered to be continued till the first Monday of April next, with leave to the complainants to amend the bill so as to make the western commissioners parties, if they shall desire, to voluntarily appear, etc."

13. A few brief remarks may here be offered in concluding the mere history of the New York case.

It was certainly a cause of rejoicing to see the

\* W., December 21, 1853. Scraps, VII, pp. 740.

matter settled in almost any way. And we do not wonder that the parties in New York expressed themselves on the occasion by uttering declarations of satisfaction at the termination of the legal contest. Previous to this the southern press had uttered accusations against the Methodist Episcopal Church, of perjury on the part of its commissioners, and of unjust grasping on the part of the Church itself.\* Now, all seems to have been made up, and every thing made right.†

The New York preachers, at a meeting held December 5, 1853, passed the following preamble and resolution:

"Whereas, the long and unhappy litigation with regard to the Church property located in

the city of New York, has now been terminated by a fraternal arrangement, mutually satisfactory to the honored commissioners of the Churches represented respectively; and whereas, in this consummation, the commissioners of our Church have pursued, as we believe, a magnanimous and Christian policy in arranging the difficulty upon Christian principles, when the technical impediments of the law were removed; therefore,

"Resolved, That we, ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of the cities of New York, Brooklyn, and Williamsburg, do rejoice in the result, and do thank God, that the unhappy difference is so wisely, amicably, and satisfactorily brought to a close."

## CHAPTER LV.

### THE NEW YORK LAWSUIT.

1. WE have seen in the preceding chapter, that all constitutional, amicable, and legal terms of arbitration were spurned by the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. These commissioners insisted that their claim, and the grounds of it, should be first acknowledged, and the mere amount should become the subject of arbitration; and not only so, but that the constitution of the Church should be destroyed to suit the new theory of the revolutionists. Of course no such enormous, unjust, and unchristian claims could be met. Any loss or gain in the money line would be a small consideration, indeed, compared with breaking the solemn covenants of constitutional principles. Hence the Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church had no alternative but to meet an unjust and unfair lawsuit.

Accordingly, Henry B. Bascom and others brought suit against George Lane and others, which was heard before the Hon. Judges, Nelson and Betts, in the Circuit Court of the United States for the Southern District of New York, May 17-29, 1851.

The counsel for plaintiffs consisted of Mr. D. Lord, Hon. Reverdy Johnson, and Mr. Johnson, junior.

The counsel for defendants were Hon. Rufus Choate, Mr. George Wood, and Mr. E. L. Fancher.

2. Mr. Lord, in behalf of the plaintiffs, opened the case with a few preliminary remarks. Among them he asserted all but omnipotent power for the General conference, even to the setting aside the sixth Restriction; that the General Rule on slavery referred only to the African slave-trade; that the General conference authorized a division, etc. He had learned his lesson pretty well from his southern teachers, who inducted him fully into all the cardinal points of their new ecclesiastical theories, which they found necessary to adopt in order to carry out practically their secession.‡

3. In the "bill of complaints," the complainants make out a long list, the leading points of which we give, that our readers may understand the grounds of their complaints:

That before June 8th, 1844, there existed in the United States of America, a voluntary association, known as the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America; not incorporated by any legal enactment, but composed of bishops, preachers, and members, about 1,109,960 in the United States and territories, united in one organized body, by certain doctrines of faith and morals, and by certain rules of government and discipline.

That the general government of the Methodist Episcopal Church was vested in one general body, called the General conference, and in subordinate bodies, called annual conferences, and in bishops and traveling ministers and preachers.

The great object of the said Church was the diffusion of the principles of the Savior of mankind—good morals, pure religion, piety, and holiness among the people of the world.

The complainants allege that the constitution, organization, forms of government, rules of discipline, and articles of religion, are well known, and are contained in the Discipline.

That differences having arisen between the northern and southern members, upon the administration of the Church government, with reference to the ownership of slaves, as threatened fearfully to impair the usefulness of the Church; and this was with the members a question of grave and serious importance, whether a separation ought not to take place by some geographical boundary, so that the Methodist Episcopal Church should thereafter constitute two separate and distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches.

That in view of this the plan of separation was passed in the year 1844.

That the General conference of 1844 had full power to pass these resolutions, and that they became of binding force and validity.

That the southern conferences adopted these resolutions; that the delegates to the convention, on the basis of the resolutions in the plan, and the convention adopted resolutions, renouncing the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal

\* N., October 28, 1852; S., November 5, 1852, and October 28, 1852. Scraps, VII, pp. 728, 729.

† R., December 15, 1853. Scraps, VII, p. 736. S., December 16, 1853. Scraps, VII, p. 737.

‡ See pp. 1-8 of "The Methodist Church Property Case, New York: published by Lane and Scott, 200 Mulberry-street, 1851. 372 pp., octavo."

Church, and constituting the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

That the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on the 2d of July, 1845, adopted resolutions acknowledging the authority of the plan, and action of the south on it.

That by virtue of the foregoing proceedings, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, as it existed before the year 1844, became divided into two distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches, with distinct and independent powers, situated north and south of the line of division.

That by force of the aforesaid proceedings, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, became entitled to its proportion of all Church property, without any alteration of the sixth Restrictive Article; and were the change in the sixth Restriction necessary, a majority of three-fourths of all the members which voted directly on the question, has been obtained.

That the property of the Book Concern in New York, being about seven hundred thousand dollars, is now in the hands of Lane and Scott.

That these Agents, after the separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two distinct Churches, paid over to the conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, their proportion of dividends as fixed for the year 1845; that since that time they have refused to pay. But the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, instructed their commissioners to demand payment.

That the southern commissioners applied to N. Bangs, G. Peck, and James B. Finley to divide the funds of the Book Concern, but all in vain; although they have used all honorable and fair means to get a settlement.

The complainants allege that they are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and that as such they have a personal interest in the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, through the defendants, as Agents and trustees appointed by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

That the defendants have, also, a personal interest in the property of the Book Concern.

That the entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is about 460,553; and the entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church is about 639,066; so that all can not be brought in as complainants or as defendants.

The complainants further say that they bring in this bill by authority of their Church, and for the benefit of all their ministers and members.

That the complainants and those whom they represent are greatly aggrieved and injured by the oppressive course pursued by the Methodist Episcopal Church, in their refusal to divide the property according to equity, and in pursuance of the plan of separation, and that they are without relief except in a court of equity.

That the defendants be required to provide a full and particular account of all the property.

And then a decree is prayed for.\*

4. In the "Answer" to the "Complaint" the defendants declare in substance as follows, in reply to the allegations of the prosecutors.

The defendants, with some few exceptions, admit some of the first statements of the complaint.

But the defendants assert that in respect to the differences alleged in reference to the ownership of slaves, that no such differences had sprung

up in the Church between the northern and southern members prior to the session of the General conference of 1844, which were attended with the consequences alleged by the plaintiffs.

They also deny that, prior to 1844, it ever was a grave question, whether a separation ought to take place by geographical boundaries, so that the Methodist Episcopal Church should constitute two distinct Churches; or that it was "thereupon" the plan of separation, so called, was passed.

That these differences grew principally out of the voluntary connection of a bishop with slavery; that the rules of the Discipline and the uniform action of the General conference have always been adverse to human slavery, it being always regarded a great evil. Prior to 1844, the whole Church united in proper efforts for its mitigation and removal; that ministers never held slaves except in cases which, under the laws of the slaveholding states, were deemed necessary; that the Discipline never contained any law respecting the holding of slaves by a bishop; that the General conference always refused to elect a slaveholder to that office; that in 1844 it was first known that the Rev. James O. Andrew was a slaveholder; that the proceedings had against him were in exact accordance with the Discipline, and the usage obtained under it.

That the adoption of the resolution in his case gave offense to the minority of the conference; that these delegates presented their declaration and Protest; that the southern delegates, without the sanction or authority of the General conference, addressed a circular to their constituents, expressing their own opinions in favor of separation, and advising the southern annual conferences to elect delegates to the Louisville convention; that these annual conferences, or portions of them, at this convention withdrew from the Methodist Episcopal Church and formed a new Church, called the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; and the plaintiffs and those whom they represent are adherents thereto, and no longer members of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and these proceedings were not authorized by the rules of government or by the constitutional law of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but were in plain hostility to its requirements.

That the resolution in the case of Bishop Andrew, instead of moving to secession, called for submission from all the delegates, ministers, and members of the Church, and all proceedings in the case of Bishop Andrew were regular, constitutional, and valid; that the voluntary connection of Bishop Andrew with slavery was justly considered as "improper conduct;" and that each bishop is amenable to the General conference, who have "power to expel him for improper conduct if they see necessary;" and that the resolution and proceedings in the case of Bishop Andrew were in accordance with the good government of the Church.

That the resolutions in the so-called plan of separation were not duly or legally passed, and the General conference had no power to pass them, except the recommendation to pass the sixth Restriction; and this never had any authority, as it was only recommended, but not passed.

To show the extent of the constitutional power of the General conference, the defendants state that from 1784 to 1808 the General conference was composed of all the preachers who had traveled four years; but in 1808, on the recommendation of a majority of the annual confer-

\* Document, No. 74.

ences, a delegated conference was constituted, to consist of delegates chosen according to a certain ratio. And the whole body of preachers, in 1808, assembled in general convention, by such constitution adopted the present plan of a delegated General conference, investing it with the powers of the whole body of preachers, as a General conference, but under the limitations of the Restrictive Articles; nor have the delegated General conference ever claimed any power to amend the Restrictive Articles except as they prescribe; nor have any alterations ever been made, except in conformity with their provisions.

This constitution, embodying these Restrictive Articles, is and was in 1844 the fundamental law of the Church; prohibited any change so as to do away Episcopacy. These rules prohibit the exercise of any power of the General conference to do away the privileges of ministers or members by trial of a committee or of an appeal; or to appropriate the proceeds of the Book Concern or Chartered Fund to any purpose except for the benefit of the traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, their wives, widows, and children. They submit whether the resolutions of the plan are not at variance with the constitution of the Church.

That the so-called plan of separation looked toward certain conditions; and these conditions never happened; so that this so-called plan has never had any force and validity, and is absolutely null and void.

That this so-called plan, whether constitutional or not, was never ratified by the annual conferences, and, therefore, the southern conferences had no authority to act in the premises; and hence the southern annual conferences acted on their own responsibility without any authority from the General conference of 1844.

That the delegates to the convention were not elected on the basis of the plan or of any resolutions of the General conference of 1844. So that the convention did not adopt their resolutions—to organize a new Church, or to dismember the Methodist Episcopal Church. Wherefore, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, exists solely on the acts and doings of the individual bishops, ministers, and members attached to such Church, South, proceeding upon their own responsibility; and they have, therefore, withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church. And these annual conferences, represented in the convention, did not constitute a separate Church under the provision of the plan of separation.

That the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in conforming their administration to the resolutions in the plan, limit its authority to their own administration for the time being, as the Methodist Episcopal Church was never divided into two distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches.

That the Methodist Episcopal Church, as it existed before 1844, was never divided into two distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches. And the withdrawal of some of her bishops, ministers, and members, was an unauthorized separation from the Church.

That, independently of the proceedings of the southern delegates, the acts of the General conference, alone, did not produce a state of things in the south which rendered the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states; but the way for such separation was prepared and consummated by the revolutionary measures of the south, begun at the seat and nearly at the time of the General conference,

before the predicted state of things could be produced by the acts of the General conference.

That the regulations of the plan as to boundaries have been violated by the Church, South, in many instances, which are specified in the Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Ohio conference, and these infractions are sanctioned by the General conference, the annual conferences, and bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

That the General conference of 1848 did declare that the fundamental conditions of said plan had failed; that the failure of any one of them rendered the whole null and void; that the practical workings of the plan were incompatible with the constitutional principles of the Church; that the whole plan was null and void; and these steps were fully within the power of the General conference; and that the so-called plan, in no event, authorized a division or reorganization of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two separate Churches; and that there exists no power in the General conference to pass any act which either effectuates, authorizes, or sanctions a division of said Church.

That all these bishops, ministers, and members who have attached themselves by their own will and act to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, including the plaintiffs, have violently withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and separated themselves from its privileges and government, and have, therefore, forfeited all claim, either in law or equity, to any portion of the funds in question.

The defendants further deny that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, became entitled, in law or equity, to any of the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church up to the time of separation; and more especially to the property of the Book Concern or Chartered Fund, without the change of the sixth Restriction; or that the vote of the majority of three-fourths of the annual conferences has been obtained.

They also deny that the principal funds of the Book Concern were obtained by voluntary contributions; and so far as these funds were voluntary and contributed by the south, they were contributed for the object for which the Book Concern was designed; many others have contributed who have since left the Church, yet such seceders never made any claim for their share of such contributions; nor can the plaintiffs make any claims to reach what they gave by voluntary contributions.

That the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, never owned the Book Concern, as this always has been, beneficially, the property of the traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and if such ceased to travel or ceased to belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church, they forfeit for themselves and for their families all ownership to these funds, in any way. The statute of incorporation is then recited and referred to.

That from the year 1796 to 1844 the avails of the Book Concern have been devoted solely for the benefit of preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to them only.

That as the recommendation of the General conference of 1844 to change the sixth Restriction has not been concurred in by the annual conferences, therefore the traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are not entitled to any portion of the funds, as they do not belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

That the dividends awarded to the southern conferences in 1845, were awarded previous to



the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and such payment was made without any reference to the so-called plan of separation. And to withhold these dividends does not deprive them of any of their rights.

That the resolutions of the Petersburg General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, are entirely nugatory in regard to the property and funds referred to, and the matters pertaining to them.

That the preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have not the same right with those of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the funds aforesaid; nor have the lay members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and never had, any pecuniary interest in these funds.

The defendants state that they have only the same interest in these funds as is held in common with all traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, except as officers and members of the corporation in trust for others.

That the claim of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to any proportional part of these funds is not clear, but is at least doubtful in law, and the defendants can not safely pay over the same to them.\*

The Rev. James B. Finley, who was commissioner, and sued with the commissioners, declared that he had no more personal interest in the fund than other preachers of his Church; that no such funds were in his possession or under his control; that the resolutions of the plan had no force for want of the confirmation of the annual conferences, and that he, therefore, can make no appropriation of such funds.†

5. After the plaintiffs had entered their complaint and the defendants had furnished their answer, Mr. Lord presented to the Court the proofs to be referred to. These consisted of certain portions of the Discipline in its various editions; the entire proceedings in regard to Canada from 1828 to 1836; address of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church to the General conference of 1840; address of British conference to General conference of 1840, and the reply to it; report on the Westmoreland case in 1840; proceedings in the cases of Bishop Andrew and Mr. Harding; the Protest; the answer to the Protest; the address of the southern delegates to the south; the reports of the southern conferences on the subject of secession; the report on organization; decision of the Court of Appeals of Kentucky, etc. All these papers are published in the New York Methodist Church case.‡

We may barely remark that the strength of the southern proofs consisted in the confused perversions of the true state of the question, by lugging in all the new theories of the south. When this confused mass was introduced and made prominent, it is no wonder that the most erroneous conclusions were come to by the Court, as the issue proved.

6. Before commencing the argument, Mr. Lord presented the *points of complainants* as follows:

"I. The capital arising from the profits of the Book Concern was the result of the common labors and services of all the members of all the conferences. It was not a charitable fund merely from donations; it was a fund of earnings to make up the deficiency of compensation for services rendered, and to provide for those who earned it when they became incapable of

labor, and for those who were dependent upon them.

"II. It was distributed by the annual conferences, but belonged in actual right to the beneficiaries, and as such was, and is, protected by the sixth Restrictive Rule.

"III. The title of the beneficiaries, at the time immediately before the separation of the Church into two parts, was perfect; and it can not be defeated or forfeited without a clear proof of breach of condition by the beneficiaries.

"IV. Even if a breach of condition by the annual conferences, by whom the fund was to be distributed, could forfeit, there has been no forfeiture, because the General conference of 1844 had the power to consent to an amicable division of the conferences on grave causes, touching the general efficiency of the Church.

"V. The General conference of 1844 did, in fact, and on a proper ground, consent to such division, to take effect immediately, in the choice of the southern conferences, and without any condition.

"VI. The General conference of the Church, South, was duly and properly organized, according to the plan of separation, and is, in every respect, as properly a General conference within its limits as the General conference of the Churches north.

"VII. The beneficiaries of the fund in question, therefore, who belonged to the southern conferences, did not, by the new organization, lose any rights, nor were they disqualified in any manner from claiming their share of the funds. And such claim is appropriately made through the General conference, South, which succeeds to the place of the prior General conference of the whole Church.

"VIII. An account should, therefore, be ordered of the proportion of the profits of the Book Concern, according to the numbers in the Minutes of 1844, and at the same ratio of the profits since; also, the capital of the Fund should be decreed to be divided in the same way, and paid over to the commissioners South as new trustees, or to proper trustees to be appointed by the Court.

"The profits of the past are to be subject to distribution, according to the directions of the General conference, South, whether the fund remain with the present trustees, or be paid over to new trustees.

"D. D. LORD, *Solicitor of complainants.*

"R. LORD, } *Of Counsel.*"\*

Mr. Lord, in his plea, took a wide range, occupying 61 pages octavo, in small print; yet presenting nothing important beyond what is contained in the *points* just quoted, and in the complaint of the plaintiffs. We will, however, cull a few of his remarks and arguments.†

He stated that, except the mode of its administration, the claim of the south is, in no sense, a charity, but a right; that the fund was the result of the common labors of all the members of all the conferences. It was not a charitable fund merely from donations; it was one which grew out of beneficial services. The southern conferences did not forfeit their right as beneficiaries. A man may remain a most perfect Methodist and yet change his allegiance. The claim is not connected, except impliedly, with the ecclesiastical connection. A man does not forfeit the claim by any technical

\* See Document, No. 75. New York Case, pp. 13-25.  
† Document, No. 75. † New York Case, pp. 26-147.

\* New York Case, p. 148. † Id., pp. 149-200

departure from one or another mode of government. It must apply to faith and practice. It is fatal to this view of Mr. Lord that the constitution, statutes, and practice of the Methodist Episcopal Church always confined the appropriation of these funds to those in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and any preacher who seceded, or was expelled, lost all claims to the funds. It is equally fatal to his position that the principles of law on religious trusts teach differently from Mr. Lord.

Mr. Lord argued that the General conference of 1844 divided the Church, and employed the common, trite arguments of the south to support that position. We need not dwell here, as this point has been fully discussed in the foregoing pages.

The case of Canada is then taken up, with no success, however, as he concedes that they could not receive any dividends because the sixth Restriction was not altered.

To justify the south he gives reasons for their organization. He lays it down that the governing body may consent to a separation of the Church into as many general governing bodies as the necessities of the case may require. Physical difficulties may grow out of extension, difference of climate, the temper of the people, political considerations, size of the body, etc. All this is true, but irrelevant, because the entire governing bodies—namely, the General conference and the annual conferences—without the petition or consent of the people, did not either sanction or authorize it, though they *consented* to it, as they would to any other withdrawal from the Church.

Mr. Lord then makes comments on the plan as authorizing division on the case of Bishop Andrew, and then quotes the decision of the Maysville case. He follows closely the instructions of his southern teachers, whose principles we have fully considered in the former part of this historical discussion.

7. Mr. E. L. Fancher, after the plea of Mr. Lord, proceeded to adduce some documents.\* He quoted the address of Bishops Soule, Hedding, Andrew, Waugh, and Morris to the General conference of 1840, in which the following declarations are made:

"The General conference, being the highest judiciary of the Church, is not subject to the official direction and constraint of the president any further than the *order* of business and the preservation of decorum are concerned; and even this is subject to *rules* originating in the body. The *right* to transact business with respect to matter, mode, and order of time, is vested in the conference, and limited only by constitutional provisions; and of these provisions, so far as their official acts are concerned, the conference, and not the president, must be the judge."†

Mr. Fancher then adduced the decision of the annual conferences on the Canada case, as reported in 1836 to the General conference, which showed that the decision was against dividing the Book Concern.‡

He next quoted as evidence the petitions of southern members to the General conference of 1848, the report on the subject, and the Pastoral Address, and referred to the Journal of the General conference, pp. 19, 37, 116, 117, 175.¶

The report of Ezekiel Cooper, in 1808, to the

General conference, was also adduced as having a bearing on the subject.\*

8. Mr. Fancher, on the sixth day of the trial, handed to the Court the *points of the defendants*, which are as follows:

"I. The Methodist Episcopal Church is a religious society, established for the promotion and spread of Christianity, organized in 1784 as an Episcopal Church, independent of the English episcopacy; and prior to the secession hereinafter mentioned, extended through every part of the United States.

"II. Said religious society, or institution, existed under, and subject to the law of public or charitable uses.

"III. The government and Discipline of the society prior to 1808 was under the jurisdiction and control of district or annual conferences, held in each of the several districts into which the territories within their limits were divided, composed of the clergymen within their respective districts; and from the proceedings of those bodies generally an appeal lay to a general convention, consisting of the ministers comprising the annual conferences, and which convention exercised original as well as appellate powers.

"IV. Property consisting of real and personal estate, commonly known and distinguished as the Book Concern, has been, and still is, held by trustees, subject to the management of said ecclesiastical jurisdictions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which is subject to the use following, namely: To be appropriated 'for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, and superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children.'

"V. The said Book Concern was originally commenced by the traveling preachers, and it has been held, more especially since 1808, in connection with, and in subordination to, the judicatories of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who are the managers of the charity.

"VI. The Methodist Episcopal Church, through its annual conferences, as such managers, can not be deprived of their power and control over said funds, unless guilty of a breach of duty, established by the decree of a court of equity.

"VII. The trustees are accountable for these funds and proceeds thereof to the Methodist Episcopal Church and its judicatories, and are bound to pay over said income, in fulfillment of the trust under their management and direction, to the beneficiaries.

"VIII. The beneficiaries—namely, the traveling, supernumerary, and superannuated preachers belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and their families—have no estate in, or right to, the said funds, or the income thereof, otherwise than as the same are given out to them, from time to time, in the administration of the charity.

"IX. Said trustees are not under the control or direction of the persons who may have contributed to the charity, and who thereby irrevocably parted with the same.

"X. The members in the southern annual conferences, or districts, who left the General conference in 1844, and subsequently formed a new General conference, and a separate ecclesiastical jurisdiction, under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, seceded and separated from the Methodist Episcopal

\* New York Case, p. 209.  
† Id., p. 212.

† Id., pp. 210, 211.  
‡ Id., pp. 214-227.

\* New York Case, p. 227.

Church, and are no longer in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, which is now composed of that portion of the former members who remained in it, and are identified with it.

"(1.) The General conference who adopted the report of the committee of nine—a plan of separation so called—had no power to act in the premises.

"(2.) Said report did not authorize such separation, but was prospective, and was accompanied with conditions and terms that have not been complied with.

"(3.) There was no cause of complaint against the action of the General conference to render a separation necessary or expedient, their general action—and more especially in the case of Bishop Andrew—being warranted by the rules and usages of the Church.

"(4.) There was a special agreement about the property in question which should govern—if the action of the General conference is available—in virtue of which agreement the plaintiffs, under the facts of the case, can have no right thereto.

"XI. The secession of the members newly organized as a separate Church, if it had been legitimate and fully authorized, and with the entire consent of the Church, would not entitle them to any portion of said funds, without an express agreement to that effect, sanctioned by a court of competent jurisdiction.

"XII. The plaintiffs are not entitled to any relief prayed for in their bill."\*

9. On Monday, May 26, 1851, after Mr. Fancher had read the points of the defendants, which we have now quoted, Hon. Rufus Choate commenced his plea, which occupies 60 pages in the report of the case.†

Mr. Choate, referring to the charge of his opponents, namely, that Mr. Choate and his clients were not in a graceful position, inasmuch as they assented to a division of the Church, but dissented from a partition of its funds, remarked as follows: That the Book Agents received this property some time since upon trust, for the benefit of certain members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, their wives, widows, *remaining members*, and they hold it under the original trust, unaltered in the slightest degree; and, according to the plan, which the plaintiffs have adduced in their bill, the Book Agents are forbidden to pay because the Restrictive Rule has not been altered by the annual conferences. We do not admit that the Methodist Episcopal Church—that old, grand, well-compact Church of Wesley—is dismembered legally and totally. It is not dismembered *de facto*, and by secession. A secession has taken place—a secession improvident and needless.

Another preliminary remark is, that when the annual conferences, in 1844 and 1845, began to vote on this recommendation, the first votes were in favor of the partition of the property; but the violence of the southern people was such as to prevent this favorable result. The Missouri conference in their act said:

"Resolved, That we have read with deep regret the violent proceedings of some of our southern brethren, in the primary meetings, against some of our bishops and others."

The Arkansas conference, in one of its reso-

lutions, declares that it has "no inclination to indorse those vindictive proceedings had in some portions of the south."\*

The General conference of 1848 gave particular directions to their Agents to prefer an arbitration, if by advice of counsel this could be legally done; and if it could not, they were to proceed to submit the matter to the annual conferences to obtain their consent. It was submitted to the annual conferences, and was in a fair way of being carried, but was interrupted by the institution of the suit by the south.

The southern delegates presented at first three causes for their course in their *declaration*; but they abandoned all except one, and settled down on the case of Bishop Andrew and Mr. Harding. Of fourteen annual conferences, five forgot the case of Harding altogether, so that in point of fact it is nothing else than this: These conferences take up the *declaration* of the minority, drop the first two causes therein alleged for separation, and lay hold on that of the Bishop, some of them including that of Mr. Harding.

In regard to the first reason in the *declaration*, "the continued agitation of the subject of slavery and abolition in a portion of the Church," Mr. Choate goes on to show, that in 1840 and 1844 the bishops report to General conference, that although there were some exceptions, the general condition, even of New England Methodism, was calm, quiet, and steady, and the reports of the bishops fully sustain this.‡

The address of the bishops to the General conference of 1840, goes to acknowledge that the subject of slavery had been settled definitely by the General conference; and that no new enactments on it would be of any avail. Hence, so far as the General conference was concerned, up to 1844 there was no cause for complaint.

Mr. Choate showed that no innovation was forced on the south touching the connection of slaveholders with the Episcopacy. The General conference of 1844 did no more than to apply to new cases, the recorded Discipline and ancient practice of the Church upon this subject. During a period of sixty years, when there had been nine bishops chosen, no slaveholder had been chosen. The general rule of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from its origin, was that slaveholders ought not to hold office. Hence, the General conference, in any instance from 1784 down to this instant, to have elected a slaveholder to the office of bishop, would have violated a fundamental principle of the Discipline. There was no innovation in excluding slavery from the Episcopacy.

Mr. Choate showed that the phrase, "any traveling preacher," did not mean a bishop, and that the rule for a traveling preacher did not apply to a bishop. This is proved without question by the authorities quoted.¶

He argued that the minority of the south no where put on record in 1844 the opinion that what had been done ought to dissolve the Church; but that it *must* or *would* render their continuance in the Church impracticable. And what has been called the plan of separation, was not a measure to produce, but to prevent division. As to the plea that widows and orphans were to lose their rights, without any act of their own, it is to be noted that this case was not in the bill, and not before the Court, but

\* New York Methodist Property Case, p. 230.

† Id., pp. 221-221.

\* New York Case, p. 233.

† Id., p. 240.

† Id., pp. 237-241.

¶ Id., pp. 251-257.

was introduced to furnish an answer to the one stated and argued. These, however, have lost, by the act of secession, all just right to such claim. It is a universal proposition of law that the seceder takes nothing, except by a body competent to make such a grant. The complainants have no grant of authority; because, 1. The General conference had no power to make it. 2. It did not assume the power to make it, if it had. 3. Both the General and annual conferences together, could not take it away from the uses to which it was originally devoted; the traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church remaining members of it.\*

The act of the plaintiffs in leaving the Church was a simple, bold, and unauthorized act of secession, unauthorized by any ecclesiastical authority whatever, and the right of property terminated with the act of secession. They declare in terms, and then proceed to achieve a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church. They first renounce the General conference, and then proceed to form themselves and their adherents into a separate and distinct organization. It is the same as if they turned from Methodism to Presbyterianism; and though there were expressions dropped in the Louisville convention and elsewhere, affirming that they did not intend to secede, this does not control the matter in the slightest degree. Actions here, as elsewhere, overrule words; and no protestation to the contrary can change the nature of the act of secession into any thing else but what it really is.

In regard to the argument that the General conference divided the Church, Mr. Choate argues, that if the General conference attempted this, it was a perfect nullity; because this body had no right to do so, according to Methodist ecclesiastical polity. This is proved by referring to Wesley, Coke, and Asbury's views, and the documents connected with the organization of the Church.†

As it respects the analogy between the case of the Canada conference and the south, Mr. Choate showed that it was not such as the south contended it to be. The General conference of 1828 decided that it had no constitutional power to divide the Church. Nor did the General conference of 1844 assume such power. The Canada conference organized themselves into a distinct Methodist Episcopal Church. They acted independently. Canada left the Methodist Episcopal Church in peace. They remained Methodists. And yet the Methodist Episcopal Church refused to give them any part of the funds or proceeds of the Book Concern, or the Chartered Fund.‡

In reply to the assertion of the south, "that the old Church is destroyed, and two new ones are created in its place," Mr. Choate replies that there are four conclusive answers to this.

*First.* The General conference has no power ecclesiastically to destroy the Church. It does not speak of a division, leaving the old identity untouched.

*Secondly.* The General conference did not, in this transaction, assume to destroy the Church; but, on the contrary, the plan of separation, from beginning to end, shows that what they intended to do was to authorize a departure, leaving the old identity untouched; because, 1. The General conference never assumed, in terms, to de-

stroy the Church. 2. That they never assumed, in terms, to divide the Church; for while they speak of a division of property, they never speak of a division of the Church, but simply of a separation of parties from the Church; it deals throughout with a contemplated act of other persons, and calls that act a separation by them, and all it contemplates is a separation by others, leaving itself to exist. It calls itself by the old name of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

*Thirdly.* The Louisville convention say nothing about a division of the Church, but characterize their own act as a separation from an identity already existing.

*Fourthly.* The frame of the plaintiffs' bill so treats the affair. They do not call us a new Church; but it assumes throughout that the old Methodist Episcopal Church exists under that name.

*Fifthly.* Not only does the General conference not assume to destroy the Church, but it goes further, and takes care to ordain that the seceding party shall have nothing at all on the ground of natural right, or natural equity; but that it shall have nothing except according to the existing law of the Church—unless the annual conferences would give it. Instead of dissolution there was a withdrawal of a party; and it was ordained that every body not withdrawing should be subject to the still existing law of the society. It is unquestionable that the General conference intended, and so determined, that no one should take a dollar by secession or natural right, unless the annual conferences gave it.

*Sixthly.* The plaintiffs knew well from the beginning, and at every future step, that they took their course of secession under the hazard of the action of the annual conferences, and that they ran the risk of an unfavorable judgment, if they even did not procure it by their course.\*

10. Mr. Wood commences his plea, and confines himself principally to the *law of the case*.—He represents the south as claiming that they have a vested right to this property. They draw a distinction between property which has been given to a Church, and property which has been acquired by the labor of individuals belonging to a Church. They treat the Book Concern as property of the latter kind; and they claim they have a vested right in it; and upon a division of the Church they are entitled, as in the case of a partnership or tenancy in common, to have a division of the property, and receive a ratable proportion.

Mr. Wood, after stating the nature of the southern claim, proceeds to investigate the law in such cases. The right of the south, he maintains, depends on the law of charitable uses. A charitable use is a *public* use. It is called charitable, mainly, because in every Christian country it is based on a charitable foundation. There are four elements in every charitable use; namely, the *founders*, the *trustees*, the *managers*, and the *beneficiaries* of the charity.

*First.* The founders of and contributors to the charity, are those who bestow the property to the charitable purpose, and these designate the purpose themselves, and this purpose must stand.

*Secondly.* The trustees of the charity are those who hold the legal estate in trust.

*Thirdly.* The managers of the charity are those who take charge of it, who conduct it,

\* New York Case, pp. 257-259. † Id., pp. 261-278.

‡ Id., pp. 278-288.

\* New York Case, pp. 282-291.

and who distribute it. The management of the charity is according to the scheme, or *plan*, which was originally impressed upon it by its founders; or where it is of a general nature, or a charity at large, as it is called, a court of equity takes charge of it and establishes a scheme.\*

*Fourthly, and lastly.* There are the *beneficiaries*, among whom the property is distributed, according to the *purpose* of the charity, or the *use* which was originally impressed upon it.

The beneficiaries, in this case, have no vested estate, no fixed right, and hence they have no power of alienation. They can not dispose of the property. They have no right except as they answer the description of the beneficiaries, to receive from time to time the income or profits of the fund, as it is dealt out by the managers in the administration of the charity.†

This doctrine is now adopted and fully settled in the United States courts, and exists as common law, independently of the statute of Elizabeth, and is enforced wherever the common law prevails, and wherever charities exist of this public kind, although the statute of Elizabeth may not have been introduced.‡

The abolition of this law would throw all the property invested, and which will continue to be invested in that way while Christianity lasts, completely afloat.¶ Such are the general elements of a charitable use.

In the case before us, we have the founders of the fund. These comprise all who have contributed money, services, or patronage.

We have also the *trustees* of the fund, and these are the Book Agents, who hold the legal estate subject to this trust.

The managers of this charity are the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, as an organized, ecclesiastical body, acting in an organized form. And this Church holds these temporalities under the law of charitable uses, and the Church itself exists under law. They manage it through their General conference and their annual conferences. The General conference takes the general superintendency over the whole; it appoints the trustees, and changes the trustees. The annual conferences seek out the beneficiaries who are entitled to the relief, and distribute to them what they receive from the trustees.

Here we have the beneficiaries. They are the supernumerated, and supernumerary traveling preachers of the Church, their wives and children, and the widows and children of deceased traveling preachers. They must be of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And the Church is a *quasi* corporation, entitled to the rights and privileges of a corporation; and though some of the preachers who become supernumerary or supernumerated may have originally contributed to the fund, this neither gives nor deprives them of any right.

In the case of private property, held by a private association of individuals, a majority can control it. Each one has a right, as a tenant in common, to his respective share, and he can alienate the right. But in the case of a charitable use, this is not the case.§

Mr. Wood then shows that the elements of a charitable use, as it exists in our courts, were derived from the civil law, into which it was

introduced by the emperors after Christianity became the law of the empire. It exists in the nature of things, as a part of Christianity, because wherever Christianity exists, there will be charity; and to abolish the law of charitable uses, or not to observe it, would entirely destroy this kind of charity.\*

The prosecutors claim that they are a portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, divided, and although divided, they are sufficiently identified to entitle them to a portion of the estate, and to entitle the persons answering to the description of being supernumerary or supernumerated ministers, their wives, widows, and children, as beneficiaries, to take it. They claim on two grounds: First, on the ground of an agreement between the members of this Church, by the General conference, to form two separate Churches, and yet identical with the Methodist Episcopal Church, each party representing it in succession and continuance, and each party entitled to its ecclesiastical privileges and private right of property; and in the next place, they claim that if the agreement does not amount to this, the division from the majority was rendered necessary by the misconduct of the defendants, and therefore they are entitled to a portion of the fund in equity.

There was, in the first place, no absolute agreement to divide the Church, because the General conference had no power to divide. And such a division as the south contends for would be a destruction of the Church, and not a division of it; for the two new Churches would destroy the old one. That the old Church remained, and a new one formed, is proved from the second resolution of the plan, the acts of the convention; and a case is given to prove that those who leave the Church can not take the funds with them.†

He next shows that there was no misconduct on the part of the defendants to warrant the south in their separation; for in the matter of slavery they did no more than carry out the principles of the Discipline. This is discussed to some extent.‡

He further shows that there was in the plan an expressed agreement about the property. That agreement was that the south would leave the Church, and could get none of the property unless the votes of the annual conferences gave it to them.¶

He argues justly, too, that these funds are not beneficially the funds of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The Church has a *control* over them as managers of funds for the sake of others; therefore the Church can not alienate the funds, and they can not apply the charity to any who are not connected with the Church in organization, in its Discipline, its identity.§

Mr. Wood concluded by inferring that the plaintiffs could have no claim to this property on the sound principles of law and equity. They have not wanted to abide the agreement made between the parties.¶

11. We now come to the plea of the Hon. Reverdy Johnson, which closed the pleadings. He considered the question under four heads:

*First.* The power of the General conference of 1844 to adopt the plan of division of the 8th of June of that year.

On this head Mr. Johnson employs thirty-four

\* *Mogridge vs. Thackwell* in 7 Vasey's Reports.

† New York Case, pp. 291-293. † Id., pp. 293, 294.

‡ Id., pp. 294, 296. § Id., pp. 297-299.

\* New York Case, pp. 299, 300. † Id., pp. 301-306.

† Id., pp. 307-315. † Id., pp. 315-318.

‡ Id., pp. 318-324. ¶ Id., pp. 324, 325.

pages of his place by a reference to various and accumulated proofs, irrelevant to the point on hand, and calculated only to confuse in explaining a point already very plain. For the General conference never pretended to claim, exercise, or approve of, such a power as he contends for; but, on the contrary, they denied that they had it, and refused positively to exercise any such power. The proofs adduced in the plea were such as the southern advisers furnished, and they answered the purpose of confusing the subject without throwing light on it.\* But Mr. Johnson proceeds:

*Secondly.* "The construction of that plan; which, as I shall maintain, is that the division of the Church was made exclusively upon the decision of the conferences in the states in which slavery exists, and upon no other contingency; and that the change in the sixth Restrictive Article in the constitution of the General conference was made to depend, and solely to depend, upon the decision of all the annual conferences of the entire Church, as at that time constituted."

On this head, Mr. Johnson employs less than a page, and even this seems so irrelevant that even this might be spared. It is, indeed, true that the southern conferences took their course solely on their own authority and responsibility; and hence they seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Furthermore, as to the charge of the Restriction, he asserts it depended on the votes of all the annual conferences. Yet, in his next proposition, he contradicts this in saying that no regard is to be paid to the change in the sixth Restriction.†

Mr. Johnson proceeds to his next proposition: *Thirdly.* "That, by force of the division of the Church, produced, under the plan, by the decision of the annual conferences in the states in which slavery exists, the property of the Church is to be divided, upon equitable principles, between the two Churches, north and south, without any regard at all to any change of what is termed the sixth Restrictive Article."

A few pages are irrelevantly spent on this proposition without throwing any light on the path. The truth is, that, as this proposition states, there was little regard paid by the south to constitutional restrictions. They were bent on secession, and they carried it out regardless of any constitutional restriction. At first they allowed their right to depend on the alteration of the Restriction. But when that failed, they contended for it in direct opposition to the plan, and the constitution of the Church. It is no wonder that Mr. Johnson had nothing pertinent to say here. He therefore vapors through five pages, furnishes no proofs, and then concludes by a mere dogmatic assertion that his proposition was proved, impossible though it was to prove it.\*

*Fourthly.* "Admitting the conference of 1844 had no authority to adopt the plan, or that the plan was conditional, and the condition not carried out, the state of things that still exists entitles the plaintiffs to relief."

Little was said on this proposition, except barely an attempt to involve the Methodist Episcopal Church in an unenviable light, because she declined to yield to all the demands of the south, without regard to the constitution of the Church.†

## CHAPTER LVI.

### REVIEW OF JUDGE NELSON'S DECISION.

1. In order to furnish a fair opportunity to the reader to judge of our review of Judge Nelson, we will publish entire his decision, as those who read this chapter will also desire to read his decision.‡

We will, however, present such extracts here from the decision, as will bring its leading points before the reader.

After quoting in full the report of the committee of nine, falsely called the plan of separation, the resolutions of the Louisville convention, and the letter of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of July 2, 1845, declining to serve the seceded conferences, he proceeds to give the outline of the bill of the complainants, and the reply to it.

He says: "The bill and answer present most of the facts upon which our opinion will be founded."

"The foundation of this charity is peculiar and novel, differing essentially from the cases of this description that have heretofore fallen under the equitable jurisdiction of a court of chancery. The traveling preachers are both the founders and the beneficiaries."

"These proceeds and profits have been devoted to the relief of distressed traveling, supernumerary, and worn-out preachers in the connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church, their widows and orphans; and to entitle the complainants, and those they represent, to the enjoyment, they must bring themselves within this description."

"The only contingencies or conditions, subsequent, to be found in it [the plan] are two: *first*, the separate organization was to depend upon the action of the annual conferences in the slaveholding states; and *second*, the division of this latter portion of the common property of the Church, upon the action of the annual conferences in respect to the change of the Restrictive Article."

"The Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States was established in its government, doctrine, and Discipline by the General conference of the traveling preachers in this communion in 1784. They organized it, established its doctrines and Discipline, appointed the several authorities—superintendents or bishops, ministers, and preachers. From that time to this, the source and fountain of all its temporal power is the traveling preachers in the connection, in

\* New York Law Case, pp. 325-359. † Id., p. 360.  
‡ Document, No. 7. See for it, C., November 20, 1851,  
and W., December 3, 1851, and Scraps, VII, pp. 660-670.

\* New York Church Case, pp. 360-365. † Id., pp. 365-367.

General conference assembled. The lay members of the Church have no part or connection with its governmental connection, and never had. The traveling preachers comprise the embodiment of its power, ecclesiastical and temporal; and when assembled in General conference, according to the usages and Discipline of the Church, represent themselves, and have no constituents."

"The General conference possessed the power to reconstruct, and reorganize its government, ecclesiastical and temporal, into two or more separate and distinct organizations, is a question about which, we think, no serious doubt can well be entertained."

"As they might have constructed any number of separate and distinct organizations on their first fraternal association and effort in the fulfillment of this mission, accordingly as it might seem to them best, so was it equally in their power, at any subsequent period of their labors. The power remained unchanged."

"The traveling preachers, assembled in General conference, embody, in themselves, the sovereign power; and we have no where seen their consent to any limitation or restriction, till all come down to the history of their administration to the conference of 1808."

"As it respects the powers of the General conference since the modifications of 1808, it is the same as previously existed, subject to the six Restrictive Articles."

"As it respects the action of this body, [the General conference of 1844,] in the matter of division, no one can pretend but that it proceeded upon the assumption of unquestioned power to erect the Church into two separate ecclesiastical establishments. Independently of this question of property, the power of severance is written on every page of its proceedings."

"The separation having taken place in pursuance of the action of the competent ecclesiastical authority—by the action of the founders of the fund themselves—how can it be maintained that the conferences, falling within the new organization, have forfeited the character which entitles them to its enjoyment?"

"For this purpose two distinct ecclesiastical organizations, we may say identically the same, have taken the place of the one—the same Discipline, faith, and doctrine—and all united in spreading the same Gospel and teachings throughout the land."

"Assume, therefore, that the General conference were disabled on account of the sixth Restrictive Article, from apportioning this fund, the law steps in and enforces the right."

2. The origin of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as stated in the bill, may be noticed here, that we may see how far the high supremacy ascribed to its ministers, by Judge Nelson, can be sustained. Let us look at it as it existed, first in Europe, under Mr. Wesley, next in America, from 1766 to 1784, and then as it existed under the General conference of 1784.

The origin of Wesleyan Methodism was simply this: Persons religiously disposed, through the preaching of Mr. Wesley, earnestly desired him to take pastoral charge of them. This he did, on the condition they would comply with the General Rules of his society, and the discipline growing out of it. In carrying out this discipline, Church officers were necessary, as leaders, stewards, local preachers, traveling preachers. Mr. Wesley, during his lifetime, was, by common consent, and common request,

the governor over his societies. The General Rules were the original bond of union in the societies. The larger Minutes contained the general disciplinary regulations, and the doctrinal standard, holy Scripture being agreed as the only rule of faith and practice. All who joined Mr. Wesley's societies agreed to walk by the General Rules, and submit to the Discipline. Any who became dissatisfied with the morals and discipline, could withdraw without censure. At Mr. Wesley's death, the government was vested in the preachers, but securing to the members all the privileges of the General Rules, and the Discipline already adopted, subject to such adaptations as time and circumstances would require, without destroying or perverting the established platform of Methodist economy.

3. Methodism in America, when first planted, was precisely the same as in Britain. The General Rules, and the Larger Minutes, were the standards. The first societies were formed in 1766. The first missionaries were sent by Mr. Wesley in 1769. The first conference was held in 1773, and Methodism in 1784 was organized into a regular Church, under the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America. The same common Discipline and the same General Rules that governed the British Wesleyans, also governed the American societies.

4. Some remarks on the nature, origin, and extent of ministerial power, will be in place, to show how ill-founded is the argument of Judge Nelson, in ascribing such high aristocratical power to the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The General conference does not, in any proper sense, claim legislative authority over the Church; but on the contrary has disavowed all such powers. And the administrative powers are controlled by the laity in the act of licensing to the ministry, and recommending licentiates to the pastorship; the oversight of the flock, and the propagation of the Gospel, are committed by the Head of the Church to the ministry. The ministers may not alter the law; but rules and regulations they may make to carry out these laws.

The Methodist ministers are not aristocrats, because they are elected by the people to the ministry. Nor do they favor aristocracy, because the economy of Methodism avails itself of the talents and services of the people to a greater extent than any other people in the world. This agency of the laity and the itinerancy are the distinguishing features of the system.

Ministerial power does not belong to men naturally. It is, therefore, *acquired*. It grows out of the pastoral relation to the people, and is formed by the mutual agreement of the parties, under the authority of an acknowledged standard of doctrines, the provisions of an itinerant system of ministerial labor, and the General Rules of the united societies, which restrict the power of the ministry, and guarantee the rights and privileges of the laity.

The learned counsel, as well as the Judge, speak of the government of the Church as they do of the state. They suppose that the sovereignty in the Church exists in the people as it does in the state. But we allow no head in the Church but Christ, and ministers claim and exercise no lordship in the Church. Indeed, some think the members exist before the ministry; whereas, God calls his laborers into the harvest, and these collect the flock by their ministry.

The government of the Church is not formed like the governments of this world. It is neither a monarchy, aristocracy, nor democracy; it is a theocracy.

The extent of ministerial power is to preach the Gospel, administer the sacraments, and exercise discipline. Hence the assumption of Judge Nelson is preposterous, that the "traveling Methodist ministers embody in themselves, and are the source and fountain of unrestrained, sovereign, unlimited, spiritual, temporal, and ecclesiastical power; and for the mode and manner of its exercise they are responsible to no earthly tribunal." This groundless assumption is founded on a total misapprehension of Methodist Church polity; and with this monstrous theory, it is no wonder the Judge declared that those having such power could assume the prerogatives of Heaven, so as to "establish doctrines and discipline," to "organize, reconstruct, divide" the Church at will.

5. The great elements of Methodist polity must be comprised in the American organization; otherwise the American Church must be a secession from Wesleyan Methodism.

Mr. Wesley assented to the new arrangement in 1784, for his American societies, and provided for it accordingly. He did this *conditionally*, and these *conditions* absolutely limited the ecclesiastical powers of the preachers over the people. They were bound up to the *necessity* of either accepting these conditions, remaining as they were, or of usurping the powers of an entire dissolution of their relation to Mr. Wesley, and a palpable violation of their constitutional relation to the people of their charge.

When Mr. Wesley ordained Dr. Coke, and appointed him superintendent, he prepared for the American Church, and sent it with Dr. Coke, a complete organized form of Discipline, comprising doctrines and moral rules—what was called, "The Sunday Services of the Methodists in North America, with other occasional services." This comprised,

THE GENERAL RULES of the Methodist societies, comprising the fundamental moral code of Methodism, and some of its liturgical and disciplinary elements.

THE LARGER MINUTES, both disciplinary and doctrinal; but especially regulating the ministry.

THE ARTICLES OF RELIGION, being twenty-five in number.

AN ORDINATION SERVICE, giving the forms and principles of ordaining to the ministry in its several grades, of bishop, elder, and deacon.

A LITURGY, with various forms of prayer and Church service. Episcopacy, or general superintendence, was an element.

All these are constitutional elements in Methodist Church polity, binding alike on people and ministers, and not to be altered, except by mutual consent of both.

These fundamental elements bound the American Methodists within their limits.

(1.) They confine the exercise of their powers absolutely to the *one* Church organization already established and operative, and contain not the slightest provision for the organization of any other; and in acceding to the terms of Mr. Wesley, they had no authority to organize any other Church.

(2.) Dr. Coke was appointed superintendent to preside over that Church, and to ordain ministers for it, and for *no other*; and any other use of his power would have been unauthorized.

(3.) These terms of assent impart no power to establish doctrines and Discipline, for these were already established.

(4.) The American preachers were bound to accept these terms, or be considered as seceders from Wesleyan Methodism.

The General conference of 1784 formed no new relations by which their ecclesiastical power was augmented. Their constitutional compact with the laity remained the same that it was before the meeting of the conference. Hence the unlimited power ascribed to the American preachers, at the conference of 1784, is a visionary fiction.

It is a very plain view of this matter, that the American preachers would have been usurpers of unauthorized power, had they adopted any other doctrines, Discipline, or forms of government, than what was prepared for them by Mr. Wesley. And their constituents, or the people, neither expected any other, nor, indeed, would they tolerate any other.

6. In opposition to the decision of Judge Nelson, we are prepared to show that all the powers claimed and exercised by the General conference of 1784, were in accordance with these cardinal principles of constitutionally-limited ecclesiastical powers, already established previous to 1784, and somewhat extended by Mr. Wesley.

The Judge says, "The Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States was established, in its government, doctrine, and Discipline, by a General conference of the traveling preachers in this connection, in 1784. . . . During this year the entire government was taken into the hands of the traveling preachers. They organized it, established its doctrines and Discipline, appointed the several authorities," etc.

In the whole course of his reasoning, the Judge is preparing to show, that as the General conference of 1784 had supreme power to organize or create, that of 1844 had supreme power to destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church. He therefore assumes that previous to 1784 there was no Methodist Church organization in America, no doctrines and Discipline established, no authorities instituted. Let us compare the *facts* of the case with the Judge's statements.

He says "*they organized the Methodist Episcopal Church.*" For more than fifteen years the traveling preachers sustained the relation of pastors to the people, under the general economy of Methodism. They had formed classes, societies, stations, circuits, and conferences, substantially as they now exist. All these were organized into one ecclesiastical compact, under a general superintendent, appointed by Mr. Wesley. And the preachers in General conference, in 1784, expressed their purpose to still submit to the control of Mr. Wesley in Church government." The preachers, therefore, exercised a *limited* power.

The Judge says "*they established the doctrines*" of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We reply that these doctrines, as far as uninspired men were concerned, had been established more than thirty years before Mr. Wesley's missionaries visited this country. In the first American conference, held in 1773, the following minutes were passed:

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



"Answer. Yes.

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

"Answer. Yes."

This official record shows that the American preachers did not attempt to establish either doctrine or Discipline. They officially approved of the doctrines and Discipline already established, in their formally adopting the Methodist economy to the altered circumstances in which they were now placed.

He says "they established the Discipline" of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The minute quoted above shows they continued to receive the Discipline already established and received. This case fails to establish sovereign, unlimited, ecclesiastical power.

The Judge says "they appointed the authorities." This is not the fact. These authorities had substantially existed previously; and in regard to the new modification of them, this was done by Mr. Wesley. He says,

"I have accordingly appointed Dr. Coke and Mr. Francis Asbury to be joint superintendents over our brethren in North America; as also Richard Whatcoat and Thomas Vasey to act as elders among them."

The facts in the case are against the Judge's statement in this case, as in most other cases in his decision.

7. The General conference of 1784 had no power to divide the Church or to provide for a plurality of governments or Churches.

We will here quote the Judge:

"As they might have constructed any number of separate and distinct organizations in their first fraternal association and effort in the fulfillment of their mission, accordingly as it might seem to them best, so was it equally in their power at any subsequent period of their labor. The power remained unchanged."

A split or division of the Church may have two meanings—either to divide the Church into two separate branches, creating two new Churches in the place of the one which before existed; or that the Methodist Episcopal Church should remain, and that this other portion should be detached from it, and should form a separate and independent Church. The first would destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church which was previously in existence, and would form two new Churches in its place.

The Judge uses language which can not be interpreted in any other sense than to maintain the destruction of the Methodist Episcopal Church in forming the two new ones; for he says:

"When the annual conferences in the slaveholding states acted, and organized a Southern Church as they did, the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two organizations became complete. The General conference of 1844 divided the ecclesiastical organization, [the Methodist Episcopal Church,] and substituted in its place two distinct, independent judicatories [or Churches.] For this purpose two distinct ecclesiastical organizations have taken the place of one." The division for which the Judge contends is that which destroys the old Church and substitutes two new ones in its place.

Let us suppose that any number of preachers at the conference, or rather convention of 1784, had declined to adopt the organization formed previously by Mr. Wesley, and had formed a

separate Church—would they have been in connection with Mr. Wesley? Or would they be separate from the Wesleyan family? They might secede, and organize a separate Church, but they could not have organized two Churches bearing the same relation to Wesleyan Methodism. It was to prevent division as well as to impart more efficiency that the new organization was adopted. As the conference of 1784 could not organize two Churches, no such power can be formed subsequently.

So anxious, indeed, was the conference or convention of 1784 to maintain the unity of Methodism, that they made the following minute: "During the life of the Rev. Mr. Wesley, we acknowledge ourselves his sons in the Gospel, ready, in matters belonging to Church government, to obey his commands." With this agreement, the consent of Mr. Wesley would have been essential to any material change in the government of the Church.

But were we to admit that the conference of 1784 could have organized two distinct Churches, we can not agree that the same power was vested in subsequent conferences. The conference of 1784 was unlike any other ecclesiastical body which has assembled in our Church. It was called for the specific purpose of organizing the Church. Subsequent conferences have been called to regulate minor matters in the practical operations of the Church, so that its unity might be preserved unimpaired.

Especially was this the case with the conference in 1792. A council had been instituted composed of the elders in the Church, called together for the express purpose, as specified in forming the body, of "preserving the union." This council had failed to meet the views of the Church, because a veto upon its decisions was at first given to every annual conference, and instead of preserving the unity of the body, it prepared the way for divisions; and as history informs us, the "divisive spirit" was strongly manifested. To check this the conference of 1792 was assembled, and it proved to be most happy in its results. Called, then, for wholly different purposes, we think we are not warranted in assuming for the conference of 1792 the same powers as were possessed by the convention of 1784. Rev. L. M. Lee, alluding to the conference of 1784, in his Life and Times of Jesse Lee, very forcibly says:

"The General Assembly of the preachers at the Christmas conference of 1784 was not, in any correct sense of the term, as since used, a General conference of the Church. It was an extraordinary meeting of the ministry under extraordinary circumstances. . . . The organization of the Church, under an episcopal regimen, was the sole object for convening the Christmas conference; and that object accomplished, its powers ceased, and the meeting was dissolved. It had no successor. From these facts it is evident that the idea of a supreme legislative department of the Church was not contemplated as a constituent of its organization."

In arguing the right of the General conferences prior to 1812 to divide the Church, Judge Nelson assumes that it was composed of *all the traveling preachers*. Thus he says:

"That the General conference, composed of *all the traveling preachers*, and who established the government, doctrines, and Discipline of the Church, possessed the power to reconstruct and reorganize its government, ecclesiastical and temporal, into two or more separate and distinct

organizations, is a question about which, we think, no serious doubt can well be entertained."

Again, he says, speaking of the conference of 1808:

"At the General conference of that year, composed of *all the traveling preachers*, it was resolved," etc.

Now, even if the reasoning of the Judge is correctly based upon the premises, yet it is wholly futile, because his premises are incorrect. The conference of 1808 was not composed "*of all the traveling preachers*;" nor has any body, comprising "all the traveling preachers," ever been called together from 1784 to the present time. If, then, it required all the traveling preachers to reconstruct or to divide the Church prior to 1812, no such division or reconstruction could have taken place. To the conference of 1784 all the traveling preachers were invited. To the General conferences of 1792, 1796, and 1800 only the traveling preachers of two years' standing, or those in full connection, were invited, while the General conferences of 1804 and 1808 were composed only of elders, or those who had traveled four years. That this very materially affected the character of such bodies may be seen by a comparison of numbers. In 1784, out of 83 preachers, 29 were not in full connection, or more than *one-third*; in 1792, out of 266 preachers, 87, or about *one-third*, were not in full connection, and were *excluded*; in 1804, out of 400 preachers, 212, or more than *one-half*, had not traveled four years, and were, consequently, prohibited from attending. So far, then, from the subsequent conferences being composed of all the traveling preachers, some of them did not permit *one-half* to assemble, and consequently the argument is wholly defective, and the conferences from 1792 to 1808 had not the powers of the convention of 1784.

8. We prove that the General conference, prior to 1812, had no such power, by the following reasons:

(1.) No such power was given to it in the terms of its constitution. The Discipline, from 1792 to 1808, is wholly silent as to the powers of the General conference, except as to certain duties. Nor can it be said that the absence of any limitation allows us to infer the existence of such power; for, according to the rules of interpretation, in the absence of express provision, we are to consider the design of the framers of the instrument. That they designed to convey to the General conference power to "divide the Church" will not be contended. That body was constituted to "preserve union"—not to destroy it. It was instituted for government—not for dissolution.

(2.) Because it would have been in violation of that implied compact entered into between the ministry and the membership. Judge Nelson, indeed, says that the "*traveling preachers represent themselves, and have no constituents*;" but such was not the opinion of the fathers of our Church. As we have seen, it was at the request of several "thousands" of the laity that Mr. Wesley drew up the plan of Church organization. That plan was "*heartily united in*" by the great body of Methodists; and hence, although the conference is composed wholly of preachers, it by no means follows that they represent only themselves. Very different has been, from time to time, their avowal. The doctrines of the Church being settled, and the rules of moral discipline being clearly and explicitly set forth, legislation, in the proper sense of that word, was

deemed unnecessary. Aiming, as they did, at the greatest possible simplicity of organization, and Methodism at that age having no treasures to guard except the "reproach of Christ," our fathers supposed no lay delegation to be either needed or desired. They met in conference, not to make laws, but to adopt such measures as would enable them to be more active and successful in their great itinerant system. They felt all the obligations of their moral compact with the membership, and they never altered or attempted to alter either their doctrines or their General Rules. Indeed, on a careful inspection of the history of the Church, it will be seen that, from 1784 to 1844, no rule was ever adopted which tended to restrict or impair the rights of the laity. In specific instances there may have been errors of administration, but the rules of the Church have given no such license. Hence, though frequent agitations have arisen in reference to our form of government, the great body of Methodists have preferred our old usages to any changes yet suggested. But were the General conference to claim power to "divide the Church," that is, to destroy the old one, and unceremoniously to transfer the membership into "two new Churches," it would be a violation of all the relations existing between the ministry and the membership of the Church. The conference have never either claimed or attempted to exercise such a power. Our fathers did not understand that they "represented only themselves, and had no constituents." Many documents might be given to prove the contrary. We give a few:

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

Mr. William Watters, the oldest American Methodist preacher, says, in his memoirs of himself, "We became, instead of a religious society, a separate Church. This gave great satisfaction *through all our societies.*"

Rev. Ezekiel Cooper, in his memoirs of Bishop Asbury, after stating the fact of our having become an independent Church, says: "*This step met with general approbation, both among the preachers and members.* Perhaps we shall seldom find such a *unanimity* of sentiment upon any question of such magnitude."

The General conference of 1824, in their pastoral address, in alluding to the influence of a lay delegation upon the finances of the Church, say:

"Whatever injury may be sustained from the scantiness of our support is attributable, not to the improvidence of the rule which limits the amount, but to some other cause; and whatever that cause may be, we at least have no information that the people refuse to contribute because they are not represented. Indeed, it would grieve us to know this; for even though they should refuse to acknowledge us *as their representatives in the General conference*, they can not do less for the love of Christ than they would oblige themselves to do out of love for authority."

The address of the bishops to the General conference of 1840 contains the following language:

"To preserve and strengthen the *unity* and peace of that great and increasing body of Christians and Christian ministers *which you represent in this General conference*, and to devise and adopt measures for the more extensive and efficient promotion of the work of God in these

lands, and in foreign countries, are the primary and very important objects of the institution of this body. And in these objects your counsel, your acts, and your prayers should concentrate."

Again, in 1844 the bishops say to the General conference:

"You are now assembled in the ninth session of your body since its organization under a constitution which, while it defines and restricts your powers, affords a permanent security of the rights and privileges of the great and growing body of *ministers and people which you represent.*"

When we remember that the names of Bishops Soule and Andrew are appended to these addresses, when it is generally understood that they were from the pen of Bishop Soule, and that they were received by the whole Church as correct and able documents, we are somewhat surprised to find that our brethren of the southern press approve the positions of Judge Nelson, so directly at variance with them.

(3.) The assumption of such a power is directly contrary to the uniform decision of the courts of law. The power to divide a Church, in the sense of dissolving it, must necessarily involve the power to make any modifications. If, then, the power to divide existed in the General conference, there must have been the power to change the *doctrines* or the *government* of the Church. Suppose, then, that the General conference of 1800 or of 1808 had so changed our doctrines as to make them Unitarian or Catholic, would they have been acknowledged as the doctrines of the Church? The courts of law can only settle such a question on some contest for property; but such contests have frequently arisen, and the uniform decision, as we are informed, has been that the party holding the original doctrines and government, no matter how small a minority, have a right to the property, and are, in the eye of the law, the true Church. Thus, in the case of an associate congregation of Perth, quoted by Mr. Wood, the judge decided:

"*First.* Where a difference of doctrines prevails, the court will decide in favor of the party which adheres to the ancient doctrines of the Church.

"*Secondly.* That when there is a difference in regard to government, the court will decide in favor of those who adhere to the old government. But the question of doctrine furnishes the primary rule—an adherence to the ancient established doctrines of the Church is indispensable to constitute Church membership."

The same principles have governed in the suits in the Presbyterian Church, which have arisen between the Old and New School branches. Now, if the General conference had no power to alter the doctrines or general economy of the Church, without forfeiting to any minority, holding the original doctrines and Discipline, all the acquired property, how could they have the power to dissolve the Church and make new organizations? If the courts decide that they cease to bind the Church by the smaller act, how can they bind it by the greater? The members of the conference may by such acts separate themselves from the Church, but they can not take the membership with them.

9. The delegated General conference, from 1808 to the present, neither claimed nor exercised the power to divide the Church.

If we consider the General conference of 1812, we find it assembling as a delegated

body, clothed with certain express powers, and restrained by specific limitations. By the conference of 1808 it was enacted that "the General conference shall have full powers to make rules and regulations for our Church," under certain restrictions. It is claimed that this grant of power conveys the right to divide the Church. To this we reply,

(1.) The conference of 1808 could convey no more power than itself possessed; but as no such power existed in the conference of 1808, it could impart no such authority to its delegated successors.

(2.) But the language itself conveys no idea of division. "To make rules and regulations for our Church" implies the existence and preservation of that Church in its unity. The right to divide a Church, so as to blot it from existence, and to establish, "in its place," "two new ones," can not be included under the grant of making rules and regulations for it; for that act puts it out of the power either of the General conference or of any other body to either rule or regulate that Church. It is an act of destruction, not of government. As well might it be claimed that the right of a teacher to make rules and regulations for the government of his pupils, gave him a right to murder them.

If we look into civil government, we shall find no analogy for such an interpretation. The right to *govern* a state is not considered as conveying a right to *annihilate* it. Vattel, in his *Law of Nations*, discusses the question whether a prince who has absolute power, has a right to divide his kingdom among several successors, and says, "Every sovereignty, properly so called, is, in its own nature, *one and indivisible*; and those who have united in society can not be separated *in spite of themselves.*" "A nation becomes incorporated into a society to labor for the common welfare, as it shall think proper, by living according to wholesome laws. With this view it establishes a public authority. If it trusts this authority to a prince, even with the power of transmitting it into other hands, this can never be, without the express and unanimous consent of the citizens, with the right of really alienating or subjecting the state to another body-politic."

Nor, if we consider the ordinary business arrangements of society, shall we find any parallel to the extraordinary powers claimed by Judge Nelson for an ecclesiastical body. If twenty men enter into a partnership, or an association of any kind, they may at their pleasure *dissolve* the partnership or association; but, as a body, they have no right to erect any two or more of them into "separate and distinct" partnerships. With the dissolution of the body their whole power is gone, and the original elements combine or remain separate as they please. How preposterous would it be for a company of bank directors, met to regulate their bank, to establish two new banks in place of one, dividing out the stockholders and the stock at their own pleasure!

In an emergency in a state, the right of dismemberment is so far recognized that any province or city may be abandoned; but, as Vattel remarks, "this province, or this city, thus abandoned and dismembered from the state, is not obliged to receive the new master attempted to be given them. The people being separated from the society of which they were members, they resume all their rights; and if it be neces-

ble for them to defend their liberty against him who would subject them to his authority, they may lawfully resist him." But Judge Nelson goes far beyond this, and claims that an ecclesiastical government may dissolve itself, and then has the power to organize two or more governments in its place, which shall be binding upon all the previous members of the Church. This notion of a body dissolving itself, or enacting itself out of official being, and then having full power to control the members and the interests of the Church thus dissolved, is, to our mind, so absurd that, were it not put forth by a Judge in the highest Court of our nation, we should deem it unworthy of serious comment. If a man even has the right to commit suicide, he can scarcely divide himself after he is dead.

(3.) This may be further illustrated by the Constitution of the United States. That instrument gives Congress "power to dispose of, and make all needful rules and regulations respecting the territory" of the United States. Chief Justice Story, in commenting upon this clause, says: "The power of Congress over the public territory is clearly exclusive and universal, and their legislation is subject to no control." Yet, will Judge Nelson decide that Congress has the right to divide the territory of the United States, and to erect it into "two or more separate" and independent governments? His principles will lead to this; and if he apply his reasoning to a possible act of Congress, he would decide in favor of a *division of our republic*. His whole reasoning tends in this direction, and we are not surprised that it should be received with favor by the secessionists of the south. Nor will it be sufficient to reply that Congress can erect this territory into states. This is not the point at issue. So may the Church erect new annual conferences, subject to the General conference, as new states are still under the control of the General Government. But if the General conference, because it has "full power to make rules and regulations" for our Church, has, as Judge Nelson decides, the right to dissolve the organization, and substitute, "in its place," two new Churches, then Congress, having "power to make all needful rules and regulations" for the territory, has the right to absolve it from the jurisdiction of the United States, and to organize, "in its place," two or more "separate and distinct" governments. Thus, we have the doctrine of dissolution avowed in high places.

Whatever may be the character of the grant of power to the General conference, it is limited by certain definite restrictions. Judge Nelson disposes of these very summarily by saying, "Neither of them has any connection with, or bearing upon, the question we have been considering." Now, were we even to admit this, we should still be inclined to ask the learned Judge what body, either civil or ecclesiastical, had ever inserted in its constitution a clause prohibiting, in direct language, the dissolution or the division of the government? As one of the authorities already quoted says, each organization is supposed to be, "in its own nature, one and indivisible." No society, so far as we are acquainted, appears to have guarded against the commission of suicide.

(4.) Judge Nelson denies that the Restrictive Articles impose any disability to divide the Church, in his sense of division, and infers their ample authority from the fact that they

have "full power to make rules and regulations for our Church under these restrictions." He did not consider that these "full powers" are *absolutely*, and in *terms*, confined to *one Church* alone, and that, too, in the sense of governing, but not destroying it, and making two or more separate Churches out of it.

But while we admit that, in express language, there is no prohibition of division, we are very far from admitting that the limitations have no "connection with, or bearing upon, this question." The fifth of these clauses reads thus: "They shall not do away the privileges of our ministers or preachers of trial by a committee, and of an appeal; neither shall they do away the privileges of our members of trial before the society, or by a committee, and of an appeal." The evident meaning of this is, that no minister or member shall be deprived of his position in the Church without a regular trial. But if Judge Nelson be correct, many thousands of Methodists have been so removed. Those who were in the Methodist Episcopal Church prior to 1844, who have never been tried, and who still claim membership, are either in the Church, or they are not. If they are in the Church, then the Church still exists, and occupies "its own place," and "two new ones" have *not* been substituted for it. If they are not in the Church, they have been removed contrary to the fifth Restrictive Rule. Has this restriction, then, no "*bearing upon this question?*"

Again: the third Restriction reads thus: "They shall not change or alter any part or rule of our government, so as to do away episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." By an "itinerant general superintendency" is plainly meant a superintendency which shall extend over every part of the Church, and in which the superintendents shall pass from part to part. Thus the bishops in 1844, in their address to the General conference, and alluding evidently to propositions which had been suggested as to restricting the Episcopacy, say:

"Having noticed in what the superintendency chiefly consists, it is proper to observe that the plan of its operation is *general, embracing the whole work in connectional order, and not diocesan or sectional*. Consequently, any division of the work into districts, or otherwise, so as to create a particular charge, with any other view, or in any order, than as a prudential measure to secure to all the conferences the annual visits of the superintendents, would be an innovation on the system.

"If we have taken a correct view of this subject, our superintendency must be *itinerant, and not local*. It was wisely provided in the system of Methodism, from its very foundation, that it should be the duty of the superintendent '*to travel through the connection at large*.' And although the extension of geographical boundaries, and the great increase of the annual conferences, have made it necessary to increase the number of the bishops, still the duty required, and the obligation to perform it, remain the same.

"That such a system as our itinerant ministry could not be preserved in harmonious and efficient operation under the direction of local bishops, is too obvious to require proof. If we preserve a traveling ministry, we must have traveling superintendents."

But if the General conference has the power

to divide the Church into any number of "separate and distinct" organizations, how is the "itinerant general superintendency" secured? Already the superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church is limited to the northern and middle parts of the United States, while that of the Church, South, is confined to southern portions. Should the General conference see fit to divide the Church into fifty parts, as Judge Nelson decides may be legally done, so that each part shall comprise but about one-half of an annual conference, where will be our "general superintendency?" Has not this limitation, also, a very important "bearing upon this question?"

This will more fully appear, if we consider the circumstances under which this restriction was enacted. Dr. Coke, who had been placed in the episcopal office, had spent a part of his time in England, in connection with the Wesleyan body there. But in 1806 he addressed a letter to the annual conferences, offering to return to the United States, provided they would divide the Church into two episcopal districts, and assign him to one and Bishop Asbury to the other. This proposition the annual conferences could not entertain, but referred it to the next General conference in 1808. A suggestion was also made at the same conference, that a bishop should be elected for each annual conference. Under these circumstances, while these propositions were thus before the members of the conference, this limitation was proposed by Rev. Jesse Lee, and was adopted with great unanimity. The General conference of 1808 evidently designed to deny to all succeeding General conferences the power of dividing the Methodist Church into permanent episcopal districts. Yet, if the Church itself can be divided at the pleasure of the conference, how valueless is such a restriction!

Nor can it be said that we are to confine our investigations merely to the language employed without reference to the design of the framers of these Restrictions. Judge Story remarks that "the first and fundamental rule in the interpretation of all instruments is to construe them according to the sense of the terms, and the intention of the parties." Now, the term "itinerant general superintendency" plainly requires that the episcopal supervision of the Church, in its entire form, should be preserved. But if any doubt could exist as to the meaning of the phrase, abstractly considered, we think that doubt must be removed by considering the intention of the parties employing the language. Thus, in any aspect in which we can consider the question, we are led to the conclusion that the General conference has no power to divide the Church.

It is clear, from the Restrictive Articles, that the exercise of the powers of the General conference is confined exclusively to one Church—the Methodist Episcopal Church alone; and that it never intended, by any process whatever, to invest them with power to do indirectly what it has forbidden them to do directly. Hence, the General conference has no power to act beyond these Restrictions, except as provided for through the votes of annual conferences.

10. And here we may as well notice now several grave errors into which Judge Nelson has fallen. Some of these refer to the General conference of 1784, and others to the conference of 1808. We mention the following errors of

his Honor in reference to the General conference of 1784:

**Error 1.** He affirms that the traveling ministers "have no constituents; that they only represent themselves." The contrary is the fact; because, 1. Although the people of their charge have not chosen them by popular elections, they have chosen them as their pastors in unity with the Church, continuing in it, and greatly approving and supporting it. 2. Were it not so, the General conference could no more represent the Methodist Episcopal Church than the Presbyterians, Baptists, or any other Church. 3. The people, by dissolving this relation, may refuse to be represented by them.

**Error 2.** He assumes that the Methodist ministry are the "source and foundation of sovereign, unlimited, temporal, and ecclesiastical power." The reverse is true; because, 1. All such power, possessed by the General conference of 1784, was acquired by their relation to God as his ministers, to Mr. Wesley as his sons, and to the people, who had chosen them, as pastors. 2. By the first they were called to preach the Gospel; the second recognized them as Christian teachers; the third gave them ecclesiastical powers.

**Error 3.** The Judge says "the conference took the entire government into their own hands, and organized and established the Methodist Episcopal Church." We reply, 1. That societies, stations, circuits, and conferences, in substance, as they exist to this day, were formed long before that General conference assembled. 2. They continued the same Church substantially that had been in successful operation for many years previous.

**Error 4.** He states that "the General conference of 1784 established the doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church." This is fallacious; because, 1. They made no change in the doctrines, and only a few verbal changes in the Discipline. 2. The doctrines had been long established both in England and America. 3. They had no power for such a work, except by usurping it from Mr. Wesley and the people of their charge.

**Error 5.** His Honor says "they appointed the several authorities." This is contradicted by the fact that Mr. Wesley had previously appointed superintendents, elders, and deacons; and they did nothing more than to accept these.

**Error 6.** He says "they might have organized any number of distinct Churches." They disclaimed all such powers by applying to Mr. Wesley. Dr. Coke had no power to ordain ministers except for the Methodist Episcopal Church; hence, they could not organize another Church.

11. The Judge maintains that the General conference of 1844 possessed all the power of the conference of 1784, and had, therefore, power to divide the Church; and that the separation took place in pursuance of the action of competent authority—by the action of the founders themselves.

The Court allows that the claimants are separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church. Of course, then, they do not now belong to the Church, and, according to the law laid down by the Judge, are not entitled to recover.

The sovereignty ascribed to the delegated conference is absurd, because it is restrained by six Restrictions. And this Restriction, in 1844, was acknowledged both by the seceders

and adherents, and hence they sent the matter to the annual conferences to remove the restriction.

If we admit the competency of the General conference to divide the Church as to the membership, it does not follow that they were competent to divide the fund. This incompetency was admitted in sending it round to the annual conferences.

We must deny, *in toto*, the declaration of the Judge, that this separation was by "the act of the founders of the fund themselves." The founders of the fund were dead. The present race of preachers were not its founders; they are only its managers. The founders were those who first started it. The growth of it since, under the management of the late and present race of preachers, is quite a different thing from founding it. The managers of the Girard College, or the Smithsonian Institute, are not, and never were their founders. This specious argument of the Court, in support of its opinions, falls to the ground.

The assent of the General conference that the south might secede, is no approval of the secession, nor does it prove that the Church could legally divide itself.

The Judge reiterates that the power to divide the Church has been claimed by the leading minds of the Church, and that this was especially the case in 1844. Nothing can be more contrary to the facts of the case than this assertion, as we have fully shown in this history.

Dr. Bangs says, in his History: "The General conference has no right, no authority, thus to scatter, tear, and slay, the body which they are bound to keep together, to nourish, to protect, and to preserve in one harmonious whole."

Bishop Emory, in the Methodist Magazine for 1830, most emphatically goes against the existence of such power. And the decision in the case of the Canada conference on this point, in 1823, declares against division.

The Judge claims that the General conference of 1844 asserted its power to divide the Church. He says:

"As it respects the action of this body in the matter of division, no one can pretend but that it proceeded upon the assumption of unquestioned power to erect the Church into two separate ecclesiastical establishments. Independently of this question of property, the power of severance is written on every page of their proceedings."

It is admitted that the General conference of 1844 did provide for the peaceful separation of the south from the Church, if necessity required it. But this is altogether a different thing from that spoken of by Judge Nelson. The report adopted by the conference recognizes the continued existence of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Beside, the division spoken of by the Judge was disclaimed by the leading men of the conference. Nearly all the leading men who were in the conference in 1844, were also members in 1848. They say, by a vote of one hundred and forty-three to three,

"There exists no power in the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to pass any act which either directly or indirectly effectuates, authorizes, or sanctions a division of said Church."

Dr. Capers's plan for division, by almost gen-

eral consent, was abandoned as unconstitutional and impracticable. Drs. Paine, Winans, and Smith, declared that the conference had no such powers. And Messrs. Hau-line, Bangs, and Finley, uttered similar sentiments.

"There is not in any government a provision made to divide itself, and consequently it must be done by violence, or in a peaceful manner by common consent."—*Dr. Paine.*

"The only proposition was, that they might have liberty, if necessary, to organize a separate conference."—*Dr. Winans.*

"This General conference, I am aware, has no authority directly to effect this separation."—*Dr. Smith.*

The General conference of 1844 neither designed to divide the Church, nor did they attempt to do so. All the debaters denied that any such power existed in the General conference. The prospective separation of the south was viewed as a contingency, and this depends on an emergency which might not happen. There was no resolution of the General conference proposing to divide the Church, to destroy the old Church, or organize new ones. There was a withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church apprehended and provided for. No one in the General conference pretended to act for the south, and to separate or withdraw them. This, it was conceded by all, if done, must be done by the south themselves. If, indeed, the Methodist Episcopal Church, as it existed in 1844, was divided into two Churches, and the old Church ceased to exist, it was done without the knowledge, concurrence, or consent of the northern conferences.

The General conference of 1844 did not assert or possess the power to divide and destroy the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They only provided for a secession which they were assured would take place, and which they had no power to prevent.

12. We may here notice several grave errors of the Judge in reference to the power of the delegated General conference since 1808.

*Error 1.* His Honor says: "As it respects the power of the General conference since the modifications of 1808, it is the same as previously existed. . . The powers conferred on the General conference are broad and unlimited, . . . the same as before." "The Restrictive Articles have no connection with, or bearing upon a division of the Church, in the sense of substituting two others in its place." The fallacy of the Judge's proposition is proved from the fact, that the conference of 1808 designed by these Restrictions to confine the exercise of the powers of the General conference to the Methodist Episcopal Church exclusively. Hence any act making rules and regulations for another Church, would be a violation of the constitution.

*Error 2.* The Court affirms, that to substitute two Churches for one, would be in accordance with the Restrictions. The proof to the contrary is, that the constitution acknowledges the Episcopacy as a unit; and to substitute two independent Churches would destroy that unity, and create two independent Episcopacies in its place. And this is expressly forbidden in the Restriction.

*Error 3.* The Judge, in support of his "opinion," sees nothing in the division of the Church incompatible with the rights and privileges of ministers and members, as protected by the constitution. We reply to this assumption, 1. That the Restrictive Articles protect these privileges inviolably against the powers of the General con-

ference. 2. And such a division as his Honor asserts, would take them out of the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church without any such disciplinary process, in open violation of the constitution.

*Error 4.* The Judge errs greatly in his argument on the case of the Canada conference. For, 1. He makes a mere inference from an obscure declaration the standard to contradict the express provision of the constitution. 2. According to his interpretation, the General conference can do *indirectly* what they can not do *directly*. 3. He acknowledges that the General conference of 1844 were restricted from dividing the Book Concern *directly*; but that they had the power to do it indirectly by dividing the Church, and then the Court could compel a division of the property of the Book Concern.

*Error 5.* The Judge quotes the case of the Canada conference as an analogous one for dividing the Church. It is enough to say to this, that the General conference disavowed by their acts and declarations that they had any power to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church.

*Error 6.* The Court says: "Power to erect the Church into two separate ecclesiastical establishments is unquestioned. . . . The power of severance is written on every page of their proceedings." This is fallacious; because, 1. No such design to divide the Church is expressed in the plan, as it is called. 2. No such design can be *inferred* from the character and general design of the plan. 3. Nor from the adoption of the conference, for they disavowed any such design, and all such power. 4. Nor from the history of the plan. Indeed, the whole history of the plan recognizes the organization and government of the Methodist Episcopal Church unchanged and entire, *before, at, and after* the accomplishment of all the provisions of the plan. The Louisville convention makes this recognition: so does the Petersburg General conference; the commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, do the same; the plan itself, in express terms, recognizes the Methodist Episcopal Church unimpaired and unchanged, after all its provisions are fulfilled.

13. The Judge falls readily in with the Louisville convention, who claimed the *authority* of the General conference for all their proceedings. They said: "We do nothing but what we are expressly authorized to do by the supreme, or, rather, highest legislative power of the Church. Would the Church authorize us to do wrong?" The General conference of 1844 did not give any authority to this purpose; they barely acknowledged the power of the southern conferences to secede; but they did not pretend to give authority, or even sanction or approbation. But the south not only proclaimed they had this authority, but it was made an inducement by the annexation of funds. In our history we have sufficiently discussed this subject; and the Judge, in giving countenance to those erroneous views, has done great injustice to innocent men.

14. The Judge prepares the way for his opinion by alleging something in the case "peculiar and novel, and differing essentially from the cases of this description that have heretofore fallen under the jurisdiction of a court of chancery." We must infer from this, that the Court considered the books containing reports on, and embodying the laws of charitable uses, furnish no authority or precedent by which to decide this case. Hence the Court, discarding all previous judicial decisions, had full scope to exer-

cise its own views on the subject. This sweeping declaration prepared the way for the anomalous decision given in this case, differing, as it does from all other cases as to the character of the decision, but agreeing with the general current of decided cases in its principles. This *peculiar and novel* character given arbitrarily to the case, relieves it at once from any influence from the long and well-established principles of the Mosaic, canon, civil, British, and American codes, with which his Honor's decision is at variance, and which we will undertake to show in this review.

15. In connection with asserting "broad and unlimited" powers to the General conference, Judge Nelson refers to Canada in the following terms:

"The practice of the General conference since 1808 confirms this view. The connection of the annual Upper Canada conference with the Methodist Episcopal Church was dissolved in 1828, and that body authorized to erect itself into an independent ecclesiastical establishment."

It is unfortunate for the decision of the Judge that he quoted this case. Because,

(1.) The General conference of 1828 decided that they had no power to divide the Methodist Episcopal Church; and should the Canada conference separate or secede, she must do it on her own responsibility, without authority from the General conference for doing so.

(2.) The Canada conference withdrew from the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, for political and sectional reasons, deemed on both sides sufficient. They parted, too, in kindness and peace.

(3.) The southern conferences absolutely refused to divide any portion of the Book Concern with the Canada brethren. The southern conferences gave three hundred and eighty-four votes against dividing the funds. So that if all the other conferences had voted in its favor, these very conferences, which are now prosecuting a claim in the civil court, under precisely the same circumstances, positively refused to give Canada a dollar by division.

(4.) The south, while in connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, both in the General conference of 1832 and 1844, officially declared their constitutional *inability* to divide the Book Concern, by submitting it to the annual conferences, and acting on their decisions.

(5.) Dr. Paine, now Bishop Paine, in his report to the General conference of 1836, declared that the vote of the annual conferences, though that was especially the vote of the south, was "final and conclusive against the claims of the Canada brethren."

(6.) After all these official declarations, in 1828, 1832, 1836, 1844, when the annual conferences decided against *their claims*, precisely as they *decided against Canada*, instead of submitting to the authority of the constitution, as the Canada brethren did, they resorted to the civil courts.

(7.) The Court has overlooked all these facts, and, in opposition to the principles formerly avowed by the south, and in express opposition to the constitution and rules of the Church, has decreed in favor of the new and unfounded claims of the south as now put forth.

(8.) In former years our southern brethren were never charged with sordid and dishonest views, because they withheld their votes; and yet their vote was almost unanimous, and for

good and sufficient reasons in their estimation, and in the estimation of the Church. But all the reasons of right and justice bearing on the consciences of men, that existed then in the one case, exist now in the other. The act, therefore, in both cases, is entitled to the same construction, the question of right and duty being the same. The constitutional majorities in the General conference, in both cases, were in favor of the distribution; but in both cases the requisite majority was wanting in the annual conferences.

16. According to the Court, the General conference of 1844 authorized the south to destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church. It is not, indeed, pretended, that the conference did, by their act, destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church, but that they authorized the southern conferences to destroy it; for Judge Nelson contends for the division of the Church, so as to form two new ones out of the old one. The claim is this, that the absolute power over the Church could be transferred by the General conference to whomsoever that body saw fit to transfer it; that they did transfer it to as many annual conferences as saw fit to use it. It was an organized Church when the General conference of 1844 adjourned. It would have remained so, if the southern conferences had not separated from it. It was therefore in their keeping. The highest functions of legislative and conventional or constitutional power over the whole organic body was, according to the doctrine of the Court and its teachers, vested by the Church in the General conference; and this was again transferred to the southern conferences, did they see fit to exercise it. This is both absurd and impossible.

17. The Judge awards the property to persons of whom the founders never dreamed. The original founders of the fund never intended that it should be appropriated to persons out of the Church, or to those who had withdrawn from it, either violently or peaceably. The intent of the founders is the law in the case. The General conference of 1844 were not the founders, but the managers or trustees of the fund. The conference could not divide it differently from the intent of the founders; and the founders have long since died. Even the preachers, as a body, could not constitutionally divide the fund to persons out of the Church. If all the annual conferences had consented to a division to persons out of the Church, the division could not have been legally made; because such was not the intent of the founders. According to the law that governs religious trusts, there is no power on earth to change the design of the founders. And the founders did not, sixty years before, contemplate the division of the Church. This fund was founded some sixty years before this attempted division. The growth of it is not its foundation; and the intent of the present managers can not alter the intent of its founders. That intent was fixed by the founders at the time the foundation was laid, and after this the founders themselves could not alter the intent. They had made their dedication, and could not recall it. The decision of the Judge perverts the very purposes of trust.

18. In attempting to bring the complainants into the proper characters of beneficiaries of the fund, he evades the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and employs, we must say, sophistical language. The Court says of the

complainants: "It is not pretended but that they are still traveling preachers, in the Methodist Episcopal connection," etc. This assertion is true, but it is a sophism. They were not of the Methodist Episcopal Church; though they were of the Methodist Episcopal communion. The Methodist Episcopal Church South is of the Methodist Episcopal communion, but not of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The United Brethren, the Methodist Episcopal Church in Canada, and several other bodies of men, are of the "Methodist Episcopal communion," but they are not of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Beside, the complainants have renounced the Methodist Episcopal Church, and organized themselves into another Church. It is in vain the Judge asks, "What act have they done to deprive them of the description of persons for whose relief its proceeds have been permanently devoted?" We answer, they have seceded from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and therefore they no longer belong to it. They have done *this act*, the act of *secession* or withdrawal, and that is enough.

Furthermore, the south *resisted* the lawful act of the General conference to final secession, on their own responsibility, from the Methodist Episcopal Church. The conference had the right to restrain, reprove, correct, suspend, or expel Bishop Andrew. The south *rebelled* against the *lawful authority* of the conference, and consummated their rebellion in wholly renouncing the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The south have perpetrated an act of unqualified *rebellion*. They have also seceded and withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and are no longer members or ministers of that Church; and although the south seceded according to the plan, this does not mend the matter; for the plan puts them out of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the place of retaining them in it.

The complainants can not be in and out of the Church at the same time, and as they claim not being in it, but out of it, the law which limits the distribution to persons in the Church, can not give it to those who are avowedly out of it. It is true, the Court has attempted, in opposition to the bill and the proofs, to bring the complainants within the Church, because they are Methodists, in a "Methodist Episcopal connection and communion, and subject to its doctrines and Discipline." If being Episcopal Methodists entitles them to the fund, then the Episcopal Methodists of Canada are entitled. If holding to the same doctrines and Discipline entitles them, then the Protestant and Wesleyan Methodists may recover from us. Or, if assuming the same name entitles them, then all a man has to do, to obtain his neighbor's property, is, to assume his name, and apply to Judge Nelson. There are many John Smiths, and if the principle be good which is assumed by the Court in this case, any John Smith may claim the property of John Smith, without proving his identity with the real ownership. Inasmuch, then, as the claimants do not belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church, nor distressed preachers thereof, the decision in their favor is contrary to law, as laid down by the Court itself.

19. The decision of the Court is *without precedents or authorities*. The Judge cites no authority, for the plain reason that none existed that would sustain him. In the decisions of



the Circuit Courts of the United States, it is customary for the judges to give long and elaborate written opinions to sustain their decisions, in which many, if not all the authorities relied on will be cited, and a course of reasoning gone into, to show the analogy in the cases recited to the one in question; and if the case be *peculiar* or *novel*, the cases having the nearest analogy are adduced, to aid in the decision. But no such course is taken by the learned Judge. Hence, the mode in which this decision is given, is, according to legal parlance, "jumping into a decision."

The original opinions and decisions, from which our courts of chancery derive their precedents, came from England, where the judge is in the place of the king, so that his decisions are the laws of the land; and following this "safe precedent," our judges become law-makers, or legislators. Juries, in chancery, are seldom admitted, by which we can have the opinion of twelve unsophisticated men. Nevertheless, had the rule of "safe precedents" been observed in this case, the decision would have been different. But to avoid the force of the authorities cited by the defendants' counsel, the case is assumed to be peculiar and novel. The law, then, which steps in with such force in this case, not being statutory, nor common law, nor yet the "law of safe precedent," is no other than the opinion of the Court, unsupported by a course of reasoning or cited authorities.

20. The Court, in this case, decides not only without precedents or authorities, but also without giving reasons or proofs for his decision. The Judge gives no reasons in support of his decision. The *dicta* of Chief Justice Hale, Blackstone, Kent, or Story, against long-established principles of law, or unsupported by reasons, will find little favor with reasonable men. And why should the dictum of Judge Nelson be of greater weight than his more learned predecessors? The defendants gave strong facts, and sound reasonings on them, to sustain their answer. The Judge concedes, that "the main question in the case, therefore, arises upon the answer, and the proofs to support it." Still he does not attend to these reasons, to show how far the bill entitles the complainants to their cause. It seems no proofs were necessary to sustain the bill, and this is taken for granted; for, because the bill brings in the complainants within the description to recover, they must recover, whether the bill is sustained by proof or not. He makes no allusion to proofs in support of the bill, but because the bill makes out its own case, the plaintiff, according to all sound jurisprudence, must sustain his bill by evidence. If the defendant make no plea, yet the plaintiff must, by proofs, show himself entitled to recover, or he could not do so. The present case seems to have been decided on entirely new rules and principles of practice, reversing the old order of procedure. We allow the complainants brought proofs; but the Judge decided the case in their favor, because the bill made out the case. The Court says, "The bill brings the complainants within the description of persons entitled to a distribution of the proceeds of the fund." Heretofore, in courts of equity, if the proofs in favor of the bill do not sustain it, the bill must fall, whether the answer is sustained by proof or not. In the case before us, because the claimants make out their case in their bill, irrespective of proofs, they must recover.

21. The decision of the Court is contrary to the best and safest decisions governing such cases; for the general law in such cases is, that withdrawal from a Church works a forfeiture of privileges. But the Court has decided, that voluntarily withdrawing from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and becoming members of another Church entirely independent, forfeits no right to membership in the Methodist Episcopal Church. He asks, "What act have they done to deprive them of the description of persons for whose relief its proceeds have been permanently devoted?"

The authorities cited by defendants' counsel, some twenty or more cases, being all the leading and strong cases in the books which bear upon the point, all go to establish the point that seceders take nothing with them in such cases. But all this is set aside at one sweep by the Court, by considering the case "peculiar and novel;" that is, that none of the cases cited were analogous to this, so that the decisions in these cases do not, in the view of the Court, apply to this. But the Court does not show wherein they differ. This in an easy way of disposing authorities. But had these authorities been admitted, the decision would have been different.

22. We maintain that the decision of the Court in this case is not a judicial decision, but a mere legislative enactment, in itself arbitrary, and unjust in its operations. It is without the support of safe precedents or authorities; it is contrary to the reasons and proofs belonging to the case; and it is actually contrary to the entire range of precedents or authorities governing such cases, in former decisions of a like nature. The Judge says:

"Assume, therefore, that the General conference were disabled, on account of the sixth Restrictive Article, from appropriating the fund; still, if the complainants bring themselves within the description of beneficiaries, they are not thereby deprived of it. The law steps in, and enforces the right."

We have seen that they have not brought themselves within the description of beneficiaries, whether as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or as distressed traveling preachers. What law is it which steps in to override the intent of the founders of the fund, and the vote of its trustees or managers?

The Court has said "the founders had a right to prescribe the terms and conditions upon which the proceeds and profits should be distributed, and the persons to whom, which, when prescribed, furnishes the law of the case for the Court." This is justly said. It is also correctly affirmed by the Judge that the beneficiaries must be "distressed traveling, supernumerary, and worn-out preachers in the connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church, their widows and orphans." The Court further lays down the law—"to entitle complainants, and those they represent, to the enjoyment, they must bring themselves within the description." But the claimants do not pretend to be in the Methodist Episcopal Church, or to be distressed or deficient. They affirm that they have seceded from the Church. They claim by the plan; but the plan puts them out of the Church, in the place of putting them into it.

The Court having averred the law, as laid down by itself, which is the rule of distribution prescribed by its founders, there is, nevertheless, a law invoked to enforce the claims of the south.

This law is not a statute, for there is none, at least none cited. It must, we suppose, be the law of equity, so called. This is nothing more than a series of precedents, in the shape of decisions of judges, first in England, and then in the United States. This law consists of the opinions of judges as to what is right between man and man, in good conscience.

The original decisions from which our courts of chancery derive their precedents, came from England, where the judge is in the place of the king, whose decisions were looked on as laws. Thus judges, with us, are law-makers or legislators. Their opinions are law. Such opinions may be formed with a view to compromise, to split the difference, or divide the profit or gain. The law which here "steps in and enforces the right," not being the statutory law, nor the law of safe precedent, is nothing else than the mere opinion of the judge, unsustained by reason or authorities, by constitutions or statute laws.

23. The decision of Judge Nelson is contrary to the principles of the Mosaic law, the civil or Roman law, the canon or ecclesiastical law, British law, and American law.

24. Although we do not accuse the Court of intentional wrong, there is manifested a sympathy and anxiety on the part of the Court that went far to form the decision. The opinion says, "if reasonably consistent with the intent of the original founders." It does not say positively and *bona fide* consistent therewith, but *reasonably* so. The Court was *anxious* to administer so as to secure to the south their claim. Hence it was easy to do what there was an *anxiety* to do, especially as there was *power* to do so. With this sympathy or bias for the south, the Court was led to overlook all the authorities, and the avowed withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church. This anxiety and sympathy for the south could overlook the Restrictive Rules, and the avowed profession of the south to adhere to the plan, which required the votes of the annual conferences. The principles, too, of the Mosaic, civil, canon, British, and American codes, could be overlooked; and, more disastrous still, the tenures of all religious trusts were disregarded, to make way for granting the claims of those who pressed them with zeal and perseverance.

Still, we can easily explain all this. The south pressed their claims with earnestness, confidence, bullying, and constant charges of fraud and dishonesty against the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was currently circulated that the General conference *promised* to divide those funds, and that the refusal of the annual conferences was a piece of consummate fraud. The southern commissioners and their aids were unremitting to inculcate their new doctrines, in regard to religious trusts, so as to run them into partnership associations. Thus a sort of popular opinion favorable to the south was formed.

Add to this, many preachers and laymen of New York, having southern affinities, or desiring at any rate to divide the funds, threw in their entire influence in favor of the distribution in any practicable way, with little or no reference to sound principles, or the final results of such a course.

Here, then, was the Court, surrounded with these influences, the south contending for recognition, and the friends of the defendants were against their success. It is no wonder the Judge decided as he did; and the more especially

as he evidently did not study the peculiar polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, so as to give a consistent decision in the case. Hence, through the lack of proper scrutiny on the part of the Judge, the rampant and unscrupulous persistence of the southern slaveholders, and the unwise concessions of many in the Methodist Episcopal Church, especially in New York, a decision is made, perilous to all the religious trusts in the United States, not only in the Methodist Episcopal Church, but in all the Churches.

25. We are bound, however, to thank the Court for exonerating the Methodist Episcopal Church from fraud, dishonesty, or wicked robbery. This he does effectually in deciding that the General conference could not divide the funds without the proper votes of the annual conferences. He decides that the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church are honest men. This is worth ten thousand times twice over the sum gained to the south. The ground taken in the famous Appeal of the southern commissioners, in the bill of the plaintiffs, and by the southern press in general, was, that the General conference had full power to distribute the funds without the constitutional vote of the annual conferences. The Court leaves this to the special pleaders, who had the bad eminence of using the vile charge, and goes on the principle that a court of equity can order that done which the General conference could not do. Thus the charge of wicked robbery is discarded by the Judge.

26. While the parent Wesleyan body in Europe and the Methodist Episcopal Church in America have always maintained that the division of the body was schismatic, dangerous, and unscriptural, the right of the British conference, or the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, approved by the annual conferences, to agree to the separation of a portion of its members, and their organization into an independent body, may be said to be fully established. This is wholly different from division, as used by Judge Nelson. In this manner the Methodist Episcopal Church was separated from the British conference. It was thus the Church in Canada was separated. In like manner the French and Australian conferences have been formed. All these petitioned the parent body for such organization; the parent bodies agreed to it; the new bodies accepted the grant, formed their new organizations, and continued in peace, harmony, and fraternization with the parent bodies. Such a course is right and proper. And as five such regular organizations, namely, the Irish conference, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Wesleyan Canada Church, the French Church, and the Australian Churches, have been formed, many more such will doubtless yet take place. Germany, China, Africa, South America, will, we trust, be thus formed. So, in connection with the British Wesleyans, many such will be formed. But the body itself can not be divided, and two new ones substituted in the place of the defunct Church.

It was the earnest desire of the General conference of 1844 that the south should be organized similar to the Methodist Episcopal Church, or the Church in Canada. But the violent and revolutionary course of the south prevented this. We trust, however, they will retract, and assume a different character.

How far such a legitimate separation should require the division of the general funds of religious trusts, we are at no loss to decide. The Wesleyan body in Europe divided none of their

religious trust funds with the Methodist Episcopal Church at its organization. If any thing was given by the British conference to the American Church, it was on no claim set up for it, but out of pure benevolence, and the good pleasure of the parent body. When the Canada conference was organized, nothing was given them out of the Book Concern, though they claimed it. Neither the French nor Australian conferences have set up any such claims; and if they did, they would do so in vain. This is the case with those Methodist Churches, whose independence is acknowledged by the parent bodies. None of these sued their mother Churches, because they did not see fit to divide with them those funds that were especially in their hands for the general benefit of their own organized bodies. The unworthy and unnatural litigation of the southern pro-slavery Church, is a blot and reproach to the otherwise fair fame of Methodism in this and the like cases.

27. We will conclude this review by a few remarks:

(1.) The distribution of trust funds perils the tenure of all Church property. To admit the legal principle as a principle of judicial action that those who secede from an organized Church are entitled to a *pro rata* portion of the Church property, would destroy the possibility of its holding property under a voluntary organization. If the law will distribute the Church must dissolve its organization, or cease to hold property in any form. Those who secede in the north because the Church will not exclude all slaveholders, will come in for their share, because they contributed to the fund. The southern seceders must have their share because the Church will not abandon its well-established principles and discipline on slavery. Whenever individuals or bodies, under local or temporary questions, see fit to secede from the Church, and the law allows of distribution, the property will soon be dissipated. All the funds and property vested for education, theological seminaries, churches, parsonages, burying-grounds, Bible societies, and all benevolent associations, must in like manner be distributed;

because they all depend on the same great principles of the Mosaic, civil, canon, and British codes.

(2.) The fact that the Church parted with these brethren in kindness, does not alter the case. Kindness and good feeling surrenders no right. The General conference *said*, separating and adhering members *said*, the division of this fund *can not be made* without the assent of the annual conferences, and *must depend upon their vote*.

(3.) The same difficulty, to a great extent, must occur, if the Church herself recognize the moral right of the seceding portions, and voluntarily render them an account and make distribution. To give it voluntarily might lead in other cases to the legal right to demand it in all cases; for the trustees of a charity are said to be just, not generous. A few instances of this species of *moral justice* going beyond *legal right*, would prove subversive of all religious trusts.

(4.) Beside, if the Church voluntarily divide to one seceding party, she must do it to all. And if this be done, the Church must be torn into fragments. The Methodist Episcopal Church wisely avoided this in reference to several secessions from her body, such as the Methodist Protestants, the American Wesleyans, and others.

(5.) If the civil courts may attribute powers to the Gospel ministry which they always disavowed, and then make this monstrous character the rule to contradict the plain provisions of the constitution and rules to the dissolution of the Churches, as his Honor has done in the case of the Methodist Episcopal Church, then all the Churches in the country are hourly exposed to dissolution and destruction.

(6.) If the civil courts may force any construction they please on the constitutions and rules of the Churches, in direct opposition to the uniform exposition and administration of those Churches themselves, as the Court has done in the case of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they may, if they choose, convict the Churches of treason, or condemn them as public nuisances, and order the civil powers to blot them out of existence.

## CHAPTER LVII.

### OUTLINES OF THE CINCINNATI LAW CASE.

I. A BRIEF, yet sufficiently full outline of the suit on the Cincinnati Church property case will form a part of our historical narrative. We find this with sufficient fullness in the publication on this subject, issued in a pamphlet of one hundred and fifty-six pages octavo, by Swornstedt & Poe, in 1852.\* In the brief preface of the publishers we will find historical data necessary to understand the case.

### CIRCUIT COURT UNITED STATES.

FOR THE DISTRICT OF OHIO.

HON. JUDGE LEAVITT, PRESIDING.

WILLIAM A. SMITH, and others, } *In Equity.*  
vs.  
LEROY SWORNSTEDT, and others, }

*Counsel for Plaintiffs.*—Messrs. R. M. CORWINE and HENRY STANBERRY, of Ohio, and JUDGE BRIEN, of Tennessee.

*Counsel for Defendants.*—Messrs. ADAM N. RIDDLE, JUDGE LANE, and THOMAS EWING, of Ohio.

The bill in this case was filed on the 12th day of July, 1849.

The answer of Swornstedt and Power, then the Agents of the Methodist Book Concern, Cincinnati, and the answer of James B. Finley, were filed February 20, 1850.

The hearing commenced at Columbus, on the

\* The Methodist Church Property Case. Arguments of Messrs. Adam N. Riddle, Judge Lane, and Thomas Ewing, counsel for the defendants in the suit of William A. Smith, and others, vs. Leroy Swornstedt, and others, heard before Hon. Judge H. H. Leavitt, in the Circuit Court United States, for the District of Ohio, June 24-July 2, 1852. To which is appended the Decision of the Judge. Cincinnati: Swornstedt & Poe. 1852. Pp. 166, octavo. Price 30 cents.

24th day of June, and the arguments closed on the 2d of July, 1852.

The Judge postponed his decision in the case till the opening of the term of the Court on the third Tuesday in October.

The Rev. William A. Smith, A. L. P. Green, and Charles B. Parsons, commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and Rev. John F. Wright, Leroy Swormstedt, Adam Poe, Edward Thomson, and Michael Marlay, commissioners of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were all in attendance.

Judge M'Lean declined sitting on the case, principally in consequence of having been consulted as to the mode of changing the sixth Restrictive Rule, through the action of the annual conferences, and, to some extent, involving the effect of that rule on the power of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The evidence agreed upon by counsel on both sides, and read in this case, was the same used in the case of Henry B. Bascom, and others, vs. George Lane, and others, heard in New York in May, 1851. The testimony relied upon by the plaintiffs and the defendants, is found in two books compiled by agreement of counsel in the New York suit. They are designated as proofs, numbered *one* and *two*. Reference was likewise made to the book of Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, printed in 1840; Emory's History of the Discipline; also, the printed journals of the *several General conferences* of said Church for 1840, '44, '48; and Bangs's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

It was the unanimous judgment of the commissioners on both sides, that all the arguments submitted to the Court ought to be published in one book, that all who chose might examine and judge of the case for themselves as presented by the counsel. The commissioners, therefore, before they left Columbus, agreed upon a *JOINT PUBLICATION*—the work to be put to press so soon as the arguments were received at Cincinnati in manuscript. This arrangement, though very desirable, was abandoned; two of the counsel for the plaintiffs, Messrs. Stanberry and Brien, having failed to furnish their arguments for publication. Mr. Corwine prepared his argument in due time, but it was not deemed proper to publish this alone without the arguments of his colleagues. The publication was delayed to October 26, 1852, and was then put to press, as further delay was deemed useless.

2. Mr. R. M. Corwine opened the case for the plaintiffs, and was followed by Mr. Riddle in the defense.

Mr. Riddle commences by giving a brief view of the economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church before and at the time of the withdrawal of that portion of it, which now constitutes the "Methodist Episcopal Church, South." This is done very accurately. We give a brief synopsis of his argument, and when we add, we include our remarks in brackets, or otherwise designate it.

Up to the year 1808 the General conference was composed of all the preachers in the Church who had traveled four years. In that year a delegated General conference was instituted by all the conferences. In transferring the powers of the whole body of preachers to the delegated conference, these powers transferred were restricted by six articles, which can be altered only by the three-fourth votes of the preachers in the annual conferences, and a two-third vote

of the General conference. These six articles are, in every legal sense, the Constitution of the Church; and the restraints upon the General conference, embodied in these, are the only security for the rights and privileges of the ministers and members, except the wisdom and piety of the General conference.

One of these restrictions prohibits the General conference from "so altering our rules as to do away Episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our general superintendency." Or, in other words, the bishops must travel throughout the whole work.

Another restriction limited the application of the proceeds of the Book Concern to those ministers within the pale of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And the southern delegates unannouncedly agreed and acted on this at the General conference of 1844, and for some time after.\*

The bishops, from the first, were held amenable to the General conference, for both moral and official conduct, and liable to be expelled by the conference for improper conduct of any kind. The Discipline had laid down no form of trial for bishops to be pursued by the General conference, whether for improper conduct or immorality; and a bishop might be expelled for improper conduct, if the General conference deemed it necessary. The General conference of 1844 were not bound by any rule of procedure, either in law or precedent, in investigating the case of Bishop Andrew. And as the Bishop acknowledged all the facts, there was no necessity for formality. [There were two precedents in 1828, the one in the trial of Bishop Soule, the other in the trial of Bishop Hedding. But these cases were unknown to Mr. Riddle, as they were not published from the MS. journals. They will be seen in our list of documents, No. 54.]

At the Louisville convention in May, 1845, a new and distinct "ecclesiastical organization" was instituted, "separate from, and independent of," the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the denomination of the "Methodist Episcopal Church, South." Hence, the conferences represented in the convention have *withdrawn* from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and have forfeited all legal claim to every part of the Church property.†

There was never any *compact*, in regard to slavery, as the southerners say; for it requires two independent parties to enter into a treaty or compact, whereas the rules on slavery were enacted by a homogeneous body of delegates, acting under a common constitutional authority.

The action of the General conference was founded on the right to expel a bishop for improper conduct, if the majority thought it necessary; and the conduct of the Bishop was improper conduct. The right to *expel* involves necessarily the right to suspend, depose, censure, restrain, advise, admonish. The words, "if they think it necessary," would not be added, if the words "improper conduct" had meant crime only; for crime it would always be imperatively necessary to depose a bishop;‡

† The General conference had no power to divide the Church, or to authorize others to divide it. Dr. Capers's proposition to divide was not entertained. The conferences composing the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, had the right to

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 7-11.

† Id., p. 11.

‡ Id., pp. 11-15.

withdraw; and this no more affected the integrity of the Church than the withdrawal of the Canada conference did.\*

Beside, the south have nullified the plan, and could have no rights under it.†

Add to all the foregoing, that all sober overtures to the south for settling the matter, without going to law, were frustrated, or rejected by the south alone, and not by the Methodist Episcopal Church, or any of its officials.‡

The claim of the complainants has no foundation in law or equity. It depends upon the law of *charitable uses*. A charitable use is a *public use*. It is called charitable, mainly, because the largest portion of that kind of public property, in every Christian country, is based upon a *charitable* foundation. There are four elements in every class of charitable uses:

(1.) The founders of and contributors to the charity.

(2.) Trustees of the charity, who hold the legal estate in trust.

(3.) Managers of the charity, who take charge of it, who conduct it, and who distribute it.

(4.) The beneficiaries, among whom the property is distributed, according to the purpose of the charity; *the use of which was originally impressed upon it*.

The management of the charity is according to the scheme, or plan, which was originally impressed upon it by the *founders*; or where it is of a general nature, and a charity at large, as it is called, a court of equity, which protects all kinds of uses, takes charge of it, and establishes a *scheme*, as was done in the case of *Mogridge vs. Thackwell*.|| The beneficiaries in the case under consideration have no vested or fixed right, no power to alienate. They can not dispose of this property. Had all the beneficiaries of the Church, before the establishment of the "Methodist Episcopal Church, South," alienated their *claim*, it would have amounted to nothing. They must answer to the description of the beneficiaries at the *time* when the income or profits are *dealt out*.

[Several important legal authorities are here quoted.]

In the case before the Court, you have all the elements of a *charitable use*; you have the *founders*—those who contributed their means, either in labor or money; you have the *trustees*, who hold the legal estate, subject to the *trust*. Sometimes trustees are *managers* of the charity, *sometimes distinct*. In this case the functions are distinct. The managers of this *charity* are the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America; the Methodist Episcopal Church as an organized, ecclesiastical institution, acting as an organized form. The managers of the charity exist under the law of *charitable uses*. The Methodist Episcopal Church, as an ecclesiastical body, entitled to hold property, entitled to temporalities, entitled to legal privileges, holds them all under the law of charitable, or *pious uses*; and the institution itself exists under the law. The property in controversy in this case is held by a corporation, known by the name of "the Methodist Book Concern," incorporated by the General Assembly of the State of Ohio, by an "Act to incorporate the Methodist Book Concern at Cincinnati," passed March 12, 1839. The Church manages the charity through the General conference and the annual conferences.

The General conference takes the general direction and superintendency over the whole concern. It appoints the trustees and changes them. The annual conferences seek out the beneficiaries and appropriate the amounts allotted to each. In the last place you have the beneficiaries; who are they? Not all the ministers of the Church? No! they are the "traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers of the Church, their wives, widows, and children." They are the *beneficiaries*. They must be of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which is a *unity*. It is a body not exactly incorporated under the law, but it is a body possessing, not to a certain extent, so far as respects its charitable purposes, and in a court of equity, and in reference to property, a *corporate capacity*. It has precisely in equity that sort of capacity which an association of individuals, who are not a mere *partnership* or a tenancy in common at law, have, when they are at liberty to act in a certain collective capacity, if not actually clothed with all the powers and attributes of a corporation. The character in a court of equity of the Methodist Episcopal Church is what is generally called a *quasi corporation*; and, in all charitable uses, the bodies and individuals, when they take under the charity, in succession, take in that *quasi corporate capacity*.

The conferences take no vested title, nothing that they can dispose of, and nothing that they can claim, except under the management of the charity.

The claimants not belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, can not in law and equity claim the property in question.

The property held by the Church, before the secession, could not be divided on any other principle than by compromise, and that in pursuance of the *sixth Restrictive Rule*, and even then it would have to be perfected under the sanction of a court of equity.\*

3. Mr. Riddle was followed by Judge Brien, counsel of the complainants; and when he had finished, Judge Lane appeared for the defendants.

(1.) To the plea of the south addressed to the generosity and magnanimity of the trustees, in behalf of superannuates, widows, and orphans, Mr. Lane replied that we must be just before we are generous. If the law attaches sacredness to any relation, it is to that of trustee. Where this confidence is bestowed and accepted, a court of equity is accustomed to exact, not only a larger measure of integrity and good faith, than elsewhere, but a strict observance of the limitations of the trust. A trustee must obey those rules only which have been established by courts of equity under the purest morality and justice, and which long since have formed its regular, well-settled, and systematic principles of administration. The Methodists of Upper Canada made a similar appeal, but the Methodist Episcopal Church refused to meet the claim, deeming such a precedent as hazardous in the extreme; and the southern men were almost unanimous in this refusal.†

(2.) Judge Lane lays down the principle, affirmatively, and distinctly, that the Methodist Episcopal Church has never, by any of its legitimate authorities, either directly or indirectly, divided itself into two distinct Churches, nor has it ever consented to any such division.

What is a Church? It is a body of worship-

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 16-19. † Id., pp. 19, 20.

‡ Id., p. 20. § Vasey's Reports.

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 21-25. † Id., pp. 23-30.

ers, holding articles of common faith, and organized for the purpose of discipline and worship.

It is organization, upon some common basis, which gives to a Church its unity, its individuality, and its identity. A common faith is not sufficient. Thousands of Christians, for instance, have held, and now hold, the tenets of Calvinism; but there is no Calvinistic Church in the world. So the evangelical Christians agree in the faith expressed in the apostles' creed; yet no Church has been built on that foundation alone. Unless a collection of believers possess, in addition to this common faith, some regulation for worship, and some provisions for discipline, it never can acquire the character of a Church.

The Quakers believe in the agency of the Holy Spirit in common with many other Christians; but their unity of discipline, their rules, make them one body. The same holds good to the Presbyterians and Congregationalists. It is their organization principally which gives individuality to such bodies, and makes them Churches.

In case of separation by a member, from either a voluntary or an incorporated association, the law is well settled, that those who withdraw leave behind them, in the original body, all its power, privileges, and property, undiminished, unimpaired, unaffected. The number who withdraw makes no difference.

The most frequent example of the application of this rule, is the division of counties and towns. Cases to this point are collected in Angel and Ames, on Corporations. Its application to Churches is not uncommon; for the Quakers, the Unitarians, the Congregationalists, the Presbyterians, the German Reformed, the Lutherans, and the Baptists, have all had occasion to learn its lesson.\*

(3.) Guided by these general observations, we may now inquire, *What is the Methodist Episcopal Church, as named in this bill?*

It is a religious association, organized on the basis of faith and discipline, originally prepared by Mr. Wesley, and modified by his successors. It was introduced into America in 1766; it possesses members, classes, and local preachers, an itinerant ministry of traveling preachers, presiding elders, and bishops, and administers its functions of worship, government, and discipline through the agency of stewards, class meetings, quarterly conferences, annual conferences, and the General conference, and bears the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The progress of the American Church was rapid. Its first meeting was in 1766; the first missionaries in 1769; the first conference in 1773; the first superintendents were set over it in 1784. The ultimate government of the Church for some years was in the concurrence of the several annual conferences. The first General conference was held in 1792, and consisted in a meeting of all the traveling preachers. In 1808 this assembly was converted into a conference of delegates from the annual conferences, in which form it has continued till the present time.†

(4.) Mr. Lane proceeds to state that in this progress of more than three-fourths of a century, the Methodist Church has experienced its years of prosperity and adversity, its triumphs and reverses, its withdrawals and accessions. The following separations or secessions have occurred:

1. The Primitive Methodists, in Charleston..... 1785
2. The Republican Methodists..... 1793
3. The Allenites, or African Methodists..... 1816
4. The Canada conference..... 1828
5. The Methodist Protestant Church..... 1823
6. The Reformed Methodists, about..... 1837
7. The American Wesleyans..... 1842

And he might have added, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in 1845.

(5.) The Book Concern is an important feature in Methodist economy. The first publication in America was Thomas a Kempis, in 1789. The management of the Book Concern is prescribed by the Discipline.

The General conference gives directions, through the Discipline, as to the mode of distribution; but the funds never come within its control. The extent of the power of the General conference over the Book Concern is,

*First.* To appoint the Agents as "the reproductive organ of corporate succession."

*Secondly.* To prescribe rules for conducting the Concern.

*Thirdly.* To inspect its accounts and superintend the Agents by its Book Committee.

The Methodist Book Concern, at Cincinnati, was incorporated by an act, passed March 12, 1839. This act makes it the duty of the Book Agents in Cincinnati to conduct the business in conformity with the regulations of the General conference. The Agents are required to remit its profits to the principal establishment at New York. It administers no charities, and selects no beneficiaries.\*

(6.) Mr. Lane next shows that the system of slavery was always held by the Methodist Episcopal Church as a great wrong, and quotes the Discipline, in its various editions from 1780 to 1816; and every Methodist preacher and member accepted their membership with a full understanding of this rule. In the words of Mr. Wesley, it may be said: "They joined me on these terms; every preacher and every member may leave me when he pleases; but while he chooses to stay, it is on the same terms that he joined me at first."

In 1844 Mr. Lane represents the question as standing thus:

*First.* All parties admitted slavery to be a great evil, which they professed themselves desirous to terminate by any safe and practicable expedient.

*Secondly.* All action of the conferences had, thus far, from 1785, been in the direction of relaxing the restrictions upon slaveholding.

*Thirdly.* The antislavery sentiment at the north had not relaxed, but had strengthened. The northern ministers felt sensitive under the reproach which their seceding brethren were casting upon them, of belonging to a slaveholding Church. The members in the northern societies were in some cases lessening, and in others disheartened by reason of this reproach, and any further concessions to the slaveholders would be followed by consequences still more disastrous.

*Fourthly.* There are many good men in the Methodist Church who conscientiously believe that all slaveholding is sinful. That the earnings of a slave, when received by the master, lie under the same curse with the price of a dog and the hire of a harlot.

*Fifthly.* The political condition of the country had its influence on these questions.

*Sixthly.* The southern members suspected, and

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 30, 31. † Id., pp. 31-34.

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 35, 36.

feared that more active measures against slave-holding were about to be demanded, and they were desirous to adopt further means of protection.

"*Seventhly.* The northern members believed that the south would claim from the conference some further countenance and sanction to the practice of holding slaves.

"*Eighthly.* The majority of the members of the conference wished and desired no action except such as might preserve their conservative position."

After surveying the case of Bishop Andrew as represented in 1844, the facts exhibited the following opinions of the members:

"*First.* The northern members believed 'that slavery could not subsist except by the commission of sin,' on the part of somebody.

"*Secondly.* That the owner of slaves was more or less involved in this sin, except when the holding were distinctly and unequivocally for the benefit of the slave, and not for the benefit of the master.

"*Thirdly.* That southern politicians, and, perhaps, the southern members of the Methodist Church, were attempting to obtain from the conference some sanction or recognition of the lawfulness of holding slaves.

"*Fourthly.* That Bishop Andrew, in his relations to these slaves, in the spirit of the Scripture rule, was not 'blameless;' that in the north his influence as a bishop was gone, and that his episcopal visitation to the northern Churches was out of the question.

"*Fifthly.* That since his 'traveling through the connection at large,' as required by the Discipline, was no longer possible, his office would become territorial, and thus contravene a fundamental principle in the Methodist economy.

"*Sixthly.* That the continued exercise of his official functions would give occasion to the worst imputations against the society, of inconsistency and sin, and would lead to malignant controversies, further secessions, and other deplorable consequences in the Methodist Church of the northern states.

"*Seventhly.* That these consequences might be avoided by his retirement from office, and that it was his duty to take this block of stumbling from their path.

"*Eighthly.* That his voluntary withdrawal infringed no southern right, and occasioned no just cause of offense to the most sensitive of the southern brethren.

"The southern members, on the contrary, believed,

"*First.* That the ownership of slaves involved no necessary wrong.

"*Secondly.* That any yielding on this point would lead to demands for further concessions.

"*Thirdly.* That any such concessions would be followed by consequences as disastrous to the southern Church as any apprehended in the north.

"*Fourthly.* That the article in the Discipline of 1816 was in the nature of a compromise, settling the question and forbidding further agitation.

"Under these circumstances, and with this diversity of views, what alternatives were before them?

"The majority of the conference had the right to expel a bishop for improper conduct, if necessary. The majority were the judges, without appeal, both of the propriety and of the necessity."\* Yet with unwonted lenity they passed

the act which disapproved of a bishop holding slaves to exercise his office.

(7.) There is no soundness in the assertion that the resolutions in the so-called plan, wrought in themselves a division of the Church. The prominent members of the conference, in all their debates, took it for granted that the division of the Church, especially of the property, depended on the votes of the annual conferences. This is plain from the speeches of Collins, Porter, Paine, Capers, Winans, Hamline, M'Ferrin, etc.

The General conference, by the Restrictive Rules, were prevented from dividing the Church, or creating two new Churches, either by the plan of separation or any other act; and had they attempted it, their acts would be unlawful, unauthorized, and void.\*

(8.) The power of the General conference is equally restrained from working any division of the funds of the Book Concern, as is plain from the sixth Restriction.† And the case of Canada is in point in this matter. Mr. Lane thus concludes:

"Before this Court can act upon the other alternative, it must find that the Methodist Episcopal Church has ceased to exist. Yet it stands, solid and secure, and seems likely to stand while time shall be. Its members are scattered every-where about us. The old organization has been continued uninterruptedly. Its bishops still exercise their functions. A steady succession of annual conferences has regularly been maintained, and, since the southern secession, two General conferences have been held. To those assemblies the Book Concern has regularly accounted, and holds itself accountable.

"When did the great Church cease to exist? When and by what act did it lose its control over the fund? Are the Book Agents betraying their trust by distributing the profits they earn under the direction of the Discipline? Has the Ohio corporation lost its franchises, or forfeited its charter, or misapplied its means by its obedience to the laws of Ohio? I am willing to rest this portion of the case upon these questions. May God forbid any further divisions under the authority of this Court; for the present separation between these brethren can not be perpetual. There is too much in common of sympathy, and virtue, and piety among them to remain apart forever. When the dark cause of this unhappy difference shall pass away—as it assuredly will pass away before the advancing civilization and purer Christianity of the future—they will again unite like drops of water; and the Methodist Episcopal Church, single and undivided, will continue to be found among the foremost of our holy institutions, shedding its benignant influence and Christian consolation upon the hearts of unborn millions for all time to come, leading them onward in the way to heaven."‡

4. After Judge Lane, the Hon. Thomas Ewing delivered the closing argument for the defendants.

After stating that the decision of Judge Nelson would destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, therefore, was incapable of acting in regard to trusts, would be the cause of endless secessions, was contrary to the law regulating religious trusts, that all such trusts in all the Churches would be periled—after these statements, Mr. Ewing proceeds to show,

(1.) That the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1844 still exists the same in name, succession,

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 36-44.

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 36-48.

† Id., p. 48.

‡ Id., pp. 50-54.

organization, and confession, though not in territorial extent.

The complainants agreed that the Methodist Episcopal Church is strictly territorial in its organization, and a separation in point of territory is a destruction of the organized Church. This is confuted fully, and it is shown that such is not the case, and that the Methodist Episcopal Church of the present day, is the same identical organized body with that of 1844. It has, in the mean time, lost territory and members in one part, and it has gained both territory and members in others; its members and its boundaries have varied, but the Church is still the same. So far, indeed, as any known public tests of identity apply, it is the same organized body, having all the rights, and bound by all the obligations of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1844. And it must be considered the same, unless it appear to have, by some special process, and with a purpose, destroyed itself.\*

(2.) As the Methodist Episcopal Church still exists and retains its identity, the trustees still hold the property in trust for it *only*, and that it is only in connection with it as an organized body, and by and through it alone, that any individual is now entitled as a beneficiary; and no member of the Church, or any section of it, large or small, could, by mere secession, be entitled to any portion of the trust fund, separate from and independent of the organized, still subsisting Methodist Episcopal Church.

This claim can not be for a moment sustained, unless it rest on some other ground than that of mere voluntary secession. This is not a partnership in which one or many of the partners may elect to dissolve and demand a division of the partnership property. No man or body of men is entitled to any share of the fund by reason of his or their having contributed to its accumulation. If the man who contributed most largely cease to be a member of the Church, he parts at once with all his interest in the fund, and all participation in its management or control. So, also, with masses of men, more or less numerous. If a man who contributed nothing become a member of the organized Church, he immediately has a common interest in the fund with all other members. So if masses of men, no matter how numerous, join themselves to the Church, they are entitled at once to share with those who have all their lives been members. From the moment it was contributed it belonged to the Church—not to the persons who gave it.†

(3.) That the Methodist Episcopal Church has not been destroyed in its organization; for, 1. The General conference had no power to destroy it by dismemberment or otherwise. 2. If they had the power they did not act with the intent to destroy it, or any which had the effect of destroying it.

Judge Nelson had decided that the General conference had the power to destroy the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to construct out of its elements two or more distinct organized bodies. Mr. Ewing shows the absurdity of this, by establishing the following propositions:

"*First.* That the General conference is not, since 1808, an original body, possessed of inherent powers, but representative merely, having no other powers than those conferred on it by the constitution which created it.

"*Secondly.* That the General grant of powers

to this conference extends only to the making rules and regulations for the Methodist Episcopal Church, not to the division, dissolution, or destruction of the Church.

"*Thirdly.* That the second Restrictive Article forbids, by clear implication, the division of the Church by the act of the General conference.

"*Fourthly.* That the third Restrictive Article, in connection with the fourth, forbids, also, by clear implication, the destruction or the division of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the act of the General conference.

"*Fifthly.* That the fifth Restrictive Article forbids, by clear implication, the destruction or division of the Methodist Episcopal Church by the act of the General conference.

"*Sixthly.* That the dissolution of the Methodist Episcopal Church is, by clear implication, forbidden by the sixth Restrictive Article; and,

"*Seventhly.* That under the sixth Restrictive Article the General conference can not 'appropriate the produce of the Book Concern, nor of the Charter Fund, to any purpose other than for the benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers' of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within its organization, 'their wives, widows, and children;' nor can that conference, by any act, so involve the fund or place it in such situation that a court of equity can apply it to objects, or in a manner forbidden by the declaration of trust and the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church."‡

(4.) That the General conference never assumed the power of destroying the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but as often as they have spoken distinctly on the subject have disclaimed the power; and that in the case at bar they did not exercise or attempt to exercise it.

Mr. Ewing proves this proposition conclusively. In the case of Canada he shows that the Canada conference separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church; for a conference as well as an individual has such right. And all the General conference did was to admit the necessity, part with their brethren in kindness, and make the adjustment of *boundary* a condition of friendship toward the seceding conference. It would have surprised all were the recent doctrine maintained, that by this act the Methodist Episcopal Church ceased to exist, and that two new Churches had sprung up out of its ruins.†

That the General conference of 1844 did not claim the power to divide the Church, he proves by convincing arguments. He proves it by the resolutions of Dr. Capers; the declaration of the southern delegates after the General conference; by the resolution of Mr. M'Ferrin; by the preamble and resolutions of the committee of nine; by the absence of any resolution of the General conference to divide the Church; when the General conference of 1844 adjourned the Methodist Episcopal Church still existed in its former organization; the speeches uttered at the General conference; Bishop Soule in 1848 addressed the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and after these proofs are given in full and in detail, he sums it up thus as proved from the acts and debates of the General conference in the case of the Canada conference and the case at bar:

"*First.* That the General conference did not consider themselves empowered to *authorize* the formation of a separate ecclesiastical connection out of any conferences attached to or connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, without

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 55-58.

† Id., pp. 58-63.

\* Cincinnati Law Case, pp. 63-79.

† Id., pp. 79-83.



the express authority of the 'several annual conferences.'

"Secondly. That neither in the Canada case nor the case under consideration does the General conference make the separation or withdrawal, or recommend it, or authorize it, but treat it as an event wholly beyond their power—a 'contingency' that may happen—an 'emergency' that may arise.

"Thirdly. But that the General conference claimed to have power over the external relations of the Church, as well as its general internal regulations; that they exercised the power to determine and fix its relations with the Canada Church, the Wesleyan Methodist Churches in England and in Ireland, and the ministers in connection with each, and on the same principle with any Church which was about to be formed, either certainly or contingently, in the United States;\* that they, therefore, exercised that power, and determined on the future relations of the Methodist Episcopal Church with the new Church, if it should be formed, and with the ministers who chose to withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church and attach themselves to the new organization."

And the new Church, in its very act of self-organization, agrees, not only to the adjustment of boundary, to the property in churches and burying-grounds, but also to the proposed submission of the division of the Chartered Fund and produce of the Book Concern to the vote of the annual conferences, according to the sixth Restriction.

It is not averred that the General conference did directly destroy the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but that they authorized the southern conferences to destroy it whenever they should find it necessary to do it.

The claim amounts to this, That the General conference had power to destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church necessarily embodied in the grant of power to "make rules and regulations for it;" that that absolute power over the Church could be transferred by the General conference to whomsoever that body saw fit to transfer it; that they did transfer it, not to any definite body of men, or portion of the Church, but to so many of the annual conferences, south, as should think fit to act in the premises; and that the destinies of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as an organized body, were at once placed in abeyance, to be taken into the hands of any southern conference who should choose to perform the office, and to be disposed of in their own good time, when they should choose to do execution upon it. It was an organized Church when the General conference of 1844 adjourned. It would have been so still, if the southern conferences had not met and separated from it. It was, therefore, in their keeping; if it were destroyed, they destroyed it. The highest functions of legislative power was, according to the doctrines attempted to be sustained by complainants, vested by the Church in the General conference, and by the General conference transferred to such body of men as should bring themselves within a certain description, and choose to exercise it. This is not only impossible, but absurd.†

(5.) The individuals who put in their claims in the bill, by their own showing, have no right to a decree for a distributive share of the fund.

This closes the merely legal argument. Mr.

Ewing then proceeds to present three points of collateral importance.\*

(6.) That the secession of the southern conferences was not justified or compelled by the continued agitation of the slavery question in the northern annual conferences, or in the General conference. Nor, more especially, was it compelled by any illegal or oppressive acts of the General conference in 1844, in the cases of Harding and Bishop Andrew.†

(7.) The Methodist Episcopal Church acted justly and righteously in refusing to the southern conferences, after they separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and formed the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a proportional share of the Chartered Fund and Book Concern.‡

(8.) The action of the General conference in 1848, respecting the so-called plan of separation, and the proffered fraternity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, furnishes no just ground of complaint.¶

We have, above, imperfectly given the simple propositions, and some outlines, embraced in Mr. Ewing's argument. Our readers must peruse it, in order to see the entire force, justice, and truth of his positions.

5. We give below a brief outline of Judge Leavitt's decision, and, in his own words, the propositions with which he concludes and decides:

After proper preliminary remarks, the Judge states the position assumed by the south to be as follows, from their own bill, meaning by the "foregoing proceedings," the plan, the action of the convention, and the resolutions of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of July 2, 1844: "That by, and in virtue of, the foregoing proceedings, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, as it existed before the year 1844, became, and was divided, into two distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches, with distinct and independent powers and authority, composed of the several annual conferences, charges, stations, and societies, lying, and being north and south of the aforesaid line of division."

In confuting this assumption, the Judge quotes the plan and the first resolution of the Louisville convention.

The question of the General conference having power to divide or dismember the Church, and that it has carefully exercised that power, is decisive of the rights of the parties; but if the conference has, in this act, transcended its first constitutional powers, to that extent its acts are void.

The complainants say that the division, as contemplated by the plan, involves a mere change in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, not destructive of its unity and integrity, because the discovered parts are of the same faith, and under the same form and constitution of government, and in pursuit of the same purposes.

The defendants insist that unity of organization, as well as of faith and doctrine, is an element of all associations of men or Church relations, and that the overthrow and destruction of such organization imports the overthrow and destruction of the Church itself.

The Judge proceeds to state the question: It is not whether there does or does not exist in

\* Cincinnati Suit, pp. 98-102.

† Id., pp. 102-109.

‡ Id., pp. 109-112.

¶ Id., pp. 112-122.

the Methodist Episcopal Church a power to destroy its organization, and entirely to reconstruct, not only its government and Discipline, but to change its standards of faith and doctrine, but *whether this power rightly exists in the General conference.* The power of change—of destruction itself—doubtless exists somewhere; but if it has not been expressly delegated, it remains with those who are the original depositaries of all power.

He then asks, "*What are the constitutional powers of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church?*" He answers, "Prior to 1808 the General conference was essentially a democracy, in which the masses of preachers met together to transact their business. Under the constitution of 1808 the General conference had constituents, to whom they were answerable, and they were limited in their powers by express constitutional restrictions. These restrictions are wholly inconsistent with the assumption of unlimited power in that body."

The Judge allows that all power not granted is reserved to those who were its original depositaries.

It is impossible to conceive of the existence of a Church without connecting with it the idea of organization. It is this alone that makes it an entity. There can be no Church without an organization; it is the essential element of its being, and its destruction is, necessarily, the destruction of the Church itself.

The power to divide the Church, or to make out of it two distinct, independent Churches, appeared to the Court to be a power inconsistent with the power "to make rules and regulations" for the Church. The power granted is one designed to be exerted for the Church. The rules and regulations must be adapted to the nature and purposes of the organism of the Church; and any exercise of its authority, resulting in the overthrow and demolition of the Church, must be viewed as repugnant to the power. Nor does it overturn this view of it to allow that the right to change or destroy the existing organization of the Church is not enumerated as one of them; and to have inserted a restriction not to destroy the Church would have involved an absurdity. The power to govern is not a power to destroy. This doctrine applies as well to ecclesiastical as to civil governments. The fact that the General conference is not expressly forbidden to destroy or divide the Church, does not prove that the conference can do it. The proof of this is, the doctrine of the limited nature of the constitutional powers of the General conference is strongly asserted by the Protest of the minority. Nor are there precedents to furnish an analogy to this case. In the Canada case the General conference asserted no claim to any power to authorize the separation of the Canada conference, but simply declared certain friendly terms on which that conference might withdraw.

The Court next asks, "If the power of division properly belonged to the General conference, was it, in fact, exercised by that body?" and answers, "If it is not in the General conference, it is not, perhaps, material to inquire where it vests, though this Court has no hesitancy in holding that such a power would belong to the body of the traveling ministry, assembled *en masse* in a conventional capacity."

If such a power existed, or was intended to be exercised in the General conference of 1844,

it is presumed that division would be consummated by direct, straightforward action. It is not pretended that the plan is operative of itself to authorize a division of the Church; it is only connected with the Louisville convention that this can be done. The General conference could not delegate to another body the exercise of such a power. And this is proved by the action of the convention, which places its right to act on the ground of authority derived from the General conference. Legislative bodies may appoint commissioners to inquire into, and to report facts, as a basis of wise and intelligent legislation; but such a body can not delegate to others its legislative discretion. The General conference, therefore, could not transfer to the Louisville convention the power to pass upon the solemn question of a division and dismemberment of the Methodist Episcopal Church. They could, with equal propriety, have conferred this power on the bishops, presiding elders, or laymen of the south.

This view may be applied, first, as proving a lack of power in the Louisville convention to divide the Church, so far as they acted under the authority of the General conference; and, second, as raising a strong presumption that the General conference of 1844 did not divide the Church, nor intend to divide it.

The acts of the General conference can not be construed to mean that there was a purpose to divide the Church, and, from its dissevered parts, to create two distinct and independent Churches. Dr. Capers's plan, looking that way, was not adopted. The plan imports no more than a proposition intended to open the way for the peaceful withdrawal of the southern conferences, should they deem such a course expedient. Throughout the plan there is no pretense to divide the Church, in the sense of creating from one Church two distinct and independent Churches. Should the conferences of the south find it necessary to withdraw, the plan shows the conditions on which the withdrawal is to be consummated; and provision is made for future friendly relations with the new Church. This is the same that was done toward the Canada conference. It is merely saying, if you decide on leaving us, it is our desire that we may part in peace. There was no claim of a power to divide the Church by the direct action of the General conference, or of any right to delegate such a power to the southern conferences; it was merely a provisional arrangement to meet a "contingency" which it was declared might happen; and this was the sentiment of the principal debates at the General conference.

The plan prescribed no mode by which the conferences of the south should decide the necessity of their withdrawal. The General conference had no right to do this, and did not assume to do it. It was left wholly to the choice and discretion of the south. The proceedings of the convention perfected the act of separation, or withdrawal, a result not brought about by the act of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, but by the Louisville convention. The right of withdrawal was unquestionable, and was distinctly admitted by the north.

If the Methodist Episcopal Church has been legally and constitutionally divided into two separate and independent Churches, it would result, necessarily, that the old Church is annihilated; and not having an existing organism,

can have no capacity to administer the charity. And the beneficiaries in the two new Churches would have the same rights, and would be equally without means to enforce them; for the agencies to administer the charity would be destroyed with the demolition of the original Church. But the Methodist Episcopal Church is not destroyed. It still exists in name and organization as it did prior to 1844. True, the withdrawal of the southern conferences has lessened the number of its members, and curtailed its territorial jurisdiction; but it is undeniably the same Church—the Methodist Episcopal Church—having all the essential elements of identity with the Church prior to 1844. This great ecclesiastical organization has not, since that time, wrought its own destruction; nor has it been destroyed by any power or influence *ab extra*. As the keeper of the charity in question, it has now the power to hold, and precisely the same agencies to administer, that it ever had. It has also beneficiaries capable of receiving, and entitled to its benefits. In a word, its machinery is perfect in all that is required to manage and distribute the charity according to the purpose of its creation.

The Court then proceeded to show that the complainants are not beneficiaries of this charity, because they have withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church by their own act and volition, and now belong to another ecclesiastical organization; for no one, not within the pale of the organized Methodist Episcopal Church, can be a beneficiary of this charity.

He then goes to decide that the withdrawal of the southern conferences was not justified on the ground of necessity. The decision on the Bishop's case "was not a judicial sentence, but a mere legislative declaration of the sense of the conference on a question of expediency, and subject to rescission by any succeeding General conference." Nor can the resolution first adopted be fairly construed as imparting a sentence of deposition against the Bishop.

The following is the result of the views presented by Judge Leavitt, which we give in his own words:

"(1.) That the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church is a delegated or representative body, with limited constitutional powers, and possesses no authority, directly or indirectly, to divide the Church.

"(2.) That in the adoption of the plan of separation, in 1844, there was no claim to, or exercise of, such a power.

"(3.) That as the General conference is prohibited from any application of the produce of the Book Concern, except for a specified purpose, and in a specified manner; and as the annual conferences have refused to remove this prohibition by changing or modifying the sixth Restrictive Rule, the General conference has no power to apportion or divide the Concern, or its produce, except as provided for by said Rule.

"(4.) That said Book Concern is a charity, devoted expressly to the use and benefit of the traveling, supernumerary, and superannuated preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, their wives, widows, and children, continuing in it as an organized Church; and any individual or any number of individuals; withdrawing from, and ceasing to be members of the Church, as an organized body, cease to be beneficiaries of the charity.

"(5.) That it is the undoubted right of any individual preacher or member of said Church, or any number of preachers or members, or any sectional portions or divisions thereof, to withdraw from it at pleasure; but in withdrawing they take with them none of the rights of property pertaining to them while in the Church; and that the withdrawal of the southern and southwestern conferences in 1845, being voluntary and not induced by any positive necessity, is within the principle here stated.

"(6.) That the defendants, as trustees or agents of the Book Concern, at Cincinnati, being incorporators under a law of Ohio, and required by such law 'to conduct the business of the Book Concern in conformity with the rules and regulations of the General conference,' in withholding from the Church, South, any part of the property or proceeds of said Book Concern, have been guilty of no breach of trust, or any improper use or application of the property or funds in their keeping.

"(7.) That this is not a case of a lapsed charity, justifying a court of equity in constructing a new scheme for its application and administration; and that the complainants and those they represent have no such personal claim to or interest in the property and funds in controversy as will authorize a decree in their favor, on the basis of individual right."

Thus, we have given a very brief synopsis of the three arguments of the distinguished lawyers, as well as of the decision of the Judge.

We are pleased with the good temper and good sense of the following: Mr. Ewing, in opening his argument says, speaking of the New York case, "It can not affect the freedom of judgment on the part of your Honor, sitting in this court, or disturb the rights of parties to have that judgment pronounced as your reason may form it, on the arguments which shall be presented. That is not yet a decided case; the decree is interlocutory, the opinion not acquiesced in." And Judge Leavitt, in concluding his decision, says: "Although the conclusions to which I have arrived have been satisfactory to myself, I experience the highest gratification from the reflection that if I had misconceived the points arising in the case, and have been led to wrong results, my errors will be corrected by that high tribunal to which the rights of these parties will, without doubt, be submitted for final adjudication." These are just sentiments, and they may furnish a caution to the religious press, as well as an example of conduct worthy of their imitation.

6. The decision of the Cincinnati case was exceedingly vexatious to the south.

The Nashville Advocate seems now convinced that no good thing could come out of Ohio, and the late trial staggered their faith. The editor concludes that "lobby counsel and out-door influence have been busy in producing this result against the clear convictions of both moral equity and legal right."\*

The St. Louis Advocate laments that no earthly power "can rectify the wrongs which have been done to the many poor, suffering, superannuated preachers, widows and orphans, who have by these means been deprived of a great part of their means of support."<sup>†</sup>

After all this outcry of the south about depriving widows and orphans of support, these

\* N., October 28, 1852. Scraps, VII, p. 728.

† St. Louis Advocate, October 23, 1852. Scraps, VII, p. 723.

same widows and orphans, as the south now acknowledge, have been better supported by contributions, in the absence of dividends from the Book Concern, than with them. And the fact, too, was entirely left out of sight, that the accusers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in this matter, were the very persons who took away these needy persons beyond the reach of these funds, by inducing them to secede from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to unite with a new Church, so that they could not, in moral equity and legal right, be any longer beneficiaries of this fund, any more than Methodist Protestants, American Wesleyans, Presbyterians, or Baptists could.

But the Southern Advocate becomes unmanageably excited on the subject; for some one in the north informed the editor that the laity in the north were exceedingly displeased on account of the decision. This is probably false, as none of the northern laity—except a few south-

ern affinities—ever thought the property ought to be divided, except constitutionally. But the south all along misrepresented the case. They inculcated that the property was joint stock property, in the place of a religious trust, confined solely to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and never intended, in its foundation, for any other. This misrepresentation was assiduously spread every-where in the south without contradiction, and industriously circulated in many places in the north, and by many believed. Thus a sort of public sentiment was formed, generally in the south, and partially in the north, that the property should be divided, because it was joint stock property. Many in the north labored under this delusion. And Mr. Wightman was not slow to take advantage of this unfounded theory, and accuse the Methodist Episcopal Church of "jugglery," "swindling," and the like.\*

## CHAPTER LVIII.

### THE CHARTERED FUND.

1. PREVIOUS to 1796 the strength of the itinerating ministry was very much weakened, from year to year, by numerous locations. This originated principally from the inadequate support of the preachers and their families, especially in the new settlements. The consequence was that the widows and orphans of those who died stood much in need of some relief, in order to prevent great suffering.

2. The subject came up for consideration before the General conference of 1796, and they finally resolved to create a *fund* for the relief of necessitous preachers, their wives, widows, and orphans. It was provided by a resolution of the General conference, that the object of this fund should be presented in an address to the members and friends of the Church, and that they should be invited to fill it up by voluntary contributions, donations, and bequests. This was done, and some subscribed liberally; while others thought it better to rely on annual collections. Its avails never amounted to one hundred dollars annually to each conference.

3. In 1797 an act of incorporation was obtained from the Pennsylvania Legislature, entitled, "Articles of association of the trustees of the fund for the relief and support of the itinerant, superannuated, and worn-out ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, their wives and children, their widows and orphans." The Attorney-General of Pennsylvania—Jared Ingersoll—having perused and examined the charter, gave to the Governor the official opinion, "that the objects, articles, and conditions therein set forth and contained, are lawful." The Chief Justice—Thomas M'Kean—and the three justices of the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, gave a similar certification to the Governor of the legality of the charter. And the Governor, in signing the charter, ordered the Master of the Rolls to enroll it, and recognizes "the objects, articles, and conditions" therein set forth, to be the law to govern the trustees and all concerned.

In the year 1832 the charter was amended,

recognizing all its original principles, and, for the convenience of the trustees, the name was changed into "the Chartered Fund of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America." We publish the entire charter and its amendment in our list of documents.†

The first article declares that the fund was intended for "benevolent and charitable purposes." It comes, therefore, under that class of objects called *charitable religious, or public trusts*. The contributors had no claim whatever for any sums given to the funds, and the intended beneficiaries were not in any condition to become contributors. It was not a partnership or joint tenancy, or joint stock association, in which contributors, whether in money, property, or services, could have any right to share in the profits or proceeds of the fund. In all such religious trusts, according to the law-books on this subject, there are four things to be considered; namely, the object of the trust, the managers, the beneficiaries, and the trustees.

4. The *object* of the trust is declared to be "expressly for the purpose of relieving the distresses, and supplying the deficiencies of the itinerant and superannuated or worn-out ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States of America, who remain in connection with, and continue subject to the order and control of the General conference; as also for the relief of the wives and children, widows and orphans, of such ministers and preachers, and for no other use, intent, or purpose whatever."‡ Thus, the express design of the fund is for relieving the distresses, and supplying the deficiencies of itinerant preachers, and for no other use whatever. And then the capital is never to be touched, and the proceeds alone are to be appropriated. According to the object of this fund, itinerant preachers, their wives and children, are to have the benefit of it; and neither the General conference nor the trustees can

\* S., November 5, 1852. *Scraps*, VII, pp. 728, 729.

† Document, No. 78.

‡ Section 7.

apply the income to any other purpose without perverting the use of the fund.

5. The *managers* of the fund are the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and none others. This is expressly declared in the sixth article as follows:

"It is provided and declared, that the annual rents, interest, and income of this estate, real and personal, which now does, or at any time hereafter may belong to the said corporation and their successors, shall by them be held subject to the exclusive order and control of the itinerant ministers and preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, in their General conference from time to time assembled: And the said ministers and preachers thus assembled, are hereby vested with full powers to appropriate and point out the mode of applying the same, to the objects, under the limitations, and for the uses and purposes herein mentioned and expressly declared."

According to this article it is plain,

(1.) That the "annual rents, interest, and income" alone can be appropriated; but not the capital.

(2.) And this income is under the exclusive order and control of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and under none other body.

(3.) The General conference is regulated in the distribution by the specified objects, uses, and purposes expressly mentioned and declared in the charter, and to no other purposes whatever.

(4.) The *mode*, however, of appropriating these funds is vested in the General conference, and they have full power to select the mode; though they can not apply the fund to any purpose whatever, except for the benefit of itinerant preachers of a certain description.

(5.) And as the charter was granted in 1796, before the General conference became a delegated body, the delegated General conference, even by the votes of the annual conferences, can not apply these funds to any other purpose but that stated above.

(6.) The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church alone can manage this fund. And though they may select the mode of doing this, no other body can do it for them, or wrest it in whole or in part out of their hands. Nor can the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church transfer the management to other hands.

6. The *beneficiaries* of the income of this fund are clearly defined in the seventh section of the charter, already quoted.

(1.) The beneficiaries must be *itinerant preachers* of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Those of any other Church can have no claim to these funds. The trustees can appropriate no funds to any conference, but a conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and one now in *connection with*, and *under the control* of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

(2.) The beneficiaries must be in connection with the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. If they be in connection with any other General conference, they can not be beneficiaries. They must *remain* in this connection.

(3.) The beneficiaries must "continue subject to the order and control of the General conference." If they are *controlled* by another General conference, or *subject* to its order, they can not be beneficiaries.

(4.) Hence all others except those of the Methodist Episcopal Church alone are excluded from the list of beneficiaries.

7. In regard to the *trustees* of the fund, we find the following in the charter as defined qualifications and duties:

(1.) The trustees must be members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of five years' standing, and at least twenty-five years of age. (Section 3.)

(2.) The General conference fill up vacancies in the Board at the nomination of the trustees. (Section 3.)

(3.) Trustees cease to be such by death, resignation, or expulsion from the Church. (Section 3.)

(4.) It is a condition of the trust, that the trustees can not sell, grant, convey, or otherwise dispose of any property of their trust, without the consent of General conference; if consent is granted to sell, they must invest the price in other property; and the annual income of the money invested must be exclusively applied as the charter declares. (Section 5.)

(5.) The annual rents, interest, and income alone shall be divided. The capital must remain. (Sections 5 and 6.)

(6.) The money on no account is to be appropriated except for the specified purpose, as is plain from the ninth section, in the words following: "It is provided and declared, that no sum or sums of money, under any pretense whatever, shall be drawn from the fund hereby intended to be established, other than for the uses and purposes, and under the limitations and restrictions, herein before expressly mentioned and declared."

8. From the foregoing it is manifest, that the trustees of the Chartered Fund had no power whatever to distribute the funds of the corporation to any person or persons. The proceeds, rents, or interest only were to be divided, but the capital, according to the charter, could not be touched for any purpose, except to reinvest, and then by the authority of the General conference. In this the trustees have acted contrary to the charter in dividing the capital, which never could be legally or justly divided.

Beside, they were bound to distribute the proceeds or income among the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In the place of this they made over a part of the capital to another body of men, not belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

9. It is scarcely necessary to say that the trustees have altogether exceeded their powers. They might as well have distributed to any other body of men the funds in their hands, as to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. By such a course the American Bible Society, or the Tract Society might divide their funds with a missionary society, or an antislavery society. The one would be as lawful as the other.

We have little information, however, on this subject; as the distribution was made to the south, by the trustees of the fund, in some private way, the particulars of which we have not learned; nor are we zealous to inquire. We learned, incidentally, however, that the trustees felt themselves bound, in justice, to divide with the south, and they therefore met the demands or claims of the south on this score. Some have made claims, on behalf of the Saints, to very large possessions, embracing the whole earth; but we have not learned that their claims have been yet met, according to the views of the claimants. The trustees of the Chartered Fund

seem to have been more generous than the world of sinners; as they have met the claims of the southern men with great promptness. We presume there was a decree of the court, and other formalities of law; but we have not learned what they were. We content ourselves with giving

the charter which governed the trustees, and the brief analysis of it in this short chapter. We abruptly break off further discussion, and will leave the subject to the consideration of the next General conference.

## CHAPTER LIX.

### SURVEY AND REVIEW OF THE APPEAL CASE.

1. THE southern commissioners, on the decision of Judge Leavitt, appealed the case to the Supreme Court of the United States, for the December term, 1853. We have seen that the commissioners of the Western Book Concern were solicited to compromise the matter with the New York commissioners. They thought they had no disciplinary right to settle by compromise. Till a legal decision would sever the chain they felt themselves as much bound to the Restrictive Rule as the General conference was. They believed they had no power or right to meet the views and claims of the south on this subject. They made all the overtures in their power to the southern commissioners. They proposed, on condition that the south will suspend the prosecution of the appeal, to allow them time to have the matter laid before the annual conferences, and ascertain if a constitutional vote could be obtained, to suspend the Restrictive Rule, for the specific object of distributing the property at Cincinnati. This proposition was rejected by the southern commissioners.

The western commissioners, therefore, felt themselves bound to defend the rights of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of all the Churches of the United States. To this they were compelled by the course of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, which rejected all solemn, constitutional, and statutory ecclesiastical compacts in the case.

2. Accordingly, the case was tried at Washington City, in April, 1854, before the Supreme Court, Judge M'Lean declining to sit on the case. The counsel for the Methodist Episcopal Church was T. Ewing and George E. Badger. The counsel for the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was Henry Stanberry. After hearing the case,

The Court chose Judge Nelson to deliver their opinion. The opinion was delivered by him, April 25, 1854, and was adverse to the Methodist Episcopal Church. It was published in the papers of the Methodist Episcopal Church generally, we believe.\* As we have published in full the decision of Judge Nelson in the New York case, in our documents, we need not publish his second decision, but refer to it; especially as we quote such portions of it as will call for stricture. While we profess, and deem it our duty to exhibit, practically, all due respect for the Supreme Judiciary of the United States, as a constitutional part of the government, in the legitimate exercise of its high functions, we have no respect at all for such a decision as that of Judge Nelson, other than to submit to it as a good citizen. We have no

respect for it as a logical performance, as a judicial decision, tried by the sound principles of the law, nor even as a plausible plea for a client before a civil court, though the last is its most noted characteristic. We will single out a few of what we consider the errors of this second attempt of the New York Circuit Judge, in confusing law principles, or rather banishing them from his decisions, in making out a case favorable to his southern teachers.

3. In our judgment, the Supreme Court of the United States have acted very strangely, if not carelessly, or even contemptuously, in leaving Judge Nelson to prepare this decision for them. As far as we can learn, it is the usage of all courts of appeal to have another than the judge appealed from to draw up their decisions. Judge Nelson had decided the case at New York, identical in principles with the case appealed from before the Ohio court. Judge Leavitt had elaborately, and on law principles, given a different decision in the Cincinnati case. Surely the case before the Supreme Court was of importance enough to have a decision from Judge Taney, or some other judge of the bench, who had not prejudged the case. In the case of Dartmouth College, Chief Justice Marshall elaborated his decision in the exercise of all his legal and judicial knowledge. Judge Story, too, gave an elaborate opinion on a branch of the case; and so did another judge, we believe. But in this Cincinnati case, of much greater importance to the country and the world, our supreme judges do not seem to have cared a straw about the whole affair, and carelessly turn the matter over to one of their number who had already blundered egregiously in a similar case, as if this matter was beneath any serious regard from them other than to sit in the Court, listen to the arguments, and then carelessly get rid of the business as easily as they could. Their course, whatever their intentions may have been, we must consider as wanting in respect to the Ohio judge, to the Methodist Episcopal Church, to Christianity itself, and to the ermine of the Supreme Bench of the United States. The judges, we are bound to think, have not duly respected their own high station in this case.

4. Judge Nelson, in giving his opinion, has dropped the official and legal name of the defendants, as the case was entered in the Ohio court, and carried before the Supreme Court, and has substituted a new name, totally unknown, ecclesiastically and legally, in the case before the Supreme Court. "The Methodist Episcopal Church," or "the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States," is the well-known title given to our Church since its

\* W., May 17, 1854.

organization in 1784 to the present time, in her Discipline, in courts of law, in the ecclesiastical and historical records of the times. So all agree. This, title, and this alone, is the one, and the only one, known in the bill of the complainants, and in the answer to this bill, and as the case was brought before the New York and Ohio Courts, and the Supreme Court at Washington. Even Judge Nelson, in the commencement of his opinion, in stating the case, affirms that our Church is "a voluntary association, unincorporated, known as the Methodist Episcopal Church." He then refers to the Discipline, as mentioned in the bill, and entitled, "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church."

This official, ecclesiastical, historical, and legal name is presently changed, by the Judge for another name, entirely new and unheard of till he adopted it from his southern teachers, who invented it. He prefaces, this change by the gratuitous assumption, "so that the Methodist Episcopal Church should thereafter constitute two separate and distinct organizations." Then comes in the Judge's new name, and new Church, which he bunglingly enough denominates "the Church, north," "the Methodist Episcopal Church, north." These and similar expressions run through the rest of the decision, and are repeated even tautologically, while the real name of the Church is entirely omitted after the preliminary mention of it.

Thus, Judge Nelson, in making out his decision, changes the ecclesiastical and legal name of the Methodist Episcopal Church for another, which was never used in any just, ecclesiastical, legal, or historical sense. We believe it is an act that ranks among the felonious, for a man to change his own name and assume another. It is, we believe, in the view of the law of most states, a penitentiary offense to do so. Deception, fraud, or some unworthy object, is the common crime charged against such an act; and if it be felonious for a man to change his own name, how much more to change the name of another, in order to disfranchise him of his rights, or deprive him of his property, his office, or his good name! Judge Nelson, however, changes the name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and gives her a new name. Such an act is condemned, rejected, and pronounced null, in the case of Dartmouth College, by Judges Marshall and Story. There we let it rest; and we, in honest charity, say, and believe, that Judge Nelson did not understand the case. He followed his southern teachers, who have bewildered him, as well as others, in this matter; as this was the only way in which they could succeed, seeing constitutions, laws, and all sober ecclesiastical principles and decisions were against them.

But there is a *fact* here which we must not overlook, even in the exercise of the amplest charity. It is this: How would it do for the good Judge to order that the Book Concern at Cincinnati, the property of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north, be divided by the decision of a master? Will this master command Swornstedt & Poe to divide the Book Concern of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north? It might be asked, do the legal charters of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of the Book Concerns and Chartered Fund, as much as name or know this new Methodist Episcopal Church, north? Or may these charters, or, as Judge Marshall decided them, *contracts*, according to

the constitutions of the United States and the several states, be thrown to the winds, by the legal sophism of changing the old names for new ones? Here are some law points that the supreme Judges might have even condescended to consider, had they attached any adequate importance to the case before them.

The Judge says, "They [the complainants] also charge that the defendants are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north." This is a glaring misstatement of the fact in the case. The complainants, in their bill, bring the charge against the Methodist Episcopal Church, or her officers, and not against the Methodist Episcopal Church, north. The southern commissioners knew very well that they could not enter a suit against the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the fictitious name of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north; because this Church was never known, and is not now known, by the style and title of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north. The southern commissioners never sued the Methodist Episcopal Church, or her Agents, under the new name. They knew well that there was no person any where to answer to that name. They did, it is true, use such phraseology in their common conversation, their periodicals used it, and they endeavored to give it all the currency possible, so as to make it pass in southern and northern circles. But they never would venture it in connection with the merits of their cause in the courts. But Judge Nelson does this for them. What they employed as a nickname, or used for effect, the Judge has endeavored to make it a legal title. He does not do this in plain language; but designedly weaves it in, in various forms of circumlocution. This seems to be done to avoid detection in the formal legal use of the title; but the manifest intention and drift of his vague and sophistical expressions are to lead every reader to conclude, that his fictitious northern Church is no other than the Methodist Episcopal Church, and pairs off with his other new Church, which is avowedly "the Methodist Episcopal Church, South." This reminds one of the fox in the fable, which endeavored to have all his kind designated like himself. As the new Church had the name *South* postfixed, the Judge must follow his teachers, in having *north* postfixed to his fictitious Church, which he would fain substitute for the venerable Church of 1784.

5. The next thing we notice is the attempt of Judge Nelson to destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to substitute in its place two new Churches, the Church, north, and the Church, South, as he is pleased to call them. We will quote the Judge:

"In the year 1844 the traveling preachers, in General conference assembled, agreed upon a plan for a division of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in case the annual conferences in the slaveholding states should deem it necessary.

"The division of the Church, as originally constituted, thus became complete; and from this time two separate and distinct organizations have taken the place of the one previously existing.

"The Methodist Episcopal Church having been thus divided with the authority and according to the plan of the General conference.

"Both divisions have been brought into existence by the same authority.

"The same authority which founded the Church of 1784 has divided it, and established

two separate and independent organizations, occupying the place of the old one.

"It can not, therefore, be denied, indeed it has scarcely been denied, that this body, while composed of all the traveling preachers, possessed the power to divide it, and authorize the organization and establishment of two separate, independent Churches."

We must content ourselves here with a very brief survey of Judge Nelson's doctrine, which teaches the destruction of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Mr. Wesley assented to the new arrangements in 1784 for his American societies, and provided conditionally for the new organization in America, but for no division into two new Churches, and the destruction of the previously-existing one. He ordained Dr. Coke as bishop, or superintendent. He prepared a Discipline, comprising the General Rules, the Larger Minutes, the Articles of Religion, an Ordination service, and a Liturgy. These fundamental principles bound the American Methodists, whether preachers or people, within their limits.

(1.) They confine the exercise of their powers to *one* Church organization already established, and the preachers had no authority to organize any other.

(2.) Dr. Coke was appointed superintendent over that one Church alone, and for no other; and any other use of his power would have been unauthorized.

(3.) The American preachers would have been usurpers in 1784, had they adopted any other doctrine, Discipline, or forms of government, than what was prepared for them, or had they attempted to organize more than one Church.

(4.) Their constituents, the laity, neither expected any other, nor would they tolerate any other.

A division may have two meanings. It may mean the separation of the Church into two branches, creating two new Churches in the place of the one dissolved; or it may mean that the Methodist Episcopal Church, for instance, may remain, and that this other portion should be detached from it, and form an independent Church. The first would destroy the Methodist Episcopal Church; the latter would leave it in its full organization, though diminished in numbers. The General conference, prior to 1812, could not divide the Church, because no such power is in the constitution; it would have violated the compact between the ministry and the people.

The delegated General conferences, from 1808 to the present, neither claimed nor exercised the power to divide the Church. In 1828 this power was disavowed by the General conference. In 1844 it was disavowed, so that Dr. Capers's plan for that purpose was rejected promptly; and the members of this conference, in general, denied the existence of such a power. Hence, in their plan, they prepared to meet and treat a threatened secession in the best way they could.

The arguments of Judge Nelson for the destruction of the Methodist Episcopal Church are supremely ridiculous, to say the least of them. If the Methodist Episcopal Church had been destroyed in 1844, how did it come to pass that none of its ministers or members found it out till some southern expounders asserted it, and Judge Nelson caught up the report, and gave it the character of a fact in giving his opinion? It

is incredible that Churches cease to exist when they lose portions of their members! Who can believe that when a man loses his arm or leg, he ceases to exist? What statesman can believe that North Carolina ceased to exist when Tennessee was erected into a state within its territorial limits? or that Virginia was annihilated when Kentucky was formed out of it? And who can believe that North Carolina and Virginia not only ceased to be, but also became two new states, when Tennessee and Kentucky were organized? And even allowing that the General conference had the power, and did assent that a new Church might be organized within the territorial limits of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it does not follow that the General conference destroyed the identity of the Church they represented and served.

In this connection, let us note a few of Judge Nelson's **BLUNDERS**, arising from his ignorance of Church matters, especially of the case before him. We do not wish to involve the other judges just here in these acts of downright groping and stumbling, as they seem to have disposed of the matter as good-naturedly as the Israelites did when they gave their jewels to Aaron to make the calf idol in the wilderness.

Our readers, no doubt, expected from this high authority an opinion prepared with great care and precision, sound in its arguments, and accurate in all its statements. Their reasonable anticipations will not be realized. It is natural to suppose the Judge would examine with much care the chapter in our Discipline on the Book Concern, and yet he has fallen into the strange mistake that each annual conference shares of the profits "an amount in proportion to the number of traveling preachers, their widows and orphans, comprehended within it." All the conferences, large and small, receive always equal amounts from the profits of the Book Concern.

Much surprise will be excited in the minds of many in the south, as well as in the north, when they read the following: "They also charge that the defendants are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, north." The complainants were very far from alleging any such thing. They were too wise and prudent to make a Church which never had any existence a party to the suit. The language in the bill is, "That the defendants are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church." Nor did they say, as the opinion states, "that in addition to these defendants, there are nearly thirty-eight hundred preachers belonging to the traveling connection of the Church, north."

In another paragraph of the opinion it is affirmed, as a matter of agreement, "that the ministers, local and traveling, should, as they might prefer, attach themselves, without blame, to the Church, north or South." Now, these words convey the idea that the former organization was abolished, and that the ministers were at liberty to gather themselves up as best they could, and attach themselves to either contemplated organization, as they might prefer. The true reading of the second resolution of the plan is, "That ministers, local and traveling, of every grade and office in the Methodist Episcopal Church, may, as they may prefer, remain in that Church, or, without blame, attach themselves to the Church, South." This language supposes the continued existence of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and that it required no action, on the part of ministers, to remain in that Church. They were



already in it; but a minister of any grade or office had to take *action* to attach himself to the Church, South; and this was the thing that might be done without blame. No danger of blame was apprehended or thought of for remaining in the Church to which they belonged. A very marked difference must appear to all between the statement of the opinion and the reading of the resolution.

This *misnomer* is very frequently applied to the Methodist Episcopal Church throughout the document. We supposed they would call every thing referred to, in their grave decision, by its real and proper name. Least of all did we expect the Court would misname the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the decree which they ordered to be entered, prescribing the method by which the amount of property belonging to the complainants is to be ascertained. It says, "Which portion shall bear to the whole amount of the fund the proportion that the traveling preachers in the division of the Church, South, bore to the traveling preachers of the Church, north, at the time of the division of said Church." It might be made a question, as we have already observed, in referring the case to a master commissioner, whether it is possible for him to determine the number of traveling preachers in "the Church, north," as there never was a Church of that title or name.

But how can Judge Leavitt calculate the preachers in the Church, north? Where will he find them? And can Swormstedt & Poe even negotiate or do business for this Church, north? All that can be done, as far as we can see, is, for the south, or the officers of the law, to sell the property, or take possession of it, by main force of police, as the Book Agents can not, and we prophesy never will, act for this north Church, of which they have no knowledge whatever, except in name. The Judge must mend the decree; otherwise, the officers of law will be unable to act at all. We have neither mysticised here, nor thrown in any difficulty in this statement. We are persuaded the Book Agents here will not act for the Church, north.

6. The Judge states that the division of the Church "carried with it, as matter of law, a division of the common property belonging to the ecclesiastical organization, and especially of the property of the Book Concern." He then talks confusedly respecting the sixth Restriction, and after uttering several sentences in this confused style, comes to the conclusion to divide the funds, without any chain of logical argument. He happens, however, to state that the south were entitled to the funds, notwithstanding the sixth Restriction, unless by agreement or stipulation they gave up their share of them. To this we reply, that they did thus *stipulate* and agree, by approving of the plan of separation when passed, and afterward by acting under it. The plan made the distribution of the Book Concern to depend on the approval of the annual conferences by a three-fourths vote. This was their stipulation and agreement; and the Judge contradicts the history of the case when he says the south did not thus stipulate. But when they saw fit to break their solemn pledge, it is too much for the Judge to say, "It is quite clear no such agreement or stipulation is to be found in the plan of separation. The contrary intent is manifest from a perusal of it." Nothing of the sort, but the contrary, is true. The fourth resolution provides for the voting of the annual conferences. The fifth resolution says, *when* the

vote is carried, the distribution shall take place. The Judge contradicts the plan; and it is quite clear that such a stipulation is in the plan.

7. The decision of the Court prevents the object of the charity. The original founders never calculated to appropriate the funds to persons out of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or to those who have withdrawn from it, whether violently or peaceably. The intent of the founders is the law of the case, according to the laws governing religious trusts. The General conference of 1844 were not the founders, but the managers or trustees of the fund. There is no power on earth to change the design of the founders. The growth of the fund is not its foundation; and the intent of the present managers can not alter the intent of its founders. The present decision counteracts, therefore, the design of the founders, and is therefore at variance with the law in the case.

8. Hence this decision is without precedents of law or authorities. The Judge cites no authority, for the plain reason that there was none in his favor. He cites authorities, it is true, to show that there was no want of proper parties in the case. But this does not enter into the merits of the case. In all important cases, the judges give elaborate decisions, and adduce those legal authorities of similar cases to sustain their views. The Court, in this case, gives no safe precedent, but decides the matter without any reference to the legal analogies of the case.

9. The Court decides not only without precedents but also without giving any reasons or proofs for its decision. The mere *dicta* or sayings of Chief Justice Hale, Blackstone, Kent, or Story, against long-established principles of law, or unsupported by reasons, will find little respect with reasonable men; and why should the dictum of Judge Nelson be of greater weight than that of his more learned predecessors? The Judge seems to confine himself merely to the bill; and because the bill brings in the complainants within the description to recover, they must recover, whether the bill is sustained by proofs or not. The present case seems to have been decided on entirely new principles and rules of practice, reversing the old order of procedure. Heretofore, in courts of equity, if the proofs in favor of the bill do not sustain it, the bill must fall, whether the answer is sustained by proofs or not. In the case before us, because the claimants make out their case in the bill, irrespective of proofs, they must recover.

10. The decision of the Court is contrary to the best and safest decisions governing such cases; for the general law in such cases is, that withdrawal from a Church works a forfeiture of privileges. The authorities cited by the defendants' counsel, some twenty or more cases, being all the leading and strong ones in the books which bear on the subject, go to establish the point that seceders take nothing with them in such cases. But all this is set aside. This is an easy way of disposing of authorities. But had these authorities been admitted, the decision would have been otherwise.

11. We maintain that the decision of the Court, in this case, is not a judicial one, but a mere legislative enactment, in itself arbitrary, and unjust in its operations. It is without the support of safe precedents or authorities; it is contrary to the reasons or proofs belonging to the case; and it is actually contrary to the range of precedents or authorities governing such cases, in former decisions of a like nature. The Judge,

in his decision in the New York case, says "that the law steps in and enforces the right," in contravention of the law of the Church, which excludes the claimants; for the claimants do not claim to be in the Methodist Episcopal Church; they have affirmed that they have seceded from the Church, in renouncing its jurisdiction. They claim by the plan; but the plan puts them out of the Church, in the place of putting them into it.

The Court having averred the law as laid down by itself, which is the rule laid down by its founders, there is, nevertheless, a law invoked to enforce the claims of the south. This law is not a statute, for there is none. It is not the law of equity, expressed in the precedents, in the shape of decisions of judges, first in England and then in the United States. This law consists in the opinions of judges as to what is right between man and man in good conscience. The law which here "steps in and enforces the right," not being the statute law, nor the law of safe precedent, is nothing else than the mere opinion of the Judge, unsupported by reason or authorities.

If the judge is only substituted for prince, the following maxim of the Justinian code would seem to rule here. "The will of the prince has the force of law." *Quod principi placuit, legis habet vigorem.* (*Just.*, I, 2, 6.) This is called by Kent "a slavish political maxim."\* "The court of chancery," says Kent,† "is as much bound as a court of law, by a series of decisions, applicable to the case, and established rule. It has no discretionary power over principles and established precedents." We leave our readers to apply this.

12. The decision of Judge Nelson is contrary to the principles of just or right laws, as received by the Christian and civilized world. We can only give a very brief outline.

It is contrary to the Mosaic code. The principles and practice of this law enjoined most solemnly, that whatever was devoted to religious purposes, could never be recalled by the donor, nor applied to a different use by the managers of it. For instance, free-will offerings devoted to the tabernacle, temple, or any public or charitable object, could never be recalled by the donor. It was consecrated to God, and must not be refunded on any account—not misapplied.

*The Theodosian code.* Theodosius the younger appointed eight civilians to reduce the imperial constitutions into a methodical code, from the time of Constantine. This code, borrowing from the Mosaic law, established the doctrine of religious trusts, so that the object or intent of the donor governed each case, and was the standard by which to designate the beneficiaries, as well as the trustees or managers of the charity. The law books all refer to this source.

*The civil code.* Here, too, the same elements of law, flowing from Christianity, were grafted on the old Roman institutions, and were embodied in the body of the civil law, as digested under the authority of Justinian.

*The British laws.* The statute of Elizabeth‡ is the great foundation of religious trusts, regulated or restrained by the Mortmain statutes of future times. The general intention of the testator or founder, governs under this statute, and ramifies through English law. But the statute of Elizabeth did not originate the principles of

religious trusts; it only gave embodiment to what existed previously.

*The American laws.* These, in substance, adopt the same principles.

We might add the *canon law*. For, though much of it has no authority in Britain or America, the leading doctrines of religious trusts are embraced by it, though some time mixed up with Papal claims. Yet this code contains much worthy of study by all judges and lawyers who would understand thoroughly the subject of religious trusts; and, indeed, its study and reference for this purpose is indispensable.

All we have room for or inclination to say here just now is to state that the decision of Judge Nelson, in our judgment, is at variance with all these sources of law, and if tested by them would be condemned. Throughout all these codes, the principles are that the intent of the founder governs. And even contributors to charitable institutions, who contribute according to this foundation, have no further control of their donations. It is consecrated to this purpose, and can not be recalled as long as the intent of the founder is carried out. For instance, a contribution to a Methodist Episcopal meeting-house can never be recovered, so long as the trustees appropriate the house to that purpose. And so the proceeds of the Book Concern can never be appropriated otherwise than the constitutional rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church will authorize. And the decision perverting them is a mere arbitrary dictum, without authority from any source of law, whether statutory or constitutional, ancient or modern.

13. We are glad to be able to say that the decision fully shows that the western commissioners took the proper course in conducting the case and meeting the appeal. In referring to the plan of separation, the Court says, "Regarding the sixth Restrictive Article as a limitation upon the power of the General conference, as it respected a division of the property in the Book Concern, provision is made to obtain a removal of it. The removal of this limitation is not a condition to the right of the Church, South, to its share of the property, but is a step taken to enable the General conference to complete the partition of the property." Now, if the General conference had not the power to complete the partition of the property without a constitutional change or suspension in the Restrictive Rule by the annual conferences, none can suppose that the western commissioners had power to perfect the partition of the property, in opposition to, and in violation of the constitution of the Church, without a decree of the Court. Being sued, they were compelled by the organic law of the Church to defend the suit, and when a decision was made in their favor, an appeal was taken to the Supreme Court of the United States.

14. While the parent Wesleyan body in Europe, and the Methodist Episcopal Church in America have always maintained that the division of the body was schismatic, dangerous, and unscriptural, the right of the British conference, or the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, approved by the annual conferences, to agree to the separation of a portion of its members, and their organization into an independent body, may be said to be fully established. This is wholly different from division as used by Judge Nelson. In this manner the Methodist Episcopal Church was separated from the British conference. It was thus the Church in Canada was separated. In like manner the French and

\* I Kent's Commentaries, p. 232.

† Id., p. 458.

‡ 43 Elizabeth.

Australian conferences have been formed. All these petitioned the parent body for such organization; the parent bodies agreed to it; the new bodies accepted the grant, formed their new organizations, and continued in peace, harmony, and fraternization with the parent bodies. Such a course is right and proper. And as five such regular organizations, that is, the Irish conference, the Methodist Episcopal Church, the Wesleyan Canada Church, the French Church, and the Australian Churches, have been formed, many more such will, doubtless, yet take place. Germany, China, Africa, South America will, we trust, be thus formed. So in connection with the British Wesleyans, many such will be formed. But the body itself can not be divided and two new ones substituted in the place of the defunct Church.

It was the earnest desire of the General conference of 1844 that the south should be organized similar to the Methodist Episcopal Church, or the Church in Canada. But the violent and revolutionary course of the south prevented it. We trust, however, they will retract and assume a different character.

How far such a legitimate separation should require the division of the general funds of religious trusts, we are at no loss to decide. The Wesleyan body in Europe divided none of their religious trust funds with the Methodist Episcopal Church at its organization. If any thing was given by the British conference to the American Church, it was on no claim set up by it, but out of pure benevolence, and the good pleasure of the parent body. When the Canada conference was organized, nothing was given them out of the Book Concern, though they claimed it. Neither the French nor Australian conferences have set up any such claims; and if they did, they would do so in vain. This is the case with these Methodist Churches, whose independence is acknowledged by the parent bodies. None of these sued their mother Churches because they did not see fit to divide with them those funds that were especially in their hands for the general benefit of their own organized bodies. The unworthy and unnatural litigation of the southern pro-slavery Church is a libel and reproach to the otherwise fair fame of Methodism in this and the like cases.

15. On the whole, the harm done by Judge Nelson's decision, though officially sanctioned by the Supreme Court, will be limited in its effects. One effect will be to encourage the violence of our southern revolutionists. As they have ecclesiastically adopted its schismatic elements, to them it may work mischief in this way. It is calculated, too, to raise strong barriers in the way of any cordial fraternization between the Churches.

But if we view the decision of the Court as a precedent for future reference in influencing any future decision, we think it will be altogether harmless. No lawyer of any standing will ever quote the case. There is no reason to be found in it. There is no analogy between it and any of the influential cases decided in any judicial court, from the judges of Rome down to this day. As a legislative dictum, no one will respect it. No judge will ever name it. Where is it, then, to rank? It is to die the death. It is now dead and buried; or will be just as soon as the last dollar it awards to the south will be paid.

Kent says that a decision is of no value when it can be shown that "the law was misunder-

stood or misapplied in that particular case."\* We now consign this second decision of Judge Nelson and its predecessor at New York to the depth of oblivion to which the following comment of Kent condemns them:

"But I wish not to be understood to press too strongly the doctrine of *stare decisis*, when I recollect that there are one thousand cases to be pointed out in the English and American books of reports which have been overruled, doubted, or limited in their application. It is probable that the records of many of the courts are replete with hasty and crude decisions; and such cases ought to be examined without fear, and revised without reluctance, rather than to have the character of our law impaired, and the beauty and harmony of the system destroyed by the perpetuity of error. Even a series of decisions are not always conclusive evidence of the law; and the reversion of a decision very often resolves itself into a mere question of expediency, depending upon the consideration of the importance of certainty in the rule, and the extent of property to be affected by a change of it."†

16. The foregoing part of this chapter was written when the decision of the Supreme Court was published. Some of the southern papers were in spasms at the rashness that would call in question the principles on which the decision was based; as if infallibility were the just claim of the supreme judges. The gross ignorance of such cavilers on questions of this sort, or their narrow sectarianism, or self-interest, must excuse them as far as we are concerned. But this does not in the least affect us as to the justness of our strictures.

According to Kent and all sound constitutional jurists, decisions, as to their reasons or just authority as *safe precedents*, are of no value when the law is misunderstood or misapplied in that particular case. Some decisions are overruled, others are doubted, and others are limited in their application. Some decisions are hasty, and others are crude. When one court reverses the decisions of another; or one judge contradicts another; or when decisions are at variance with the established principles of the great law codes of the civilized world, and acknowledged as such, there will be little respect paid to the soundness of the new decisions, though they may have the obligation of law. Well has Kent said "that such decisions ought to be examined without fear, and revised without reluctance;" and that such a revision is "a mere question of expediency."

As the Supreme Court has its origin and model in the High Court of Chancery of England, it will be proper to take a survey of the English court and its chancellor, in order to have more correct views of the origin and character of the Supreme Court of the United States.

The Court of Chancery is the highest court of judicature in England, next to the Parliament. Its jurisdiction is *ordinary* or *extraordinary*. The ordinary jurisdiction is that wherein the Lord Chancellor, or Lord Keeper, etc., in his proceedings and judgment, is bound to observe the order and method of the common law, and the *extraordinary* jurisdiction is that which this court exercises in *equity*.

The extraordinary court, or court of equity, proceeds by the rules of equity and conscience, and moderates the rigor of the common law,

\* I Kent's Commentaries, p. 475.

† Id., p. 470.

considering the *intention* rather than the words of the law—equity being the correction of that wherein the law, by reason of its universality, is deficient.

There are in England two supreme courts of equity, the High Court of Chancery, and the Exchequer. The last principally concerns title suits.

The High Court of Chancery is composed of three tribunals, respectively presided over by the Lord Chancellor, the Master of the Rolls, and Vice Chancellor. Before either of these judges may be brought any cases, except such as relate to lunatics, which must be heard before the Chancellor. The Vice Chancellor is compelled to hear all matters which the Chancellor may direct, in addition to those originally set down in his own court. The decrees, orders, and acts of the Vice Chancellor, are liable to be reversed, discharged, or altered in the Chancellor's court.

Where there is any *error* in a *decree* in matter of law, there may be a *bill of review*, which is in nature of a writ of error, and an appeal to the house of lords. The lords affirm or reverse the decree of the chancery, and finally determine the cause by a majority of votes. No proofs will be admitted as evidence which were not made use of in the chancery.\*

According to the principles of English law, the Chancellor hath power to moderate the written law, governing his judgment by the law of nature and conscience, and ordering all things *juxta æquum et bonum*; and having the king's power in these matters, he hath been called "the keeper of the king's conscience." In his absolute power he is not limited by the law, but by conscience and equity, according to the circumstances of things. He by his oath swears well and truly to serve the king, and to do right to all manner of people.†

The king, as *parens patriæ*, *father of the country*, has the general superintendence of all charities, which he exercises by the Lord Chancellor; and, therefore, whenever it is necessary, the Attorney-General, at the relation of some informant, files an information in the court of chancery to have the charity properly established. Also by statute, 43 Elizabeth, c. 4, authority is given to the Lord Chancellor, as Lord Keeper, as keeper of the king's conscience in this matter, to rectify by decree what is judged to be wrong. An appeal also lies here to the house of peers.‡

Blackstone § deprecates the idea of some who ascribe very high powers to the court of equity in England. He says, with such powers, the court of chancery "would rise above all law, either common or statute, and be a most arbitrary legislator in almost every particular case. No wonder they are so often mistaken." He further states, "In the infancy of our courts of equity, before their jurisdiction was settled, and when the chancellors themselves, partly from their ignorance of law—being frequently bishops or statesmen—partly from ambition and lust of power—encouraged by the arbitrary principles of the age they lived in—but principally from the narrow and unjust decisions of the courts of law, had arrogated to themselves such unlimited authority, as hath totally been disclaimed by their successors for

now above a century past. The decrees of a court of equity were then rather in the nature of awards formed on the sudden *pro re nata*, with more probity of intention than knowledge of subject; founded on no settled principles, as being never designed, and therefore never used, for precedents. But the systems of jurisprudence in our courts, both of law and equity, are now equally artificial systems, founded on the same principles of justice and positive law, but varied by different usages in the forms and mode of their proceedings."

The Constitution of the United States declares that the "judicial power of the United States shall be vested in one Supreme Court, and in such inferior courts as the Congress may from time to time ordain and establish."

"The judicial power of the United States is, in point of origin and title, equal with the other powers of government, and is as exclusively vested in the courts created by, or in pursuance of the Constitution, as the legislative power is vested in Congress, or the executive power in the President."\*

The judicial power extends to all cases in law and equity arising under the Constitution, the laws and treaties of the Union; to controversies between citizens of different states, etc. "The judicial power," says Kent,† "in every government must be coextensive with the power of legislation. It follows, as a consequence, that the judicial department of the United States is, in the last resort, the final expositor of the Constitution as to all questions of a judicial nature. Were there no power to interpret, pronounce, and execute the law, the government would either perish through its own imbecility, as was the case with the articles of confederation, or other powers must be assumed by the legislative body, to the destruction of liberty."

According to Story, the courts of equity are far from having a right to claim exemption from errors—even serious errors. Equity jurisprudence in America had its origin at a far later period than the jurisdiction of the courts of common law. Under Britain, in many of the colonies, it either had no existence, or a very imperfect and irregular administration. Even since the Revolution, it has been of slow growth and cultivation. Even in those states where it has been cultivated with the most success, it has not been studied or administered, as a system of exact principles, till about the close of the last century; and later, the reports have received but little attention. "And, perhaps," says Story, "it is not too much to say that it did not attain its full maturity and masculine vigor, till Mr. Chancellor Kent brought to it the fullness of his own extraordinary learning, unconquerable diligence, and brilliant talents." He adds, that our equity jurisprudence of America is founded upon, coextensive with, and, in most respects, conformable to that of England. So that our equity jurisprudence generally embraces the same matters of jurisdiction and modes of remedy as exist in England.‡ But the study and the practice of equity principles in England are now far in advance of what they are in the United States.

And in regard to the reports of judicial decisions of the Supreme Court of the United States, they are far from possessing such high deference as some would claim for them. It is ac-

\* See Tomlins on Chancery. † Id., on Chancellor.

‡ Tomlins on Charitable Uses.

§ III Blackstone's Commentaries, p. 433.

\* I Kent's Commentaries, p. 290. † Id., p. 296.

‡ I Story's Commentaries on Equity, pp. 62-65.

knowledge they are *final*, and from them there is *no appeal*, so as to reverse their decisions. But when they are examined by reason, and the decisions of other courts, and the established principles of the great national legal codes of the world, they are subject to the fullest scrutiny, and they will receive it, as all *such* decisions have heretofore been subject to such ordeal, and all future ones will be. Chancellor Kent maintains this ground, and place sit in a clear light, in a section from which we have given a quotation in a preceding page.\*

Collecting our information partly from the concessions of the best American jurists, the decisions already made, and other reliable sources, the highest portion of the bar, as well as the Supreme Bench of the United States, have much to learn in reference to the just principles of law and equity respecting charitable uses. It were not difficult to show that there is in our courts a lack of accurate acquaintance with the principles of religious trusts, as they have been safely sustained by the great law codes of the enlightened world. Hence the crudity of some decisions, that will be as much the reproach of the American bench in time to come, as some of the decisions of the ecclesiastical chancellors and statesmen, of which Blackstone complains. And as to the decision of the appeal case from Ohio, before the Supreme Court of the United States, we have already paid too much deference to it in the space occupied, by exposing its weakness, its want of any real support from well-established decisions or sound reason. We will say to all, *stand to the decision*, in its present authoritative act; while we totally reject it as at variance with reason, justice, right, sound jurisprudence, and all safe precedents in like cases.

17. A principal object, on the part of the south, in prosecuting the suit, seems to have been, to obtain ecclesiastical, legitimate recognition by the civil powers. It was pretty manifest to all, that ultimately they would obtain a pro rata proportion of the Book Concern by the votes of the annual conferences. But this mode would place them out of the Methodist Episcopal Church. As we have seen, they relied at an early day on the southern legislatures and the courts for security in using the Church property of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The importance of recognized legitimacy was acknowledged by Mr. Stanberry in his printed brief, on the appeal case, in which he maintains that a decision in their favor "fixes the legitimacy of the Church, South, upon a true and unquestioned foundation. It is a view of the case very dear to Southern Methodists." THE LEGITIMACY OF THE CHURCH was the desideratum of the south.

When the case was decided, the southern press was furnished with short editorials, shaped by the expositors of the southern claims, in order to make the impression, that the Supreme Court had legitimized the southern Church to all intents and purposes. The National Intelligencer, of April 26th, states that the decision of the Supreme Court not only divides the property, "but also declares the division of the Church to be a valid act, and that the two divisions, north and south, are equally legitimate."† The Washington Union, of same

date, declares that the decision "not only establishes the side of the Church, South, to a proportionate share of the common funds and property, but decides that the two divisions are equally legitimate."\* Dr. M'Ferrin exults that the Court has legitimized the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

Here is another specimen of the resort of the leaders in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to the civil power to secure that which they could not obtain on proper ecclesiastical principles, or according to the letter and spirit of the New Testament. Such brief articles as those in the Intelligencer and Union, manifestly made for the purpose, appeared in most of the political papers, thus misrepresenting the case altogether. There never were any "*common funds*," belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The funds belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church *solely*; and the Court, or rather the diplomacy of the leaders in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, through the Court, succeeded by various methods, other than Christian, to secure a portion to themselves of property that never belonged to them, but was the legal and just property of the Methodist Episcopal Church. This is history, and we must not suppress it.

18. On the compromise settlement of the New York case, the southern press congratulates the Methodist Episcopal Church, that there was now a return of justice and right. They had been lavish in bestowing all epithets of dishonesty, injustice, and dishonor on the Methodist Episcopal Church, because they did not meet their views, during their revolution, in breaking down the constitutional barriers of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We will quote only the editor of the Southern Advocate on this subject. He says:

"To our northern brethren, we can readily believe that this settlement, which lifts from their consciences and better feelings a very unpleasant burden, is acceptable. It sets them right once more before the community. It quiets a distinctly felt and oft-expressed sense of uneasiness on the part of a large body of the Methodist laity. We had the opinion volunteered to us in New York, not long since, in influential quarters, that no blessing from God, no extensive revivals of religion need be expected, till a fair settlement was made with the south. Some such feeling we suppose to have been general."‡

There were doubtless some, in the narrow circle of Mr. Wightman's acquaintance, who thought as he states. Our acquaintance furnishes no such examples of laymen who entertained such views, nor could they be found, we believe, among Mr. Wightman's chosen ones, who believed that the Book Agents or any others should divide this property without the constitutional votes of the annual conferences. And the public discussions in the papers furnished no advocates for the measure among the clergy or laity of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Mr. Wightman's version is of a piece with his low billingsgate, indulged in for years previous to the utterance of the above, in which he accused the Methodist Episcopal Church and her officials of dishonesty and injustice,

\* I Kent's Commentaries, pp. 470-496.

† National Intelligencer, April 26, 1854. Scraps, VIII, p. 405.

\* Washington Union, April 26, 1854. Scraps, VIII, p. 407.

‡ S., December 13, 1853. Scraps, VII, p. 742.

because the Book Agents did not fall in with the views of himself and his fellow-seceders, in attempting to disorganize the Methodist Episcopal Church. We wish we could place this in a more favorable light, but the historical facts do not allow it. We pray that Mr. Wightman may come to a better mind, and that God may forgive him for his slanderous aspersions.

19. How far the promotion of peace will be promoted between the two Churches, by the decision of the property question, has been commented on with very different interpretations. Dr. Wightman says:

"It is a matter of no small gratification that the main barrier to a cordial exchange of fraternal feeling and good fellowship between the sister Churches, has been removed. On the basis of the late settlement, the Methodist Episcopal Church may, with self-respect, tender the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, an offer of brotherly intercourse, which, should it ever come, will be heartily responded to."\*

On the foregoing we remark, that apart from the mere property question, there is a long list of misdeeds of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, that must be amended before there will be cordial amity between the two Churches. And the proceedings of the south in regard to

the property question, contain a pretty long list of additional wrong acts that will be difficult either to remove, explain, or bear, on the part of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in view of fraternalization. And then the acts of the last General conference of the new Church in rejecting the Scriptural creed of Methodism on slavery is no small impediment in the way.

Still we think we see some signs of remorse in the south. Our quotation from Dr. Wightman, we hope, is a sign that he has repented of his former hard and unfounded sayings respecting the dishonesty of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and even Dr. Smith seems to be penitent indeed. Under date of December 1, 1853, in writing to the New Orleans Advocate, he says:

"May we not hope that a result so favorable to peace, will ultimately, and indeed at an early day, lead to those fraternal relations between the two great branches of the Methodist family in this country, which no circumstances should be permitted to violate? With me, I confess, this is an object most desirable in itself, and one for which I trust we will not cease to pray."\*

The Scriptures say, "first pure, then peaceable." We therefore first pray for purity, and then for peace and amity.

## CHAPTER LX.

### CONCLUSION.

I. It remains for us to close these chapters by some concluding observations. For this purpose, a brief survey of the leading points in the narrative, and some general remarks on them may best answer this purpose.

And in the first place we would refer to the principles and practice of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery. We gave this in full in the second chapter. Previous to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, when all the states were slave states, and while the Methodist societies were solely under the control of Mr. Wesley, strong antislavery sentiments were entertained by American Methodists. They considered slavery contrary to the laws of God, man, and nature, hurtful to society, and contrary to the dictates of conscience, pure religion, and the law of love. They disapprove of Church members having slaves, and advise freedom. They require traveling preachers to emancipate their slaves. Yet they only *advise* freedom; so that in all cases they did not require it. No purchase of slaves was deemed right, except to free them. No sales were allowed.

At the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1784, and subsequently, the same views were entertained respecting the evil nature of slavery. Every slaveholder who was a member was required to emancipate if it could be done, and no slaveholder was admitted into the Church, unless he promised to emancipate, when the laws allowed of emancipation. Those who bought or sold slaves, or gave them away, were immediately to be expelled, unless they bought in order to free them.

The General Rule represents slavery voluntarily entered into or continued in, as contrary to Scripture. 1. The word to *enslave*, in the Rule, is not used in the sense of reducing a free person to slavery, but in the sense of dealing in slaves, or trafficking in them; because buying and selling are acts subsequent to making men slaves. For the act of original enslaving, such as stealing men, taking them by force, or making them slaves by the civil law, as in this country, must precede all purchases and sales. To *enslave* in the sense of the Rule, therefore, is not to reduce a free person to slavery, but to deal or traffic in persons already slaves, or even hold, own, or use them as slaves, except so far as is necessary to make them free; or if this is impossible, to do the next best for them for their good. 2. The Rule does not refer to the African slave-trade, or to any particular trade, but to the acts of any purchase or sale which encourages, and sanctions, continues or perpetuates slavery. 3. And such was the original intention of the Rule. The General conference of 1784 did not use the word *enslave* in the sense of *reducing a free person to slavery*. The note of Bishops Coke and Asbury on the Rule is, "The buying and selling the souls and bodies of men—for what is the body without the soul, but a dead carcass?—is a complicated crime." In 1784 the Discipline is, "Q. 43. What shall be done with those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away? A. They are immediately to be expelled, unless they buy them on the purpose to free them." In 1796 we find the following: "Every member of the society who sells a slave, shall immediately, after full proof, be excluded the

\* S., Dec. 16, 1853. Scraps, VII, p. 742.

\* N. O. Adv., Dec. 17, 1853. Scraps, VII, p. 743.

society." That the Rule refers either to enslaving free persons, or the African slave-trade, contradicts both the letter of the Rule, and the contemporaneous statutes in carrying it out.

The Rule, too, relates to a moral subject, or to a subject in its moral character. It is placed among the leading moral prohibitions, such as the taking the name of God in vain, profaning the day of the Lord, drunkenness, fighting, etc. It relates to the purchase and sale of human beings, which never can be resorted to without wrong, except to free from slavery; or at least to prevent inhumanity and cruelty, or to ameliorate the condition of the slave; and the last is a hazardous act.

The *extirpation* of slavery has always been a cherished object with the Methodist Episcopal Church, from its organization to the present day. The word *extirpate* is one of the strongest in the English language, and means to root out, pluck up by the roots, to destroy totally, and *extirpation* means eradication, excision, total destruction.

The *means* of *extirpation* employed by the Methodist Episcopal Church have been only Gospel means, in order to bring master and slave to the knowledge, the enjoyment, and practice of religion. Submission, loyal submission to law has always been enjoined and practiced by the Church, and when these prevented and do now prevent emancipation, the Church has continued to employ the moral and religious instrumentalities alone, and the instances in which the Church has made application to the civil powers have been made by petition, as in 1800, and have been done in the capacity of good citizens, with a due regard for law; but with the deep conviction that *bad laws*, such as are many of the slave laws, ought to be repealed. Nor has the antislavery action of the Methodist Episcopal Church been confined to the north. The committees which reported the measures of 1800 and 1804, number among their members, Jesse Lee, William M'Kendree, George Daugherty, Philip Bruce, William Burke, Henry Willis—all of them southern men. What members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slave states may do as citizens in the matter of slavery remains to be tried, as little or nothing of this sort has yet been attempted.

In the nature of the case, by the action of the slave laws on inheritance, there have been, and ever must be, while slavery exists in the state, more or less slaveholders within the pale of the Church. This was the case previous to, at the organization of the Church, and ever since. Some of our most extensive revivals have been in the slave states, when the Church was receiving slaveholders into her pale, and teaching them to emancipate when they could; and also teaching those who could not *thus* release them, to conduct toward them as our Savior directed, in exercising the law of love. Some strong laws were made at an early day for excluding slaveholders, but to no purpose, as they could not be exercised without injustice and wrong; hence they were, by common consent, repealed, or disused, as having no practical nor theoretic result. And this was the case with the Wesleyan Methodists, as well as in the United States; for the Wesleyans had slaveholders in their communion till the day of general emancipation in the West Indies; and this course neither sanctions nor upholds slavery, while the moral principles of the Bible are brought to bear on the subject. And this was the case, too,

in the primitive Church, and slaveholders were within its pale, till slavery expired gradually under the influence of the Christian spirit and Christian principles. For it is idle to say that the Old or New Testament countenanced or upheld slavery. And those few Churches in recent times which have made or attempted to make absolute non-slaveholding a term of membership, have done little or nothing religiously to benefit slave or master; or they have shut themselves out entirely from the field of labor. The reason is, they have adopted a mere arbitrary theory in the place of the Gospel panacea, of enlightenment, regeneration, and sanctification, and therefore could not succeed. This is history, and can not be met except by dogmatism and self-sufficiency, and with some mixture of fanaticism and narrow sectarianism.

2. As we have specially to treat of what relates to the Methodist Episcopal Church, it will be relevant for us to survey the principles, Discipline, practice, and success of the Wesleyan Methodists in the West Indies.

It is acknowledged by all, as has been shown in our first chapter, that the slaves and colored people in the West Indies were sunk in ignorance and viciousness when the Wesleyans commenced their labors there. The instructions to their missionaries, show the principles which governed the West India missionaries among the slaves. The following are the principal elements in the Wesleyan Discipline to regulate their missionaries. 1. The object was the instruction and conversion of the slaves from sin to holiness. 2. All their instructions and labors were to be directed to this one object. 3. No polygamist, adulterer, or immoral person, or who is idle, disorderly, or disobedient to his owner, if a slave, could remain in the Church. 4. Before admission to the Church, they were to be tried by a proper probation in these respects. 5. The children and hearers were to be considered under pastoral care. 6. The only business of the missionary was to promote the religious interests of the slaves, without in any way, either public or private, interfering with their civil relation. Obedience to masters was enjoined on slaves. 7. The consent of the owner or overseer of the slaves was to be obtained before the course of instruction commenced. 8. The sacred duties of the married relation were to be observed by all. 9. The missionaries were to join in no civil local disputes, either verbally, or with any person at home by correspondence. 10. The civil powers were to be treated with the greatest respect and deference.

In carrying out this Discipline, the following rules were observed: 1. Each missionary had a printed copy of the instructions as the standing rules of his conduct. 2. The instructions were to be read annually at the district meetings, and inquiries instituted as to their observance. 3. Every superintendent, or preacher in charge, was required to observe them himself, and see that all under his charge observed them in like manner. 4. The superintendents were to report to the missionary committee in London on all these matters.

Mr. Watson, in 1817, testifies that the missionaries rather concealed the miseries of the slaves, than declared their real condition; for they were unwilling to disoblige the planters, and thus shut up their access to the slaves. But the gross attacks on the missionaries extorted from them disclosures respecting the degradation and oppression of the slaves. These

disclosures were wrung from the missionaries by the violence of the West India body. This prepared the public mind in England for the abolition of slavery. The object, however, of the missionaries was purely spiritual. Their *design* was solely the salvation of souls. Yet it was to the operation of the missions as an *effect* that freedom was accomplished, though nothing was more remote from the views of the missionaries when they first entered the work. Mr. Watson, in 1832, declared "the missionary society laid restraints on missionaries—a total silence on the civil wrongs of the slaves—lest this would interfere with their salvation, which was more important than freedom."

The moral discipline of the instructions was carried out by the missionaries to the letter. The Rev. Mr. Barry, a missionary, testifies to this on his examination before the committee of the house of Parliament, in 1832. He states, on oath, that if any leader should be applied to by an individual for admission to the Church, the leader states the fact to the missionary, who examines particularly whether, if a slave, his conduct, as far as known, is irreproachable, and whether he has been faithful to his master. If the examination be satisfactory, he is admitted for two or three months on trial. If, at the end of his trial, the leader can still recommend him for moral conduct, a ticket is then given him, which recognizes him as a member. At the weekly meeting of the leaders, the missionary inquires of each as to the moral conduct of every member of his class during the week. If any slave is guilty of any act of immorality or dishonesty, or of running away, the slave is immediately called to an account, and if proved to be guilty is expelled. This course is invariably pursued.

The Wesleyans, however, never made non-slaveholding a term of membership. They had slaveholders in communion with their Church till the day of emancipation. Of the 446 leaders in Jamaica in May, 1832, most of them were owners of slaves. While they considered the *system* of slavery morally wrong, they believed men might hold the legal relation of master without guilt. The same was the case with the Baptist missionaries in the West India Islands, up to the day of emancipation.

The salvation of the slaves was the only object at which the missionaries aimed. In all their letters they took no step to interfere with the civil relations of the slaves, either in public or private. The result was, the slaves were instructed in the principles of Christianity, and were governed by its morals. They also became obedient to their masters, and served them without constraint or the use of the whip. Their minds became improved, and they learned to read, reason, and instruct their children. Their knowledge of right and wrong led them to understand this text, "If thou mayest be free, use it rather." Yet religion led them to control their evil passions, and suffer and wait for a lawful and peaceable freedom, and when the day of freedom came, the influence of their religion led them to enjoy it to advantage. Dr. Lushington, in the British Parliament, March 13, 1827, declared, "but for the Wesleyan missionaries, the whole black population of the West Indies would have continued in a state of idolatry and paganism."

A brief view of the Church statistics in the West Indies will present the good results of missions in those islands. Sir George Ross,

who patronized the Wesleyans on his West India estates, declares before Parliament, in 1823, that the most gratifying results followed the labors of the missionaries. He calculated that about 80,000 adults and children, were either Church members or under instructions under the Wesleyans alone, while about 20,000 adults and children were under the care of all others, comprising Baptists, Moravians, the Scotch Church, and the Church of England. In 1827 the number of Wesleyan colored members alone in the West Indies was 27,606, beside children and others under instruction. In 1831 there were 24,499 slaves Church members, and 7,281 free colored; in all 31,780 members. Upward of 3,000 children of slaves were under instruction, out of the total number of 25,420. In 1842 the number of members was 52,868, and children in proportion. Our statistics reach no farther down. Now, all this was accomplished by preaching the Gospel to masters and slaves, without any, even the least reference to the civil relations; except as the plain teachings of Christian morals impressed the minds of each. This was and truly is the work of the Church. What men, though Church members, are to do as citizens and men under the influence of true Christianity, is quite another thing, and it has a legitimate sphere of action in reference to those in bonds. But the work of the Church alone, as a Church, is a spiritual one, and principally and primarily concerns the salvation of men.

3. We may now refer to the progress and good effects of religion on the slaves and colored people through the instrumentality of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Ever since its organization, the colored people had been especially the objects of its attention. Most other Churches had greatly overlooked their spiritual concerns. In the providence of God many of them became truly religious through the instrumentality of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The first distinction between white and colored members appeared in the Minutes in 1787. From the statistics given at page 82, it will be seen that the colored people, ever since 1787, has formed a considerable portion of the membership. In 1845, when the secession of the south took place, the number of white members was 985,698, and the colored members 150,120. In 1787 the colored members were one-eleventh of the whole; in 1790, in 1800, 1810, 1820, and 1830, about one-fifth; and in 1840 and 1850, about one-tenth. The progress was pretty uniform, and showed a fair proportion between the colored and white members. The colored people had been served in the regular circuits and stations up to 1828. At and after this time, missions have been established solely for colored people, with great success.

In 1845 the progress of colored missions, under the care of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was such as to enlist all the southern Churches in the good work; so that the promotion of colored missions became the established policy of the entire south. A meeting of citizens and ministers of all the southern Churches in Charleston, this year, came deliberately to this conclusion. They say, *that by the grace and providence of God, the instruction of the slaves is the great duty, and the fixed policy of the south, and this is demonstrated by the blessing of God, and the work must go on.* Now, all this was principally done through the instrumentality of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with her strong



antislavery creed, and her antislavery regulations. Therefore the *necessity* of a change in 1844, merely to favor the system of slavery, is a preposterous conceit. All this was done while the south was under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Among the slaves, as we have seen in the preceding pages of this history, there has been a gratifying reformation. They have been greatly enlightened by the teachings of Christianity, so that their general intelligence has been much advanced. Their morals, too, have been vastly improved. They became honest, true to their trusts, and observant of the code of Christian morals. The process of oral instruction has been generally resorted to. Yet multitudes of them have learned to read, not only their Bibles and Hymn-Books, but also newspapers and books.

A large number of truly-religious people in the south, though slaveholders, have learned from the spirit and principles of religion to treat the slaves with humanity, and provide for their temporal and spiritual wants. Hence the condition of colored people in the United States is far superior to what it is in the West Indies or any other country. And while the laws of the slave states are more stringent, and further from the principles of equity than those, perhaps, of any other slave country, the religious influence of the whites has had a most beneficial effect on the slaves and colored people, in both enlightening them intellectually and morally, and in improving their condition, though this good result did not spring from slavery, but in spite of it, and is also neither so deep, extensive, nor complete, as if the colored people were not slaves. Slavery can have no more pretension to a missionary character, than drunkenness, theft, and idolatry can have to be good, moral, and religious.

4. We have noticed with sufficient detail the principles of the recent American abolitionists, commencing with Garrison and George Thompson of England, and others. These were very different from the first abolitionists of England and America. Such men as Clarkson, Sharp, Wilberforce, Buxton, Brougham, Dr. Lushington, Bunting, and Watson, in England; and John Jay, Franklin, Rush, and Benezet, in America, were not the leaders in the recent abolition ranks of America. These were very different from Thompson and Garrison. The British public in 1823 to 1833, were very much engaged in the topics involved in West India emancipation. The act of Parliament was passed in 1833, to take place August 1, 1834. The controversy was then transferred to America.

Mr. Garrison and Mr. Knapp commenced the *Liberator* in January, 1831, and the New England Antislavery Society was formed in January, 1832. In 1832 Mr. Garrison attacked the Colonization Society. The American Antislavery Society was formed in 1833.

During three months preceding the act of emancipation of Britain in 1833. The British Antislavery Society, or a majority of them employed several public lecturers, to go through the country, and inflame the minds of the people in favoring immediate, unconditional emancipation. Among the most prominent of these was Mr. George Thompson. The New England Society, through Mr. Garrison, invited Mr. Thompson to come to America to lecture on slavery. He was sent to America by the Glasgow, Edinburgh, and London Antislavery Societies, the

two former of which were formed for the express purpose of sending him. The London, or British and Foreign Society issued a circular to America, recommending Mr. Thompson, whom the Society sent, "for a term of three years, to operate in this country by a system of agitation." Mr. Thompson opened his *SYSTEM OF AGITATION*, as he and his friends called it, in Lowell, Massachusetts, August 5, 1834. He contended for immediate, entire, and unconditional emancipation, without expatriation, and the admission of the colored people to the unabridged principles of the Constitution. Mr. Thompson met with rebuts every-where except from his few Garrisonian friends, and returned to Europe at the close of 1835, without accomplishing any good, though he did much harm.

Rev. Orange Scott, as we have seen, and other Methodist preachers, united with Messrs. Thompson and Garrison, and trod in their footsteps. At first they attacked slavery, and then the Church, its ministers and Discipline. The Church was charged with all the evils of slavery, as if she had made all the slave laws, and had power to emancipate all the slaves, but refused to do it. In short, the Methodist abolitionists of these times commenced and continued a course of mere agitation and discord most injurious to religion. The result was, that the work of the Lord languished under such inflictions; while those who were leaders in this evil work abandoned the Church itself, and organized for themselves, the details of which we have given at sufficient length.

We can not believe that any good followed their course, while much evil was the result. They had recourse principally to *agitation*, and as they did not use arguments to convince, but employed all sorts of denunciation, evil, and evil only followed.

The Antislavery Society and its agents, too, were lavish in condemning the Church as the bulwark of slavery. And every measure of the Church was pronounced wrong, except so far as it could be employed to forward the views and measures of the abolitionists.

The brief history of the new American abolition movement, from 1834 to 1854, is this: It attempted to make all the Churches tributary to its measures. It condemned them without stint when compliance was refused. And the Church itself was only fit to be destroyed when it declined this subserviency. This race of abolitionists produced few works of any value on slavery, apart from the mere newspaper discussions. The works of merit, printed and circulated by them, were mostly written by quite another class of abolitionists. In the year 1840 they divided; the most moderate party still retaining much of the same elements on account of which they separated from the old school Garrisonians. Still, in spite of them or their measures, the antislavery spirit of the country has remained, and is increasing in power and stability every day. The Methodist Episcopal Church has passed through a severe ordeal, because she refused to be tied to the car of this party, so different in spirit and measures from Clarkson and Franklin, Wesley, and their associates. We presume a sufficiently full portrait of these events has been presented in the preceding pages, so as to show that the Methodist Episcopal Church acted the wise and right part in not following in the wake of these zealous reformers of Church and state.

5. On the other hand, it will be manifest to

any unprejudiced persons, not partisans in the case, that the Methodist Episcopal Church took a wise and Christian course in refusing to adopt the pro-slavery course of the south. In carrying out the antislavery and Scriptural principles of the Discipline, they were bound by principle and consistency to do as they did in the cases of Bishop Andrew and Mr. Harding. In the case of the latter, the Discipline in its letter and spirit was maintained in requiring emancipation in a *practical* case, and in such cases as had been occurring in the Baltimore and other conferences since the organization of the Church. The General conference in 1844 did nothing more than to follow the uniform *rule*, and *common law* of the Church, exemplified in many cases of like sort with that of Mr. Harding.

In the case of Bishop Andrew, the General conference of the Church had all along refused to choose a slaveholder for bishop. This showed the *mind* of the Church—its *sense*, or *meaning* of what was right, and fitting, and safe, in order to carry out good principles. There was, too, an *analogy* in the case that ran through the uniform usage or practice of the Church. It is this: Where the field of labor comprised both free and slave territory, the preachers were required to conform to what was suitable to the free territory. Thus freedom was to govern; and slavery, as was right and even necessary, had to yield. The preachers traveling in such conferences as Philadelphia, Baltimore, and the old Pittsburg and Ohio conferences, were, without exception, by rule and usage required to be free from slavery. The field of the bishop included both free and slave territory. It was, therefore, right in itself, and was the common law of the Church, that no bishop should become a slaveholder, or if he did become one merely by law, he was bound to free himself from the evil. This the south refused to do in the case of Bishop Andrew. Brethren in the north wished to purchase his slaves and set them free, and give him the avails. This he and the south refused, and thus they became determined patrons of slavery. The Church could not bear the outrage on principle and safe usage; and therefore the General conference did right in declaring their *sense*, in their action in the case.

6. From the facts presented in the foregoing chapters, it is manifest that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, must be considered as a pro-slavery Church. Her leading ministers and periodicals, uttered nothing that presented slavery in its true colors. Previous to the formation of the new Church, in 1845, or from 1837 to the Louisville convention, both conferences, individuals, and newspapers, adopted the theory that slavery was wholly a civil institution, with which the Church had nothing to do. At the convention the general tenor of the members was of a pro-slavery character. And the very organization of the new Church owed its existence to the support of pro-slavery principles, measures, and practices. Previous to the Petersburg General conference in 1846, the same proclivity to slavery was manifest in various ways. At this conference the rule and section on slavery were barely tolerated. In 1850 they were completely nullified, so as to have neither theoretical nor practical meaning or application, and thus they became a dead letter to all intents and purposes.

But the pro-slavery spirit did not stop here. The General Rule and the section on slavery were attacked subsequently to 1850, by the

correspondents and editors of the southern papers, as if they contained the most pernicious heresies in the world. They were denounced, ridiculed, and condemned without stint. Rev. B. T. Crouch was among the most vehement against those portions of the Discipline. Bishop Soule attacked them with all solemnity, in three long articles, and represented them as unfit to be in the Discipline; though Mr. Crouch thought the now useless rules might remain as an ornament to the Discipline, if it was desired. The editors and the correspondents all said amen. In May last the General conference decided, by a vote of 54 against 47, to expunge the Rule. But the Rule requiring a two-third vote, could not be expunged. The majority then voted to nullify the Rule by exposition, and explained by passing a declaratory law, that the Rule "is understood as referring exclusively to the slave-trade, as prohibited by the Constitution and laws of the United States." This was carried, we believe, by a majority of ninety-six to ten. Hence the members and ministers are not only permitted to be slaveholders, but also *slave-traders*, or *slave-dealers*. Thus they have, as they say, placed the Church on "*Scriptural ground*," as one editor expounds the action.

We will not here repeat the exceptions which we have taken to the new organization. We will barely refer to them, with the hope that they may be found to be unfounded, and that we have been mistaken in filing them.

7. While we have deemed it our duty to make the foregoing statements, we are gratified to have it in our power to furnish something more encouraging to our readers.

The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, since their secession, has carried on the missionary work among the slaves and colored people, with great energy and success. At the present time they have about 150,000 colored members; or about the same number that was in the Methodist Episcopal Church before the secession in 1845. There are many missionaries laboring solely among the colored people with great success, preaching the Gospel, instructing catechetically the children, visiting the families pastorally, and benefiting their charges effectually. They pursue and carry out the same modes of instruction employed by the Wesleyans in the West Indies, and by the Methodist Episcopal Church in her missions. They are doing a great practical work. And whatever exceptions we or others may take to some of the principles and measures of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, their missionary labors among the slaves of the south have no parallel in the world at this day. While they are denounced without stint, by northern and some British abolitionists of the recent school, they are doing more good practically and Scripturally for the enlightenment, reformation, elevation, and future advantageous emancipation of the slaves than all their censors are. They indeed are the only persons that can do this work, and they are doing it well, employing the same modes of instruction pursued by the principal Churches, by the Wesleyan, Baptist, and Moravian missionaries in the West Indies, and by the Methodist Episcopal and Presbyterian Churches in the United States. It gives us great pleasure, indeed, to have it in our power to pen this paragraph, which we do under the deepest conviction, that we record historical facts, which we have been careful to ascertain from reliable sources of information. In the course of this history, under our mis-

sonary head we have considered the subject in detail, and we request our readers to note particularly this part of the history. We trust and pray the evil element may not prevail against the good in this case.

Another thing we feel bound to mention here. We mean the warm and cordial reception and support which our southern brethren give to the leading institutions and usages of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Whatever exceptions we may take to some of their positions, they are ardently attached to all the fundamentals and peculiarities of Methodism, the instance of slavery excepted. They are less disposed to innovation than the north is; and hold most tenaciously to the leading parts of pure and original Methodism.

8. We will close the present chapter with the following extract from Dr. Dixon, in his work on Methodism and America:

"In the mean time great consequences must result from either their failure or their success. That things can not always remain as they are, is certain. Christianity must either conquer slavery, or slavery must conquer Christianity. The two forces have every-where, and in all ages, been antagonistic. To lower down the Christian system to slavery, would be to denude it of all its essential attributes. The very existence of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is itself a living, palpable testimony against this tyranny over millions of men. If it fail in its testimony, it ceases to be Christian. For the Church to fraternize with slavery, is for it at once to cease to be a religious fellowship; it sinks to the rank of a political confederacy of the very worst kind.

"There is danger of this. The institutions of a country necessarily operate on the character and spirit of religious bodies. The individuals

composing the Christian society are the same as those who compose the body-politic; and, to a certain extent, carry their feeling and views with them into the Church. To fashion the policy of the one by the spirit and maxims of the other must be their constant effort. So to modify the Discipline of the Church as to meet the conditions of the social body, is to bring down the doctrines of the Gospel to a worldly standard, and to drag the Church after the car of the state. This subserviency must be fatal to the vitality and power of the Church. Her freedom is essential to her efficiency. To mingle the forms of the Christian society with the policy of the state, when the state, as in this case, is antichristian, is to destroy its means of producing any kind of amelioration; it becomes a part of the same system; an element of evil, only swelling the general aggregate, and giving its amount of influence to the universal corruption.

"This contest of principle is a fearfully grave subject. The men who are called to represent the Christian cause are placed in a most responsible position. Their fidelity must be severely tested; their duties are of the most momentous description. Will they retain their fidelity to true Christianity—their adherence to the pure Gospel—their devotedness to the interests of humanity? We hope they will. We have much confidence in their character. They do not see it to be their duty to put themselves in direct collision with the civil government; but they feel the obligation of upholding the truth of God. . . . They do not see the hand of God in the thunder and lightning; but they believe in the 'still small voice.' 'Not by power, or by might, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord,' is their motto."

Faint, illegible text, possibly bleed-through from the reverse side of the page. The text is arranged in several lines and appears to be a list or a series of entries, but the characters are too light and blurry to transcribe accurately.

## DOCUMENTS.

THE following is the list of Documents referred to in the foregoing pages. The sources from which they are taken are carefully noted out at the end of each Document.

### DOCUMENT 1.

*Instructions to Missionaries in the West Indies, in the employ of the British Conference, adopted December 18, 1817.*

At a meeting of the committee, held at the Wesleyan Mission-House, Hatton Garden, London, December 18, 1817, it was unanimously resolved:

1. That the substance of various Advices and Directions which have, from the commencement of the Wesleyan missions, been delivered to the missionaries, shall be forthwith embodied in the form of printed Instructions, which shall be considered as standing rules of conduct for the said missionaries.

2. That a copy of these Instructions, signed by the secretaries for the time being, shall be furnished to every missionary who now is, or hereafter shall be, employed in any of our foreign stations.

3. That the said Instructions shall be read over annually, at the meeting of every district committee, by the chairman, who is to inquire whether they have been observed on the part of the brethren; and the same shall be reported in the district minutes regularly, and with them transmitted to the committee in London. Every superintendent is not only charged with the observance of them himself, but is responsible, as far as may be, for their observance by the brethren under his direction, or for an immediate report to the district, or to the managing committee in London, in any case in which they may have been violated.

I. We recommend to you, *in the first place, and above all things*, to pay due attention to your personal piety; which, by prayer, self-denial, holy diligence, and active faith in Him who loved you and gave himself for you, must be kept in a lively, vigorous, and growing state. Set before you constantly the example of the holy apostle: "*This one thing I do; forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.*" Philippians iii, 13, 14. Amid all your reading, studies, journeyings, preaching, and other labors, let the prosperity of your own souls in the divine life be carefully cultivated; and then a spirit of piety will dispose you to the proper performance of your ministerial duties; and, by a holy reaction, such a discharge of duty will increase your personal religion.

II. We wish to impress on your minds the absolute necessity of using every means of mental improvement, with an express view to your great work as Christian ministers. You are furnished with useful books, the works of men

of distinguished learning and piety. We recommend you to acquire an increase of that general knowledge which, if the handmaid of piety, will increase your qualifications for extensive usefulness. But more especially we press upon you the absolute necessity of studying Christian divinity, the doctrines of salvation by the cross of Christ, "which things the angels desire to look into." They exercise their minds, which excel in strength, in the contemplation of those precious truths which you are called to explain and illustrate. Let all your reading and studies have a reference to this. You are to teach religion; you must, therefore, understand religion well. You are to disseminate the knowledge of Christianity, in order to the salvation of men; let the Bible, then, be your book; and let all other books be read only in order to obtain a better acquaintance with the holy Scriptures, and a greater facility in explaining, illustrating, and applying their important contents. We particularly recommend to you to read and digest the writings of Wesley and Fletcher, and the useful commentaries with which you are furnished, which are designed and calculated to increase your knowledge of the sacred volume. Like the Baptist, you must be "burning and shining lights;" and, therefore, recollect every day, that while you endeavor, by reading, meditation, and conversation, to increase your stock of useful knowledge, it is necessary for you to acquire a proportionate increase of holy fervor.

III. We exhort you, brethren, to unity of affection, which will not fail to produce unity of action. Let your love be without dissimulation. In honor prefer one another. On this subject, we beseech you to pay a practical regard to the advice of the venerable founder of our societies, the Rev. John Wesley. With his characteristic brevity, he inquires, "What can be done, in order to a closer union of our preachers with each other? *Answer*.—1. Let them be deeply convinced of the absolute necessity of it. 2. Let them pray for an earnest desire of union. 3. Let them speak freely to each other. 4. When they meet, let them never part without prayer. 5. Let them beware how they despise each other's gifts. 6. Let them never speak slightly of each other in any kind. 7. Let them defend one another's character in every thing, to the utmost of their power. And, 8. Let them labor in honor to prefer each the other before himself."

IV. Remember always, dear brethren, that you are, by choice and on conviction, Wesleyan Methodist preachers; and, therefore, it is expected and required of you to act in all things in a way consistent with that character. In your manner of preaching, and of administering the various ordinances of God's house, keep closely to the model exhibited by your brethren

at home. Indeed, you have solemnly pledged yourselves so to do. *You have promised to preach, in the most explicit terms, the doctrines held as Scriptural, and therefore sacred, in the connection to which you belong.* We advise, however, in so doing, that you avoid all appearance of controversy, in your mode of stating and enforcing divine truths. While you firmly maintain that ground which we, as a body, have seen it right to take, cultivate a catholic spirit toward all your fellow-laborers in the work of evangelizing the heathen, and aid them to the utmost of your power in their benevolent exertions. You have engaged also to pay a conscientious regard to our Discipline. We need not tell you that *all the parts* of that Discipline are of importance; and that, taken together, they form a body of rules and usages, which appear to meet all the wants of individuals who are seeking the salvation of their souls; and, under the Divine influence and blessing, to promote the prosperity of every society. We also particularly press upon your constant attention and observance, Mr. Wesley's "Twelve Rules of a Helper."

V. We can not omit, without neglecting our duty, to warn you against meddling with political parties, or secular disputes. You are teachers of religion; and that alone should be kept in view. It is, however, a part of your duty, as ministers, to enforce, by precept and example, a cheerful obedience to lawful authority. You know that the venerable Wesley was always distinguished by his love to his country, by his conscientious loyalty, and by his attachment to that illustrious family which has so long filled the throne of Great Britain. You know that your brethren at home are actuated by the same principles, and walk by the same rule; and we have confidence in you that you will preserve the same character of religious regard to good order and submission "to the powers that be," in which we glory. Our motto is, "Fear God, and honor the king;" and we recollect who hath said, "Put them in mind to be subject to principalities and powers, to obey magistrates, to be ready to every good work."

VI. You will, in a foreign station, find yourselves in circumstances very different from those in which you are at home, with regard to those who are in authority under our gracious sovereign. It is probable you will frequently come under their immediate notice and observation. We are, however, persuaded that while you demean yourselves as you ought, you will be generally favored with their protection. On your arrival at your stations, you will be instructed what steps to take in order to obtain the protection of the local governments; and we trust that your subsequent good behavior toward governors, and *all* who are in authority, will be such as shall secure to you the enjoyment of liberty to instruct and promote the salvation of those to whom you are sent.

VII. Those of you who are appointed to the West India colonies, being placed in stations of considerable delicacy, and which require, from the state of society there, a peculiar circumspection and prudence on the one hand, and of zeal, diligence, and patient perseverance, on the other, are required to attend to the following directions, as specially applicable to your mission there:

1. Your particular designation is to endeavor the religious instruction and conversion of the ignorant, pagan, and neglected black and colored population of the island, or station, to which

you may be appointed, and of all others who may be willing to hear you.

2. Where societies are already formed, you are required to watch over them with the fidelity of those who must give up their account to Him who hath purchased them with his blood, and by whose providence they are placed under your care. Your labors must be constantly directed to improve them in the knowledge of Christianity, and to enforce upon them the experience and practice of its doctrine and duties, without intermingling doubtful controversies in your administrations, being mainly anxious that those over whom you have pastoral care should clearly understand the principal doctrines of the Scriptures, feel their renovating influence upon the heart, and become "holy in all manner of conversation and godliness." And in order to this, we recommend that your sermons should consist chiefly of clear expositions of the most important truths of Holy Writ, enforced with affection and fervor on the consciences and conduct of them that hear you; that you frequently and familiarly explain portions of the Scriptures; and that, as extensively as you possibly can, you introduce the method of teaching children, and the less instructed of the adult population, by the excellent catechisms with which you are furnished.

3. It is enforced upon you that you continue no person as a member of your societies whose "conversation is not as becometh the Gospel of Christ." That any member of society who may relapse into his former habits, and become a polygamist, or an adulterer; who shall be idle and disorderly, disobedient to his owner—if a slave—who shall steal or be in any other way immoral or irreligious, shall be put away, after due admonition, and proper attempts to reclaim him from the "error of his way."

4. Before you receive any person into society, you shall be satisfied of his desire to become acquainted with the religion of Christ, and to obey it; and if he has not previously been under Christian instruction, nor baptized, you are, before his admission as a member, diligently to teach him the Christian faith, and the obligations which he takes upon himself by baptism, so as to be assured of his having obtained such knowledge of the principles of religion, and such belief of them as to warrant you to administer to him that ordinance. Beside this, no person is to be admitted into society without being placed first on trial for such time as shall be sufficient to prove whether his conduct has been reformed, and that he has wholly renounced all those vices to which he may have been before addicted.

5. You are to consider the children of the negroes and colored people of your societies and congregations as a part of your charge; and it is recommended to you, wherever it is practicable and prudent, to establish Sunday or other schools for their instruction. It is to be considered by you as a very important part of your duty as a missionary to catechise them as often as you conveniently can, at stated periods; and to give your utmost aid to their being brought up in Christian knowledge, and in industrious and moral habits.

6. As in the colonies in which you are called to labor a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the committee most strongly call to your recollection what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted as a missionary to the West Indies, that your only business is to

promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without, in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition. On all persons, in the state of slaves, you are diligently and explicitly to enforce the same exhortations which the apostles of our Lord administered to the slaves of ancient nations, when by their ministry they embraced Christianity: "Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service as to the Lord, and not to men: knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free." Eph. vi, 5-8. "Servants, obey in all things your masters according to the flesh; not with eye service, as men pleasers; but in singleness of heart, fearing God: and whatsoever ye do do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance; for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong shall receive for the wrong which he hath done; and there is no respect of persons." Col. iii, 22-25.

7. You are directed to avail yourselves of every opportunity to extend your labors among the slaves of the islands where you may be stationed; but you are in no case to visit the slaves of any plantation without the permission of the owner or manager; nor are the times which you may appoint for their religious services to interfere with their owner's employ; nor are you to suffer any protracted meetings in the evening, not even at negro burials, on any account whatever. In all these cases, you are to meet even unreasonable prejudices, and attempt to disarm suspicions, however groundless, so far as you can do it consistently with your duties as faithful and laborious ministers of the Gospel.

8. As many of the negroes live in a state of polygamy, or in a promiscuous intercourse of the sexes, your particular exertions are to be directed to the discountenancing and correcting of these vices, by pointing out their evil, both in public and in private, and by maintaining the strictest discipline in the societies. No man living in a state of polygamy is to be admitted a member, or even on trial, who will not consent to live with one woman as his wife, to whom you shall join him in matrimony, or ascertain that this rite has been performed by some other minister; and the same rule is to be applied in the same manner to a woman proposing to become a member of society. No female living in a state of concubinage with any person is to be admitted into society so long as she continues in that sin.

9. The committee caution you against engaging in any of the civil disputes or local politics of the colony to which you may be appointed, either verbally or by correspondence with any persons at home, or in the colonies. The whole period of your temporary residence in the West Indies is to be filled up with the proper work of your mission. You are not to become parties in any civil quarrel; but are to "please all men for their good to edification;" intent upon the solemn work of your office, and upon that eternal state in the views of which the committee trust you will ever think and act.

10. In cases of opposition to your ministry, which may arise on the part of individuals, or

of any of the colonial legislatures, a meek and patient spirit and conduct are recommended to you. You will in particular guard against all angry and resentful speeches, and in no case attempt to inflame your societies and hearers with resentment against your persecutors or opposers. Your business, in such cases, after every prudent means of obtaining relief has failed in your own hands, is with the committee at home; who will immediately take such steps as may secure to you that protection, from a mild and tolerant government, which they hope your peaceable and pious conduct, your labors and successes, will ever merit for you.

N. B. The directions to the West India missionaries are also to be considered as strictly obligatory on all others, as far as they are applicable to the circumstances of their respective stations.

VIII. It is peremptorily required of every missionary in our connection to keep a journal, and to send home frequently such copious abstracts of it as may give a full and particular account of his labors, success, and prospects. He is also required to give such details of a religious kind as may be generally interesting to the friends of missions at home; particularly accounts of conversions. Only we recommend to you not to allow yourselves, under the influence of religious joy, to give any high coloring of facts; but always write such accounts as you would not object to see return in print to the place where the facts reported may have occurred.

IX. It is a positive rule among the Wesleyan Methodists that no traveling preacher shall "follow trade." You are to consider this rule as binding upon you and all foreign missionaries in our connection. We wish you to be at the remotest distance from all temptation to a secular or mercenary temper. "No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath called him to be a soldier." Independently of the moral and religious considerations which enforce this principle, we here take occasion to remind you that all your time and energies should be the more sacredly devoted to the duties of your mission, because the committee feel themselves fully pledged to pay an affectionate attention to all your wants, and to afford them every reasonable and necessary supply. And this pledge, they doubt not, the generosity of the friends of missions will, from time to time, enable them to redeem, so long as you continue to regulate your expenses by as much of conscientious regard to economy as may be found to consist with your health and comfort, and with the real demands of the work of God.

And now, brethren, we commend you to God and the word of his grace. We unite with tens of thousands in fervent prayer to God for you. May he open to you a great door and effectual; and make you, immediately or remotely, the instruments of the salvation of myriads. We shall incessantly pray that "you may go out with joy, and be led forth with peace; that instead of the thorn may come up the fir-tree, and instead of the brier the myrtle-tree; and it shall be to the Lord for a name, for an everlasting sign that shall not be cut off." "Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doeth wondrous things; and blessed be his glorious name forever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory: Amen and Amen." (Grinrod's Compend, pp. 209-217; also, Watson's Life, New York, 1836, pp. 206-211.)

## DOCUMENT 2.

*Resolutions of the British Conference on Slavery, in 1830.*

THE conference, taking into consideration the laudable efforts which are now making to impress the public with a due sense of the injustice and inhumanity of continuing that system of slavery which exists in many of the colonies of the British crown, and to invite a general application to Parliament, by petition, that such measures may, in its wisdom, be adopted as shall speedily lead to the universal termination of the wrongs inflicted upon so large a portion of our fellow-men,

Resolve as follows:

1. That, as a body of Christian ministers, they feel themselves called upon again to record their solemn judgment, that the holding of human beings in a state of slavery is in direct opposition to all the principles of natural right, and to the benign spirit of the religion of Christ.

2. That the system of bondage existing in our West India colonies is marked with characters of peculiar severity and injustice; inasmuch as a great majority of the slaves are doomed to labors inhumanly wasting to health and life; and are exposed to arbitrary, excessive, and degrading punishments, without any effectual protection from adequate and impartially-administered laws.

3. That the conference, having long been engaged in endeavoring the instruction and evangelization of the pagan negroes of our West India colonies, by numerous and expensive missions, supported by the pious liberality of the friends of religion at home, have had painful experience of the unfavorable influence of a state of slavery upon the moral improvement of a class of men most entitled to the sympathy and help of all true Christians; that the patient and devoted men who have labored in the work of negro conversion, have too often been made the objects of obloquy and persecution, from that very contempt or fear of the negroes which a system of slavery inspires; that the violent prejudices of caste, founded upon the color of the skin, and nurtured by a state of slavery, and inseparable from it, have opposed the most formidable obstacles to the employment of colored teachers and missionaries, who would otherwise have been called into useful employment, in considerable numbers, as qualified instructors of their fellows; that the general discouragement of slave marriages, and the frequent violent separation of those husbands and wives who have been united in matrimony by missionaries, have served greatly to encourage and perpetuate a grossness of manners which might otherwise have been corrected; that the nearly absolute control of vicious masters, or their agents, over those under their power, is, to a lamentable extent, used for the corrupting of the young, and the polluting of the most hallowed relations of life; that the refusal of the Lord's day to the slave, as a day of rest and religious worship, beside fostering the habit of entire irreligion, limits, and in many cases renders nugatory, every attempt at efficient religious instruction—all which circumstances, more or less felt in each of the colonies, demonstrate the incompatibility of slavery with a general diffusion of the influence of morals and religion, and its necessary association with general ignorance, vice, and wretchedness.

4. That the preachers assembled in conference feel themselves the more bound to exhort the members of the Methodist societies and congregations

at home, to unite with their fellow-subjects in presenting their petitions to the next Parliament, to take this important subject into its earliest consideration, because of the interesting relation which exists between them and the numerous Methodist societies in the West Indies, in which are no fewer than 24,000 slaves, who, with their families, have been brought under the influence of Christianity, and who, in so many instances, have fully rewarded the charitable toil of those who have applied themselves to promote their spiritual benefit, and whose right to exemption from a state of slavery is, if possible, strengthened by their being partakers with us of "like precious faith," and from their standing in the special relation of "brethren" to all who themselves profess to be Christians.

5. That the conference fully concur in those strong moral views of the evil and injustice of slavery which are taken by their fellow-Christians of different denominations, and in the purpose which is so generally entertained of presenting petitions to Parliament from their respective congregations for its speedy and universal abolition; and earnestly recommend it to all the congregations of the Wesleyan Methodists throughout Great Britain and Ireland, to express in this manner—that is, by petitions to both houses of Parliament from each congregation, to be signed at its own chapel, and presented as early as possible after the assembling of the next Parliament—their sympathy with an injured portion of their race, and their abhorrence of all those principles on which it is attempted to defend the subjection of human beings to hopeless and interminable slavery.

6. That the conference still further recommend, in the strongest manner, to such of the members of the Methodist societies as enjoy the elective franchise, that, in this great crisis, when the question is, whether justice and humanity shall triumph over oppression and cruelty, or nearly a million of our fellow-men, many of whom are also our fellow-Christians, shall remain excluded from the rights of humanity, and the privileges of that constitution under which they are born; they will use that solemn trust to promote the rescue of our country from the guilt and dishonor which have been brought upon it by a criminal connivance at the oppressions which have so long existed in its colonies, and that, in the elections now on the eve of taking place, they will give their influence and votes only to those candidates who pledge themselves to support, in Parliament, the most effectual measures for the entire abolition of slavery throughout the colonies of the British empire. (Watson's Life, pp. 375-377.)

## DOCUMENT 3.

*Handbill and other papers, issued in Barbadoes, October, 1823, in reference to the destruction of Methodist chapels, and the expulsion of Methodist missionaries.*

"GREAT AND SIGNAL TRIUMPH OVER METHODISM, AND TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF THE CHAPEL!

"Bridge Town, October 21, 1823.

"THE inhabitants of this island are respectfully informed, that, in consequence of the unmerited and unprovoked attacks which have repeatedly been made upon the community by the Methodist missionaries—otherwise known as agents to the villainous African Society—a party of respectable gentlemen formed the resolution of closing the Methodist concern altogether.



With this view, they commenced their labors on Sunday evening, and they have the greatest satisfaction in announcing, that, by twelve o'clock last night, they effected the total destruction of the chapel.

"To this information they have to add, that the missionary made his escape yesterday afternoon, in a small vessel, for St. Vincent; thereby avoiding that expression of the public feeling toward him, personally, which he had so richly deserved.

"It is hoped, that, as this information will be circulated throughout the different islands and colonies, all persons who consider themselves true lovers of religion will follow the laudable example of the Barbadians, in putting an end to Methodist and Methodist chapels throughout the West Indies."

This outrageous proceeding, which, though it occupied two nights, met with no interruption whatever from the local authorities, was followed on the succeeding day by a proclamation from the Governor, to the following effect:

"BARBADOES.—Whereas, it has been represented to me, that a riotous assembly collected at the Wesleyan chapel on Sunday night, the 19th, and Monday night the 20th inst., and proceeded to demolish the building, which they completely destroyed. And whereas, if such an outrageous violation of all law and order be suffered to pass unpunished, no man will be safe either in person or property; since, when the very ends of civil association are thus defeated, the people, finding the laws too feeble to afford them protection, must court the favor of the mob and remain entirely at their mercy. In such a state of things, the laws are only a scourge to the weak. And whereas, in a society constituted as this is, the very worst consequences are to be apprehended from such evil examples,

"I do, therefore, by and with the advice of his Majesty's Counsel, hereby offer a reward of £100 to any person or persons who will give such information as will lead to the conviction of any person or persons concerned in the aforesaid riotous proceedings.

"Given under my hand and seal at arms, at Government House, this 22d day of October, 1832, and in the fourth year of his Majesty's reign. God save the King!

"By his excellency's command.

"WM. HUSBANDS, *Dep. Sec.*"

With equal promptitude there appeared a counter proclamation from the white mob of Barbadoes, which will be found to supply materials for much useful reflection. It was as follows:

"*Bridge Town, Barbadoes, October 23d.*

"Whereas, a proclamation having appeared in *The Barbadian* newspaper of yesterday, issued by order of his excellency, the Governor, offering a reward of one hundred pounds for the conviction of any person or persons concerned in the said-to-be riotous proceedings of the 19th and 20th instant; public notice is hereby given to such person or persons who may feel inclined, either from pecuniary temptation or vindictive feeling, that should they attempt to come forward to injure, in any shape, any individual, they shall receive that punishment which their crimes will justly deserve. They are to understand, that to impeach is not to convict; and that the reward offered will only be given upon conviction, which can not be effected while the people are firm to themselves.

"And whereas, it may appear to those persons who are unacquainted with the circumstances

which occasioned the said proclamation, that the demolition of the chapel was effected by the rabble of this community, in order to create anarchy, riot, and insubordination, to trample upon the laws of the country, and subvert good order; it is considered an imperative duty to repel the charge, and to state, *Firstly*. That the majority of the persons assembled were of the first respectability, and were supported by the concurrence of nine-tenths of the community. *Secondly*. That their motives were patriotic and loyal; namely, to eradicate from this soil the germ of Methodism, which was spreading its baneful influence over a certain class, and which ultimately would have injured both Church and state. With this view the chapel was demolished, and the villainous preacher who headed it, and belied us, was compelled by a speedy flight, to remove himself from the island.

"With a fixed determination, therefore, to put an end to Methodism in this island, all Methodist preachers are warned not to approach these shores; as, if they do, it will be at their own peril. "God save the King and the people!" (*Negro Slavery, p. 42. Pamphlets, Vol. XXVII, p. 378.*)

#### DOCUMENT 4.

*Report of the House of Assembly of Jamaica on the subject of the late rebellion, dated House of Assembly, April 26, 1832.*

*House of Assembly, 25th April, 1832.*

ORDERED, That the report of the Committee on the Rebellion be published once in the several papers of this island.

By the house,

JOHN G. VIDAL, *Clerk of the Assembly.*

MR. SPEAKER.—Your Committee, appointed to inquire into the cause of, and injury sustained by, the recent rebellion among the slaves in this island, report,

That they have taken the examinations, on oath, of various persons, which examinations, with the original documents sent down to the house by his excellency, the Governor, on the 15th March, last—and referred to the Committee—as well as sundry other documents respecting the late rebellion, accompany this report.

Your Committee express it as their opinion, and do report the same to the house, that the causes which have led to the late rebellion among the slaves in this island are as follows:

The primary and most powerful cause arose from an evil excitement, created in the minds of our slaves generally, by the unceasing and unconstitutional interference of his Majesty's ministers with our local legislature, in regard to the passing of laws for their government, with the intemperate expression of the sentiments of the present ministers, as well as other individuals in the Commons' House of Parliament, in Great Britain, on the subject of slavery, such discussion, coupled with the false and wicked reports of the Antislavery Society, having been industriously circulated by the aid of the press throughout this island, as well as the British empire.

Secondly, from a delusive expectation produced among the whole of the slave population, by the machinations of crafty and evil-disposed persons, who, taking advantage of the prevailing excitement, imposed upon their disturbed imagination a belief that they were to be free after Christmas, and, in the event of

freedom being then withheld from them, they "must be prepared to fight for it."

Thirdly, from a mischievous abuse existing in the system adopted by different religious sects in this island, termed Baptists, Wesleyan Methodists, and Moravians, by their recognizing gradations of rank among such of our slaves as had become converts to their doctrines, whereby the less ambitious and more peaceable among them were made the dupes of the artful and intelligent, who had been selected by the preachers of those particular sects to fill the higher offices in their chapels, under the denomination of rulers, elders, leaders, and helpers; and, lastly, the public discussions of the free inhabitants here, consequent upon the continued suggestions made by the King's ministers, regarding further measures of amelioration, to be introduced into the slave code of this island, and the preaching and teaching of the religious sects called Baptists, Wesleyan Methodists, and Moravians—but more particularly the sect called Baptists—which had the effect of producing in the minds of the slaves a belief that they could not serve both a spiritual and temporal master, thereby occasioning them to resist the lawful authority of their temporal, under the delusion of rendering themselves more acceptable to a spiritual master.

Your Committee further report that the injury sustained by the late rebellion, by the slaves willfully setting fire to buildings, grass, and cane-fields destroyed, robbery and plunder of every description, damage done to the present and succeeding crops, loss of the labor of slaves, beside those killed in suppressing such rebellion, and executed after trial, as incendiaries, rebels, and murderers, has been ascertained by means of commissioners appointed under an order of the house, and by the detailed returns made to the Committee, in conformity with such order, to amount to the following sum of money, namely, £1,154,583 2s. 1d. To which is to be added the sum of £161, 596 19s., 9d., being the expense incurred in suppressing the late rebellion, and a further expense not yet ascertained, which has accrued since martial law ceased, being the pay and rations of a portion of the Maroons, as well as detachments of the island militia employed in the pursuit of such of the rebellious slaves who have not surrendered themselves, but remain out, and are sheltered among the almost inaccessible forests and fastnesses in the interior districts of the island.

Your Committee recommend that the examinations taken before them, the confessions numbered from one to eleven, and the detailed returns of the commissioners appointed under the order of the house, to ascertain the injury sustained by the late rebellion, be inserted in the Minutes of the house, and printed therewith; and that the remaining documents be lodged in the office of the clerk of the house. (Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 233-235.)

#### DOCUMENT 5.

*Protest of the Baptist Missionaries of Kingston, Jamaica, May 8, 1832, to the House of Assembly of Jamaica.*

*Kingston, May 8, 1832.*

THE Baptist missionaries have viewed with indignation and abhorrence the unjust attempt made by the Committee of the honorable House

of Assembly, appointed to examine into the causes of the late rebellion, to injure their characters in the estimation of the British public, by preferring charges against them which can not be substantiated—charges as repugnant to the feelings of the missionaries, as dishonorable to the men who framed them.

It is not for the Baptist missionaries to say what was the primary or secondary cause of the late disastrous events; it is sufficient for them at present to state that neither their "preaching, teaching," nor conduct was that cause, and they dare the "Rebellion Committee" to prove that it was so.

The Baptist missionaries, conscious of their innocence of the charges publicly preferred against them in the report of the "Rebellion Committee," feel it to be a duty they owe to themselves—to their friends in this country—to the Baptist Missionary Society in England, to which they are attached, and to the religious world at large, thus publicly to state that the charges brought against them by that Committee are unfounded and unjust; that they have wantonly and grossly libeled men whose characters have never yet been sullied; who have ever submitted, in all civil matters, to the powers that be; who have inculcated on servants and slaves the duty of obedience to their masters, and the tenor of whose ministrations has been agreeable with, and in conformity to, the doctrines and precepts of that Gospel which is both pure and peaceable.

One of the Baptist missionaries has already been tried on these charges, by the highest legal authorities in the island, and acquitted, and all of them have shown their willingness to submit to any legal investigation into their conduct.

Deep-rooted and unbending prejudice has been manifested toward them by men from whom they ought to have received protection. Bribery, perjury, and every species of iniquity has been resorted to for the purpose of criminalizing the "Baptist missionaries in particular," but in vain; and yet the "Rebellion Committee" have condemned them unheard—have found them guilty on evidence which the missionaries have never been made acquainted with, consequently neither themselves nor their friends have had an opportunity of disproving it, and have condemned, *in toto*, preaching which they have never heard.

These facts, to the enlightened and unprejudiced public of Great Britain, will afford sufficient proof that the "Rebellion Committee" have merely chosen this apparently-favorable opportunity for the purpose of expressing their *determined and long-cherished hatred to religion and its propagators*, and they will, at the same time, tend to establish, more firmly than ever, the unimpeachable characters of

THE BAPTIST MISSIONARIES.\*

#### DOCUMENT 6.

*Protest of Wesleyan Methodists to the House of Assembly of Jamaica, dated Kingston, May 11, 1832.*

*Kingston, May 11, 1832.*

At a meeting of the Wesleyan missionaries, and of the leaders of their respective societies, in this island, convened by the chairman of

\* Antislavery Reporter, Vol. V, pp. 235, 236. Pamphlets, Vol. XXXV.

the district, and held in the Parade Chapel this 10th day of May, 1832, for the purpose of protesting against the report of the Committee appointed by the honorable House of Assembly, to ascertain the cause of the late rebellion, it was unanimously

*Resolved 1,* That we have read the report of the Committee appointed by the honorable House of Assembly, to inquire into the causes of the late rebellion in this island, and perceive, with great surprise and indignation, the unworthy attempt which is made to implicate us and our people as the promoters of the same.

*Resolved 2,* That as neither the Wesleyan missionaries, nor the leaders in their societies, were directly or indirectly concerned in instigating, or in any way aiding in the late rebellion, we consider the aforesaid report, as far as it relates to the "Wesleyan Methodists," utterly false and unfounded, nearly all the "leaders" being respectable free persons, *most of whom are owners of slaves.*

*Resolved 3,* That as the report aforesaid is calculated to bring our system into disrepute, by asserting that it affords facilities for exciting rebellion among the slaves, we feel ourselves called upon to maintain that our system is Scriptural, and peculiarly calculated to promote peace and good order among all classes of his Majesty's subjects, whether free or slaves, and that nothing contrary to this can be proved against it; that, therefore, the aforesaid report is a gross calumny, not only upon ourselves and people in this island, but also upon the body to which we belong.

*Resolved 4,* That being conscious of our own innocence, and of the praiseworthy conduct of the members of our societies in this island during the late disturbances, we consider it our imperative duty to protest, in the most public and solemn manner, both here and in Great Britain, against the charges preferred against us in the report aforesaid, and also against the conduct of individuals who could make such a wanton attack upon our characters without allowing us an opportunity of self-vindication.

*Resolved 5,* That the assertion contained in the aforesaid report, that the "preaching" and "teaching" of the "Wesleyan Methodists" is calculated to mislead the minds of the slaves on the subject of "lawful authority," is unworthy our serious consideration; their ability to expound and enforce the holy Scriptures having been decided by a competent tribunal, and the *fulsehood of the charge* can be refuted by an appeal to the thousands of their hearers throughout the island.

*Resolved 6,* That we feel ourselves called upon expressly to state that there are no "gradations of rank" recognized in our societies, in connection with the slaves in this colony, but members and "leaders," of whom we entertain the highest opinion, and whose conduct is unimpeachable.

*Resolved 7,* That these resolutions be signed by all present on behalf of our societies in this island, and that a copy of them, signed by the chairman and secretary of this meeting, in behalf of the *seventeen missionaries, and four hundred and forty-six leaders,* be forwarded immediately to his excellency, the Governor, the Earl of Pelmore.

*Resolved 8,* That these resolutions be published in three of the island newspapers; that a copy be transmitted, with the least possible delay, to our Committee in London, and by

them presented to our most gracious sovereign, in any way which to them may appear the most acceptable.

THOMAS PENNOCK, *Chairman.*  
THOMAS MURRAY, *Secretary.\**

#### DOCUMENT 7.

*Resolutions of the British Conference in August, 1832, on Slavery.*

1. THE conference feels that it is rendered imperative upon it, by every disclosure of the real character of colonial slavery, to repeat its solemn conviction of the great moral guilt which the maintenance of that system entails upon our country; and year by year, till some effectual step shall be taken by government to terminate it, to call upon the members of the Wesleyan societies throughout Great Britain and Ireland, to promote that important event by their prayers, by their influence, by diffusing all such publications as convey correct information on this subject, by supporting those institutions which are actively engaged in obtaining for our enslaved fellow-men and fellow-subjects the rights and privileges of civil freedom, and by considerately and most conscientiously giving their votes, at the election of members of Parliament, only to those candidates for their suffrages, in whose just views and honest conduct on this important question they have entire confidence.

2. The conference also feels itself called upon to express its deep sense of the injustice done to its missionaries in the island of Jamaica, and of the outrages committed upon the property of the mission there, in the destruction of five chapels by lawless mobs of white persons, notwithstanding the peaceable conduct of the slaves connected with the Wesleyan societies, during the late insurrection, and the acknowledged prudent conduct of their missionaries. These circumstances serve to impress the conference more deeply with the painful truth, that the system of slavery is frequently even more corrupting to the heart, and more destructive of religious influence, in the agents of the slave proprietors in the colonies, than in the slaves themselves; and afford additional and most powerful reasons for the renewed efforts of the friends of religious liberty, of negro instruction, and of the extension of the kingdom of our Savior in the world by the instrumentality of Christian missions, to obtain for the slaves, and for those who labor in the charitable work of their instruction, a security for the exercise of the rights of conscience, which nothing can effect but the entire and speedy abolition of the system of slavery itself. The conference farther expresses its affectionate sympathy with the missionaries in the island of Jamaica, in the sufferings and injuries to which they have been so unrighteously subjected through the intolerance and violence of "wicked and unreasonable men." And, while it gratefully records its testimony to their excellent conduct, in neither betraying the principles of eternal justice and morality as to the civil wrongs of the slaves, nor mixing themselves up, while employed in their mission, with such discussions on the case as might be dangerous, it exhorts them still to cultivate the same spirit, to exert the same zeal for the instruction and salvation of the popula-

tion of the West India colonies, and to walk steadfastly by those excellent rules which are embodied in their printed instructions. The conference more especially expresses its approbation of the conduct of the missionaries who have been now for several years employed in Jamaica, because, at a former period, through the unfaithfulness of one, and the timid apprehensions of two others, some resolutions were published in the year 1824, bearing a construction far too favorable as to the condition of the slaves, and the general state of society there; which resolutions were condemned by the missionary committee for the time being, and by the ensuing conference. And since these resolutions have been lately made use of as evidence in favor of the system of slavery, the conference repeats its strong disapprobation of them, as conveying sentiments opposed to those which the conference has at all times held on the subject of negro slavery; and not less so to the views and convictions of the great majority of its missionaries, who have been, and now are, employed in the West India colonies.

3. The conference acknowledges, with unfeigned gratitude, the attention which has been uniformly paid by his Majesty's Government to the representations of the missionary committee in London, on all subjects connected with the persecutions and injuries to which the missions have from time to time been exposed, especially in the colony of Jamaica; and the conference has heard, with peculiar satisfaction, the assurance conveyed to the committee by his Majesty's Secretary of State for the colonial department, in a letter dated July 21st, that it is "the firm determination of his Majesty's Government to exert to the utmost all the constitutional power of the crown, in order to punish the outrages which the committee have complained of, and to afford full protection to all classes of his Majesty's subjects, so long as they shall conduct themselves with propriety, and act in obedience to the law. (Watson's Life, pp. 416, 417.)

#### DOCUMENT 8.

*The Address of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the year 1800 to all their Brethren and Friends in the United States.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—We, the members of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, beg leave to address you with earnestness on a subject of the first importance.

We have long lamented the great national evil of negro slavery, which has existed for so many years, and does still exist in many of these United States. We have considered it as repugnant to the inalienable rights of mankind, and to the very essence of civil liberty, but more especially to the spirit of the Christian religion.

For inconsistent as is the conduct of this otherwise free, this independent nation, in respect to the slavery of the negroes, when considered in a civil and political view, it is still more so when examined in the light of the Gospel. For the whole spirit of the New Testament militates in the strongest manner against the practice of slavery, and the influence of the Gospel wherever it has long prevailed—except in many of these United States—has utterly abolished that most criminal part of slavery, the possessing and using the bodies of men by arbitrary will, and with almost uncontrollable power.

The small number of adventurers from Europe who visit the West Indies for the sole purpose of amassing fortunes, are hardly worth our notice, any farther than their influence reaches for the enslaving and destroying of the human race. But that so large a portion of the inhabitants of this country, who so truly boast of the liberty they enjoy, and are so justly jealous of that inestimable blessing, should continue to deprive of every trace of liberty so many of their fellow-creatures, equally capable with themselves of every social blessing and of eternal happiness, is an inconsistency which is scarcely to be paralleled in the history of our race.

Influenced by these views and feelings, we have for many years restricted ourselves by the strongest regulations from partaking of the "accursed thing;" and have also laid some very mild and tender restrictions on our society at large. But at this General conference we wished, if possible, to give a blow at the root of this enormous evil. For this purpose we maturely weighed every regulation which could be adopted within our society. All seemed to be insufficient. We, therefore, determined at last to rouse up all our influence, in order to hasten to the utmost in our power the universal extirpation of this crying sin. To this end we passed the following resolutions:

That the annual conference be directed to draw up addresses for the gradual emancipation of the slaves to the legislatures of those states in which no general laws have been passed for that purpose.

That these addresses urge, in the most respectful but pointed manner, the necessity of a law for the gradual emancipation of the slaves.

That proper committees be appointed out of the most respectable of our friends for the conducting of the business; and

That the presiding elders, deacons, and traveling preachers do procure as many signatures as possible to the addresses, and give all the assistance in their power in every respect to aid said committees, and to further this blessed undertaking. And that this be continued from year to year, "till the desired end be fully accomplished."

What now remains, dear brethren, but that you coincide with us in this great undertaking, for the sake of God, his Church, and his holy cause; for the sake of your country, and for the sake of the miserable and the oppressed, give your signatures to the addresses; hand them for signatures to all your acquaintances and all the friends of liberty; urge the justice, the utility, the necessity of the measure; persevere in this blessed work, and the Lord, we are persuaded, will finally crown your endeavors with the wished-for success. O, what a glorious country would be ours, if equal liberty were every-where established, and equal liberty every-where enjoyed!

We are not ignorant that several of the legislatures of these states have most generously stepped forth in the cause of liberty, and passed laws for the emancipation of the slaves. But many of the members of our society, even in those states, may be highly serviceable to this great cause by using their influence, by writing or otherwise with their friends in other states, whether those friends be Methodists or not.

Come, then, brethren, let us join hand and heart together in this important enterprise. God is with us, and will, we doubt not, accompany with his blessing all our labors of love.

We could write to you a volume on the present subject; but we know that in general you have already weighed it; and we have great confidence that your utmost assistance will not be wanting, and we promise to aid you with zeal and diligence.

That our gracious God may bless you with all the riches of his grace, and that we may all meet where perfect liberty and perfect love will eternally reign, is the ardent prayer of

Your affectionate brethren,  
Signed in behalf and by order of General conference,

THOMAS COKE, FRANCIS ASBURY, RICH'D WHATCOAT, EZEK. COOPER, WM. M'KENDREE, JESSE LEE,*	}	Bishops.
	}	Committee.

### DOCUMENT 9.

*Petition of the Committee of the Antislavery Society to the House of Commons in 1830.*

HUMBLY SHOWETH,

That your petitioners beg leave to remind your honorable house, that on the 15th of May, 1823, your honorable house, by its unanimous resolutions, recognized the *evil of slavery* and the duty of providing for its ultimate extinction; and that his Majesty's ministers then undertook to carry those resolutions into effect.

That though seven years have since elapsed, during which the colonial assemblies have persisted in either evading or refusing to comply with the resolutions of Parliament and the recommendations of his Majesty's Government, supported by the voice of the British nation, yet hitherto no adequate means of giving them effect have been adopted by your honorable house.

That your petitioners regret to find that even in the colonies subject to the legislation of the crown, the orders in council, including the revised and consolidated order of the 2d of February last, though containing some important and salutary enactments, fall, nevertheless, far short of those official and parliamentary pledges of 1823 which they professed to fulfill, and have provided no sufficient means either for the final extinction of slavery, or for its effectual mitigation.

That while these pledges have thus remained for seven years unfulfilled, the committee of the West India planters and merchants in this country, who, at the commencement of that period, had fully assented to their propriety, have recently withdrawn their concurrence, and have not scrupled to express their approbation of the conduct of the local legislatures in the course which they have pursued, and which has been, in fact, a rejection of the measures recommended by the crown, and of that measure especially which proposed to facilitate the manumission of the slave.

That this conduct of the West India committee may be considered as a plain avowal, notwithstanding their previous professed adherence to the resolutions of 1823, that it is their fixed purpose and intention that slavery shall be perpetual: and it is manifestly calculated to confirm the colonial assemblies in their contumacy, and

to render any effective reform, by their means, still more hopeless than your petitioners have deemed it to be.

That under these circumstances of disappointment, and utterly despairing of any aid toward the abolition of slavery from the colonial legislatures, or from the holders of slaves generally, your petitioners feel themselves compelled again to press on the attention of your honorable house the recognized and admitted evils of that system; its injustice, inhumanity, and impolicy; its hostility to the principles of the British Constitution; and its utter repugnance to the spirit and precepts of the Christian religion; and to declare their firm conviction that it is only by the direct legislation of Parliament that a remedy can be applied to these evils, and their unalterable determination—which they believe to be that also of the public at large—to leave no lawful means unattempted for effecting, by parliamentary enactment, and at the earliest possible period, the entire abolition of slavery throughout the dominions of his Majesty.

That contemplating slavery in this light, your petitioners can not withhold the strong expression of their concern and regret that a system so productive of misery and crime should not be tolerated by this Christian nation, but should be directly upheld by its naval and military force at a frightful cost of European life, and should, also, by means of the bounties and protection granted to the produce of slave labor in our colonies, be even favored and encouraged, to the injury and disadvantage of the produce of free labor in the other tropical possessions of the crown.

That such policy as this, while it is most unjust toward multitudes of our fellow-subjects, and most injurious to the general commercial interests of the empire, tends directly to aggravate the sufferings and prolong the bondage of unoffending British subjects, and to involve the country in the guilt and shame of abetting and maintaining, at an enormous expense of blood and treasure, a system which it has recognized and denounced as inhuman, immoral, and unjust.

That the cruel and afflicting circumstances which have marked the moral and religious condition of the colonial slave, have long claimed the commiseration of every benevolent mind, but have been forced on the attention of your petitioners at this time by recent occurrences, and especially by the late intolerant acts of the legislature of Jamaica, and by the persecutions which Christian missionaries and their negro converts have had to endure, and are still enduring in that island; and to these they respectfully beg to direct the consideration of your honorable house.

That it is not the purpose of your petitioners again to enter into any specification of the various and unnumbered evils, whether physical or moral, of the present colonial system of Great Britain. They are already too well known to require it. But your petitioners can not forbear from bringing before the view of your honorable house, as one of its most opprobrious features, the circumstance that under the allegiance of a British monarch, and within the legislative jurisdiction of a British Parliament, thousands of children are annually born to no inheritance but that of a hopeless and interminable bondage.

That the experience of the last seven years has brought the nature and baneful effects of slavery more fully under the cognizance of Parliament and the public; and that contemplating in this view the evidence now lying on the table of your

\* See Dr. Peck on Slavery and the Episcopacy, p. 138; also, Zion's Herald, February 20, 1850. Pamphlets, Vol. XLVII, p. 133.

honorable house; the enormities which are there officially brought to light; the statistical information which has there been officially furnished; and above all the very measures of pretended and delusive reforms which have been framed, during that period, by the colonial legislatures, as well as those they have refused to adopt; your petitioners are driven to this conclusion, that slavery is an evil which requires not merely to be palliated or amended, but which it is an imperative duty wholly to eradicate; that it is no longer to be regarded as a practice capable of being rendered tolerable by regulation, but as a crime to be suppressed, an outrage on our professed principles as Christians to be renounced, and a foul stain on the national character to be wholly and forever effaced.

That your petitioners, indeed, must confess that they can discover no essential difference, in point of principle, between the colonial slavery which we are reluctantly made to uphold, and even to foster and encourage, and the African slave-trade which we have stamped with the merited characters of felony and piracy, and which we visit with the penalty justly due to those atrocious crimes, and which even the advocates of slavery now admit to be fully entitled to the reprobation which has been affixed to it.

That in this view, it is most important that your honorable house should be reminded that before the slave-trade had received its final condemnation, it was strenuously defended by the same advocates who now defend colonial-slavery; and your petitioners venture to assert that, with slight variations, the petitions, remonstrances, and speeches in support of the slave-trade, and the whole character of the resistance made to the abolition of that foul and murderous traffic, were grounded on the very same principles, supported by the very same arguments, and conducted in the very same spirit as have marked the recent efforts of the same parties, both at home and abroad, to impede the progress of colonial reform, and to frustrate the solemn resolutions of Parliament, and the wishes of the country at large on that subject.

That your petitioners are further convinced that the laudable efforts of Great Britain to induce other nations to abandon the slave-trade have hitherto failed of their effect, and must continue to do so, so long as we ourselves, for our own profit, retain the unfortunate victims of our former crimes, and their innocent offspring, in a state of cruel, hopeless, and uncompensated bondage.

That under the painful impression of these sentiments, sentiments which have recently obtained the unanimous approbation of a very large and highly-respectable meeting in this city, and in which your petitioners confidently anticipate the universal concurrence of all classes throughout the United Kingdom who do not participate in the administration or in the gains of slavery; your petitioners feel it to be their imperative obligation again to approach your honorable house with their most urgent entreaties that you would no longer postpone to take this momentous subject into your early and earnest consideration, and that in order effectually to relieve the country from the guilt and ignominy of such a system, you would proceed forthwith to devise, and adopt, and enforce the best and wisest means of insuring its universal extinction throughout the British empire; and that, till this most desirable consummation shall have been attained, immediate measures

may be taken, at least to arrest the progress of the evil, and to prevent any further addition being made to the present number of enslaved British subjects, by fixing a day after which all children who shall be born within the dominions of his Majesty, whatever be their class, condition, or complexion, shall thenceforward be absolutely, and to all intents and purposes, free. (*Antislavery Reporter*, Vol. XXXIII, pp. 269-272.)

#### DOCUMENT 10.

*Address to the Electors and People of the United Kingdom, by the Executive Committee of the Antislavery Society, dated July 7, 1830.*

*Office of the Antislavery Society,  
18 Aldermanbury, July 7, 1830.*

FELLOW-COUNTRYMEN,—Parliament is about to be dissolved, and you will shortly be solicited for your votes by those who wish to be your representatives in the house of commons. Let your first question to every candidate be, are you a proprietor of slaves, or a West India merchant? If the answer is in the affirmative, we would recommend to you a positive refusal. Whoever the candidate may be, demand of him, as the condition of your support, that he will solemnly pledge himself to attend in his place whenever any measure is brought forward for the termination of slavery by parliamentary enactments, and that he will give his vote for every measure of that kind. Unless such a pledge is given in these, or equivalent terms, and more especially so as to exclude the subterfuge of still committing the work to the assemblies, the engagement will be of little value, or rather of none at all. Add to this right use of your own vote, the widest and most active influence you can employ with your brother electors to engage them to follow your example.

Let committees for the purpose be formed in every county, city, and borough in the United Kingdom, in which any independent suffrages are to be found; and let public meetings be called, and the exhortations of the press be employed to extend the same salutary work; and that work, let us add, alone; avoiding all political distinctions, and inviting men of both or all parties, to unite in promoting that single object.

We can not promise our countrymen, that by such means your generous wishes will be fully and certainly accomplished; but one end at least, and an inestimable one, you will be sure to obtain. You will deliver your own consciences from any participation in the guilt which you have used your best endeavors to restrain.

Come forward, then; instruct your representatives; give or withhold your suffrages for the next Parliament; and use your personal influence throughout the country; all in such a manner as may best promote the success of this great and sacred cause.

If you succeed you will give a new triumph to the British Constitution, you will exalt the glory of your country, in that best point, her moral elevation, and recommend her to the favor of Heaven. You may rescue also yourselves and your posterity from severe calamities, which we firmly believe are now impending over us, notwithstanding our apparent prosperity, not only from the natural effects of our pernicious system in the colonies, if longer

persisted in, but from the just vengeance of a righteous and all-directing Providence.

If you fail, you will at least have the inestimable consolation that you have done what you could "to undo the heavy burden and to let the oppressed go free," and that the sins and calamities of your country, however pernicious in their consequences to yourselves or your children, were evils which you could not avert. (*Antislavery Reporter*, Vol. XXIX, p. 187.)

#### DOCUMENT 11.

*Address to the People of Great Britain and Ireland, unanimously adopted at a general meeting of the London Antislavery Society, held April 23, 1831.*

THE Society for the Abolition of Slavery throughout the British dominions, earnestly request your attention to the present state of the question. The dissolution will probably soon take place, when the great body of electors will be strongly agitated with discussing the measure of reform which has divided the existing Parliament. At this crisis we entreat you, in the midst of conflict and excitement, to remember the sacred cause to which, in conjunction with ourselves, you are solemnly pledged. Upon the exertions now made, as far as human wisdom may foresee, mainly depends the continuance or extinction of that system which has so long prevailed in violation of all the principles of the British Constitution, and in subversion of all justice, outraging every feeling of humanity, and utterly repugnant to the precepts of the religion we profess to acknowledge. We pray you to rouse yourselves to strenuous, persevering, and well-organized exertions; and we suggest for your consideration the following measures: To call meetings of your committees, and to invite to join you all who prefer humanity to oppression, truth to falsehood, freedom to slavery; to appoint frequent periods for assembling; to form a list of all the electors who can be properly influenced in the approaching contest, each individual answering for himself and as many more as he can bring to aid; to make strict inquiries of every candidate, not only whether he is decidedly favorable to the extinction of slavery, but whether or not he will attend the debates in Parliament when that question shall be discussed; herein taking special care not to be deceived by general professions of disapprobation of slavery, but ascertaining that the candidate has adopted the determination to assist in carrying through measures for its speedy annihilation. None look with greater horror on the shedding of blood, or the remotest chance of occasioning such a calamity than ourselves; but we are in our consciences convinced, and that after investigation the most careful and scrupulous, that from the emancipation we recommend, no risk to the safety of the white inhabitants could arise; on the contrary we verily believe, that the continuance of slavery renders desolation and bloodshed much more probable; and that if the country does not repent of the sin of slavery, and cast it from her, it may, by the just retribution of Providence, terminate in a convulsion destructive alike of life and property.

On behalf of candidates who are known to hold these principles, and on behalf of such candidates only, we ask your assistance; and this

assistance may be most powerfully rendered, not merely by votes, but by open and public adoption of the candidate on these avowed grounds, by the exertion of lawful influence, by saving him time in his canvass, and by relieving him from expense in going to the poll.

We assure you, that on our part we will not be backward in our efforts for the attainment of the same ends; and we will, from time to time, afford you all the information we may deem requisite.

In the truth and justice of our cause we are all-confident; but men must work by human means. Without strenuous efforts, *the gold and combination of our interested opponents* may leave the cause without that support in Parliament which is essential to success, and so continue, for an indefinite period, sufferings indescribable and iniquity incalculable.

We solemnly conjure you to show yourselves, by your courage, energy, and perseverance, faithful in the cause of truth and mercy, and then, with His aid to whom all good is to be ascribed, we trust this accumulation of guilt and misery may be speedily annihilated.

Signed in behalf of the London committee,

T. F. BUXTON,	Z. MACAULAY,
S. GURNEY,	D. WILSON,
W. WILBEFORCE,	R. WATSON,
W. SMITH,	S. LUSHINGTON,
T. CLARKSON.*	

#### DOCUMENT 12.

*Resolutions unanimously adopted at a General Meeting of the Antislavery Society, held at Exeter Hall, London, April 23, 1831, the Right Hon. Lord Suffield in the Chair.*

*Office of the Antislavery Society, }  
13 Aldermanbury, April 25, 1831. }*

1. THAT the object of this meeting is the entire extinction of negro slavery.

2. That the time has now arrived, in which the people of Great Britain and Ireland may give, by their votes, as they have already given by their petitions, efficacious assistance toward delivering the negroes from the evils of slavery, and the nation from the guilt of tolerating it; and that the address now read [see preceding document] be adopted by this meeting and circulated throughout the country.

3. That the buying, or selling, or holding of our fellow-men as slaves, is contrary to the Christian religion, and to the principles of the British Constitution.

4. That, under the strongest rational conviction, fortified by the experience of all ages, that the holders of slaves are, by the very circumstances of their situation, rendered as unfit, as they have always proved themselves unwilling, to frame laws for the benefit of their bondmen, this assembly can not refrain from avowing their utter despair of receiving any effectual aid from the colonists in the prosecution of their great object.

5. That this assembly consider it incumbent on them to renew the declaration of their decided conviction, that *slavery is not merely an abuse to be mitigated, but an enormity to be suppressed*; that it involves the exercise of severities on the part of the master, and the endurance of sufferings on the part of the slave, which no laws

can effectually prevent; and that to impose on the British people the involuntary support of a system so essentially iniquitous, is an injustice no longer to be endured.

6. That the experience of the last eight years has not only furnished additional evidence of the *criminality and incurable inhumanity of slavery*, but has also demonstrated incontrovertibly, that it is only by the direct intervention of Parliament that any effectual remedy can be applied to this enormous evil; and that it is the unalterable determination of this meeting to leave no lawful means unattempted for obtaining, by parliamentary enactment, the total abolition of slavery throughout the British dominions.

7. That this meeting desire the expression of their sincere regret for the unavoidable absence of His Royal Highness the Duke of Gloucester, to be respectfully conveyed to him, together with their cordial acknowledgments for the undeviating support he has uniformly given to the principles on which this society is founded.

THO. PRINGLE, *Secretary*.\*

#### DOCUMENT 13.

*Declaration of the Antislavery Convention, assembled at Philadelphia, December 4, 1833.*

THE convention assembled in the city of Philadelphia, to organize a National Antislavery Society, promptly seize the opportunity to promulgate the following DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS, as cherished by them in relation to the enslavement of one-sixth portion of the American people.

More than fifty-seven years have elapsed since a band of patriots convened in this place, to devise measures for the deliverance of this country from a foreign yoke. The corner-stone upon which they founded the TEMPLE OF FREEDOM was broadly this—"that all men are created equal; and they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, LIBERTY, and the pursuit of happiness." At the sound of their trumpet-call three millions of people rose up as from the sleep of death, and rushed to the strife of blood; deeming it more glorious to die instantly as freemen, than desirable to live one hour as slaves. They were few in number—poor in resources; but the honest conviction that TRUTH, JUSTICE, and RIGHT, were on their side, made them invincible.

We have met together for the achievement of an enterprise, without which that of our fathers is incomplete; and which, for its magnitude, solemnity, and probable results upon the destiny of the world, as far transcends theirs as moral truth does physical force.

In purity of motive, in earnestness of zeal, in decision of purpose, in intrepidity of action, in steadfastness of faith, in sincerity of spirit, we would not be inferior to them.

Their principles led them to wage war against their oppressors, and to spill human blood like water, in order to be free. *Ours* forbid the doing of evil that good may come, and lead us to reject, and to entreat the oppressed to reject, the use of all carnal weapons for deliverance from bondage; relying solely upon those which are spiritual, and mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds.

Their measures were physical resistance—the marshaling in arms—the hostile array—the mortal encounter. *Ours* shall be such as only the opposition of moral purity to moral corruption—the destruction of error by the potency of truth—the overthrow of prejudice by the power of love—and the abolition of slavery by the spirit of repentance.

Their grievances, great as they were, were trifling in comparison with the wrongs and sufferings of those for whom we plead. Our fathers were never slaves—never bought and sold like cattle—never shut out from the light of knowledge and religion—never subjected to the lash of brutal task-masters.

But those for whose emancipation we are striving—constituting at the present time at least one-sixth part of our countrymen—are recognized by the law, and treated by their fellow-beings, as marketable commodities, as goods and chattels, as brute beasts; are plundered daily of the fruits of their toil without redress; really enjoying no constitutional nor legal protection from licentious and murderous outrages upon their persons; are ruthlessly torn asunder—the tender babe from the arms of its frantic mother—the heart-broken wife from her weeping husband—at the caprice or pleasure of irresponsible tyrants. For the crime of having a dark complexion, they suffer the pangs of hunger, the infliction of stripes, and the ignominy of brutal servitude. They are kept in heathenish darkness by laws expressly enacted to make their instruction a criminal offense.

These are the prominent circumstances in the condition of more than two millions of our people, the proof of which may be found in thousands of indisputable facts, and in the laws of slaveholding states.

Hence we maintain, that in view of the civil and religious privileges of this nation, the guilt of its oppression is unequalled by any other on the face of the earth; and, therefore,

That it is bound to repeat instantly, to undo the heavy burden, to break every yoke, and to let the oppressed go free.

We further maintain that no man has a right to enslave or imbrute his brother—to hold or acknowledge him, for one moment, as a piece of merchandise—to keep back his hire by fraud—or to brutalize his mind by denying him the means of intellectual, social, and moral improvement.

The right to enjoy liberty is inalienable. To invade it, is to usurp the prerogative of Jehovah. Every man has a right to his own body—to the products of his own labor—to the protection of law, and to the common advantages of society. It is piracy to buy or steal a native African, and subject him to servitude. Surely the sin is as great to enslave an AMERICAN as an AFRICAN.

Therefore we believe and affirm, that there is no difference, in principle, between the African slave-trade and American slavery;

That every American citizen who retains a human being in involuntary bondage as his property, is [according to Scripture\*] a MAN-STEALER;

That the slaves ought instantly to be set free, and brought under the protection of law;

That if they had lived from the time of Pharaoh down to the present period, and had

\* Pamphlets, Vol. XXIX, p. 567.

\* Ex. xxi, 16.



been entailed through successive generations, their right to be free could never have been alienated, but their claims would have constantly risen in solemnity;

That all those laws which are now in force, admitting the right of slavery, are therefore before God utterly null and void; being an audacious usurpation of the Divine prerogative, a daring infringement on the law of nature, a base overthrow of the very foundations of the social compact, a complete extinction of all the relations, endearments, and obligations of mankind, and a presumptuous transgression of all the holy commandments, and that therefore they ought instantly to be abrogated.

We further believe and affirm, that all persons of color who possess the qualifications which are demanded of others, ought to be admitted forthwith to the enjoyment of the same privileges, and the exercise of the same prerogatives, as others; and that the paths of preferment, of wealth, and of intelligence, should be opened as widely to them as to persons of a white complexion.

We maintain that no compensation should be given to the planters emancipating their slaves,

Because it would be a surrender of the great fundamental principle, that man can not hold property in man;

Because SLAVERY IS A CRIME, AND THEREFORE IS NOT AN ARTICLE TO BE SOLD;

Because the holders of slaves are not the just proprietors of what they claim; freeing the slaves is not depriving them of property, but restoring it to its rightful owners; it is not wronging the master, but righting the slave—restoring him to himself;

Because immediate and general emancipation would only destroy nominal, not real property; it would not amputate a limb or break a bone of the slaves, but by infusing motives into their breasts, would make them doubly valuable to their masters as free laborers; and,

Because, if compensation is to be given at all, it should be given to the outraged and guiltless slaves, and not to those who have plundered and abused them.

We regard as delusive, cruel, and dangerous, any scheme of expatriation which pretends to aid, either directly or indirectly, in the emancipation of the slaves, or to be a substitute for the immediate and total abolition of slavery.

We fully and unanimously recognize the sovereignty of each state, to legislate exclusively on the subject of the slavery which is tolerated within its limits; we concede that Congress, under the present national compact, has no right to interfere with any of the slave states, in relation to this momentous subject;

But we maintain that Congress has a right, and is solemnly bound to suppress the domestic slave-trade between the several states, and to abolish slavery in those portions of our territory which the Constitution has placed under its exclusive jurisdiction.

We also maintain that there are, at the present time, the highest obligations resting upon the people of the free states, to remove slavery by moral and political action, as prescribed in the Constitution of the United States. They are now living under a pledge of their tremendous physical force, to fasten the galling fetters of tyranny upon the limbs of millions in the southern states; they are liable to be called at any moment to suppress a general insurrection of the slaves; they authorize the slave-owner to vote on

three-fifths of his slaves as property, and thus enable him to perpetuate his oppression; they support a standing army at the south for its protection; and they seize the slave who has escaped into their territories, and send him back to be tortured by an enraged master or a brutal driver. This relation to slavery is criminal and full of danger: IT MUST BE BROKEN UP.

These are our views and principles—these our designs and measures. With entire confidence in the overruling justice of God, we plant ourselves upon the declaration of our independence, and the truths of divine revelation as upon the everlasting rock.

We shall organize antislavery societies, if possible, in every city, town, and village, in our land.

We shall send forth agents to lift up the voice of remonstrance, of warning, of entreaty, and rebuke.

We shall circulate, unsparingly and extensively, antislavery tracts and periodicals.

We shall enlist the pulpit and the press in the cause of the suffering and the dumb.

We shall aim at a purification of the Churches from all participation in the guilt of slavery.

We shall encourage the labor of freemen rather than that of slaves, by giving a preference to their productions; and

We shall spare no exertions nor means to bring the whole nation to speedy repentance.

Our trust for victory is solely in God. We may be personally defeated, but our principles never. TRUTH, JUSTICE, REASON, HUMANITY, must, and will gloriously triumph. Already a host is coming up to the help of the Lord against the mighty, and the prospect before us is full of encouragement.

Submitting this DECLARATION to the candid examination of the people of this country, and of the friends of liberty throughout the world, we hereby affix our signatures to it; pledging ourselves that, under the guidance and by the help of almighty God, we will do all that in us lies, consistently with this declaration of our principles, to overthrow the most execrable system of slavery that has ever been witnessed upon earth—to deliver our land from its deadliest curse—to wipe out the foulest stain which rests upon our national escutcheon—and to secure to the colored population of the United States all the rights and privileges which belong to them as men, and as Americans—come what may to our persons, our interests, or our reputation—whether we live to witness the triumph of LIBERTY, JUSTICE, and HUMANITY, or perish untimely as martyrs in this great, benevolent, and holy cause.

Resolved, That the above declaration be engrossed on a sheet of parchment, signed by all the members of the convention, and extensively published.

Done at Philadelphia, the sixth day of December, A. D. 1833. (Pamphlets, Vol. XXV, p. 473.)

#### DOCUMENT 14.

*Constitution of the Antislavery Society, adopted December 4, 1833, in Philadelphia.*

#### PREAMBLE.

WHEREAS, the most high God "hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell on all the

face of the earth," and hath commanded them to love their neighbors as themselves; and whereas our national existence is based upon this principle, as recognized in the Declaration of Independence, "that all men are created equal, and that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, among which are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" and whereas, after the lapse of nearly sixty years, since the faith and honor of the American people were pledged to this avowal, before almighty God, and the world, nearly one-sixth part of the nation are held in bondage by their fellow-citizens; and whereas slavery is contrary to the principles of natural justice, of our republican form of government, and of the Christian religion, and is destructive to the prosperity of the country, while it is endangering the peace, union, and liberties of the states; and whereas we believe it the duty and interest of the masters, immediately to emancipate their slaves, and that no scheme of expatriation, either voluntary or by compulsion, can remove this great and increasing evil; and whereas we believe that it is practicable, by appeals to the consciences, hearts, and interests of the people, to awaken a public sentiment throughout the nation, that will be opposed to the continuance of slavery in any part of the republic, and by effecting the speedy abolition of slavery, prevent a general convulsion; and whereas we believe we owe it to the oppressed, to our fellow-citizens who hold slaves, to our whole country, to posterity, and to God, to do all that is lawfully in our power to bring about the extinction of slavery, we do hereby agree, with a prayerful reliance on the Divine aid, to form ourselves into a society, to be governed by the following

#### CONSTITUTION.

ARTICLE 1. This Society shall be called the AMERICAN ANTISLAVERY SOCIETY.

ART. 2. The object of this Society is the entire abolition of slavery in the United States. While it admits that each state in which slavery exists, has, by the Constitution of the United States, the exclusive right to legislate in regard to its abolition in said state, it shall aim to convince all our fellow-citizens, by arguments addressed to their understandings and consciences, that slaveholding is a heinous crime in the sight of God, and that the duty, safety, and best interests of all concerned, require its immediate abandonment, without expatriation. The Society will also endeavor, in a constitutional way, to influence Congress to put an end to the domestic slave-trade, and to abolish slavery in all those portions of our common country which come under its control, especially in the District of Columbia—and likewise to prevent the extension of it to any state that may be hereafter admitted to the Union.

ART. 3. This Society shall aim to elevate the character and condition of the people of color, by encouraging their intellectual, moral, and religious improvement, and by removing public prejudice, that thus they may, according to their intellectual and moral worth, share an equality with the whites, of civil and religious privileges; but this Society will never, in any way countenance the oppressed in vindicating their rights by resorting to physical force.

ART. 4. Any person who consents to the principles of this Constitution, who contributes to the funds of this Society, and is not a slaveholder, may be a member of this Society, and shall be entitled to vote at the meetings.

ART. 5. The officers of this Society shall be a President, Vice-Presidents, a Recording Secretary, Corresponding Secretaries, a Treasurer, and a Board of Managers, composed of the above, and not less than ten other members of the Society. They shall be annually elected by the members of the Society, and five shall constitute a quorum.

ART. 6. The Board of Managers shall annually elect an Executive Committee, to consist of not less than five, nor more than twelve members, which shall be located in New York, who shall have power to enact their own by-laws, fill any vacancy in their body, and in the offices of Secretary and Treasurer, employ agents, determine what compensation shall be paid to agents, and to the Corresponding Secretaries, direct the Treasurer in the application of all moneys, and call special meetings of the Society. They shall make arrangements for all meetings of the Society, make an annual written report of their doings, the income, expenditures, and funds of the Society, and shall hold stated meetings, and adopt the most energetic measures in their power to advance the objects of the Society.

ART. 7. The President shall preside at all meetings of the Society, or in his absence one of the Vice-Presidents, or, in their absence, a President *pro tem*. The Corresponding Secretaries shall conduct the correspondence of the Society. The Recording Secretary shall notify all meetings of the Society, and of the Executive Committee, and shall keep records of the same in separate books. The Treasurer shall collect the subscriptions, make payments at the direction of the Executive Committee, and present a written and audited account to accompany the annual report.

ART. 8. The annual meeting of the Society shall be held each year at such time and place as the Executive Committee may direct, when the accounts of the Treasurer shall be presented, the annual report read, appropriate addresses delivered, the officers chosen, and such other business transacted as shall be deemed expedient. A special meeting shall always be held on the Tuesday immediately preceding the second Thursday in May, in the city of New York, at ten o'clock, A. M., provided the annual meeting be not held there at that time.

ART. 9. Any Antislavery Society, or association, founded on the same principles, may become auxiliary to this Society, and entitled to be represented at its meetings. The officers of each Auxiliary Society shall be *ex-officio* members of the parent institution.

ART. 10. This Constitution may be amended, at any annual meeting of the Society, by a vote of two-thirds of the members present, provided the amendments proposed have been previously submitted, in writing, to the Executive Committee. (Pamphlets, Vol. XXV, p. 473.)

#### DOCUMENT 15.

*Declaration and Resolutions of the Synod of Kentucky concerning Slavery, passed at the session held in Danville, Kentucky, October 8, 1834.*

This Synod, believing that the system of absolute and hereditary domestic slavery, as it exists among the members of our communion, is repugnant to the principles of our holy religion, as revealed in the sacred Scriptures, and

that the continuance of the system any longer than is necessary to prepare for its safe and beneficial termination is sinful, feel it their duty earnestly to recommend to all presbyteries, Church sessions, and people under their care to commence immediate preparation for the termination of slavery among us, so that this evil may cease to exist with the present generation, and the future offspring of our slaves may be free.

In recommending that emancipation be universally extended to all slaves hereafter born, this Synod would be understood as excluding those now living from the operation of the benevolent principle above commended. They believe there may be, at the present time, many slaves belonging to the members of the Presbyterian communion whose situations would be greatly improved by emancipation, and that many others, especially of the children and youth, might be prepared for freedom by the use of reasonable efforts on the part of their masters; but it is difficult to provide, by general rules, for such individual cases, and this Synod think it best to leave them to the operation of the Christian law of love on the consciences of men. For the purpose of promoting harmony and concert of action on this important subject, the Synod do

*Resolve*, That a committee of ten be appointed, to consist of an equal number of ministers and elders, whose business it shall be to digest and prepare a plan for the moral and religious instruction of our slaves, and for their future emancipation, and to report such plan to the several presbyteries within the bounds of this Synod for their consideration and approval.

*Resolved, further*, That this Synod have unbounded confidence in the scheme of African colonization, and hope of its great usefulness, and that we look upon African colonization as one interesting door of hope opened to us, in the providence of God, for doing a signal service of patriotism to our common country, an act of justice to our unfortunate African race among us, and for spreading the blessings of civilization and the everlasting Gospel in the interior of Africa.

After considerable discussion the paper was adopted. The yeas and nays being called for are as follows, namely: Yeas 56, nays 8, non-liquets 7.

On motion,

*Resolved*, That the whole document, as amended, be published in the Western Luminary, and that it be recommended to each pastor and stated supply to read the same to the congregation in which he labors previous to the next meeting of the Synod.

A true extract from the Minutes.

Attest: R. DAVIDSON,  
Stated Clerk of the Synod.\*

#### DOCUMENT 16.

*Appeal to the Members of the New England and New Hampshire Conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, December 19, 1834.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—If any apology be necessary for our troubling you in this manner, we trust a sufficient one may be found in the importance of the subject upon which we address you.

It is a command of the infinite God that we should "open our mouths and place a righteous judgment for the poor and the needy, who are dumb, and appointed to destruction"—Proverbs xxxi, 9—and it is in obedience to this command that we now appeal to you in the behalf of more than two millions of our fellow-citizens, who, we know, are made *poor* and *needy* by the bondage which they are compelled to suffer, and who are *dumb* in a most affecting sense, inasmuch as they are not, and never have been, permitted to speak for themselves.

On the subject of negro slavery, as it exists in the United States, we think we can say that we have bestowed the most serious attention, for a number of years past. It has interested our sincerest sympathies and prayers, both for the enslaver and the enslaved; nor are we conscious of having neglected any means which might serve to afford us a consistent and enlightened view of the question which we now wish to propose for your consideration.

But it is not the cause of two millions, five hundred thousand slaves that we plead merely, nor yet the millions of their posterity which are yet to live and endure the evils of an unjust and violent bondage; but we plead for the Methodist Episcopal Church, of which we are unworthy, indeed, but we trust devoted members. We feel that we should prove ourselves utterly unfit for the relation which we sustain to this Church, either as members or ministers, were we longer to keep silence, and do nothing to avert the dreadful evils with which slavery threatens, so evidently, her peace and prosperity. We can not look on with indifference, and see some of the plainest rules of her Discipline outraged and set at defiance, though we were to leave out of the account the part which so many of her members and ministers have taken in the unnatural and antichristian work of slavery.

In approaching this subject, we are conscious of no unkind feelings toward any who may differ from us in opinion; we wish to "speak the truth in love," to discharge a solemn duty which we owe to God, our maker, to the Church of which we are members, and to the thousands of the poor slaves from whose minds the lights of science and religion are shut out, and who are held in a bondage more oppressive and cruel, in many respects, than any other of the kind which ever prevailed among men.

It is not necessary that we should here enter into a detailed account of the evils of slavery, or that we should attempt a particular discussion of its principles; nor is it our design to answer all the apologies which have been made by professing *Christians* and *Christian ministers* for the system. We wish simply to mention some of the most prominent features of the system of slavery as it exists in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to lay before you some of the reasons which force upon our minds the solemn conviction that, as a Church, and as individuals, we are far behind our duty in relation to this thing; that no man has, or can have, a right to hold a fellow-man for one moment in bondage as a piece of merchantable property, to take the hire of his labor against his will, or to refuse him the means of social, moral, and intellectual improvement; that personal liberty—that is, liberty to enjoy one's own labor—is the inalienable gift of the infinite God to every human being; therefore, to take away this liberty, where no crime has been com-

mitted, is a direct violation of a right which belongs to God alone. Hence, every American citizen who retains a fellow-being in bondage as a piece of property, and takes the price of his labor without his consent, is guilty of a *crime* which can not be reconciled with the spirit of the Christian religion; and it is the more criminal for a professing Christian, or Christian minister, to do this, because they thus afford their support to an unjust and violent system of oppressions—a system which always has been, is now, and always will be, the unyielding enemy of virtue, knowledge, and religion—a system which leaves more than one-sixth part of the citizens of these United States without any adequate protection for their persons—a system which opens the way for and fosters the worst of passions and crimes, such as prostitution, adultery, murder, discord, theft, insurrections, indolence, insensibility to the claims of justice and mercy, pride, and a wicked contempt for the rights and feelings of a large proportion of our fellow-men. Its natural tendency upon all who become the victims of its oppression, is to benumb the sensibilities of the mind, to corrupt and deaden the conscience, and to kill the soul. Hence, we say the system is *wrong*, it is *cruel* and *unjust*, in all its parts and principles, and that no Christian can consistently lend his influence or example, for one moment, in support of it, and, consequently, it should be abandoned **NOW** and **FOREVER**.

In this view of the subject we shall show you that we are not alone, but we are most firmly supported by the Bible, by the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by the opinions of Wesley, of Dr. Clarke, of Watson, and by the testimony of the British conference, and the unanimous voice of the Wesleyan conference in England, including the whole of the preachers and people. We choose to confine ourselves to the above-named testimonies, not, indeed, because there are not a multitude of other collateral ones, but rather because we wish to examine the subject in its *connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church*. Hundreds of her ministers and thousands of her members are enslavers of their fellow-men, as they have been for years. They hold the bodies and the souls of men, women, and children, many of whom are members of the same Church with themselves, in abject slavery, and still retain their standing without any censure on this account. Nay, we shall show you that the Christian Advocate and Journal, the official organ of this Church, apologizes for the crimes of the enslaver of the human species, and attempts to justify the system!

We say, then, that the testimony of the infinite God is against the system of slavery: "And he that stealeth a man and selleth him, or if he be found in his hand, he shall surely be put to death." Exodus xxi, 16. "By this law," says Dr. A. Clarke, "every man-stealer, and every receiver of the stolen person, should lose his life, no matter whether the latter stole the man himself or gave money to a *slave-captain* or *negro-dealer* to steal him for him." Here the enslaver of the human species is pronounced worthy of death, and those who affect to justify this crime by the various excuses which they make for it, do but show thereby that they have some apprehension of the justice of the above law, else why attempt to excuse it in any way? It is true that a certain

kind of servitude was permitted by the Jewish economy, but God never gave the Jews, nor any other nation or individual, the permission to *steal* men, nor any thing like a permission for any one to buy or sell those, or their posterity, who had been *stolen*. Concerning the slavery which existed among the Jews, the pious and learned commentator above quoted remarks: "They certainly had privileges which did not extend either to *sojourners* or to *hired* servants; therefore, their situation was incomparably better than the situation of the slaves under different European governments, of whose souls their pitiless possessors, in general, take no care, while they themselves venture to profess the Christian religion, and quote the Mosaic law in vindication of their system of slavery. How preposterous is such conduct, and how intolerable!" But there was no such thing as *involuntary, unending slavery* among the Jews; nor, indeed, was there any kind of slavery tolerated by their law which bears any resemblance, for its cruelty and oppression, to that which prevails among professing Christians in these United States.

"If a man be found stealing any of his brethren of the children of Israel, and maketh merchandise of him, or selleth him; then that thief shall die; and thou shalt put him away from among you." Deut. xxiv, 7. Now, just as sure as any man in the United States can prove that his slaves are merchantable property, just so sure the word of God pronounces that property stolen, and the possession of it a crime for which any Israelite was doomed to suffer death.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Matt. xxii, 39. By this command, we are obligated, not only to pity a fellow-creature when we see him in distress, but also to do the utmost in our power to give him the same instruction which we enjoy ourselves, and to promote, as far as possible, his temporal and spiritual felicity. But how can it be shown that those *Christians*, those *Methodist ministers*, love their neighbors as themselves, when they have had slaves in their families and on their plantations for years, and the profits of whose labors they have been reaping, and yet they never have furnished them with a Bible, nor suffered them to learn one single letter of the alphabet! Now, it is worse than no excuse for such to say that the laws will not permit the instruction of their slaves. Suppose the laws were to prohibit their praying for their slaves? Would there not be precisely as much reason for their implicit obedience to such a law, as there is for obeying the one which prohibits them from reading the Bible? Why, it is too plain to need illustration, that each of the slave states has just as much *right* to prohibit the spiritual instruction of the slaves, as any of them have to forbid their instruction in letters and general science. We wonder what the Methodist enslavers would do, in case the states where they live should pass laws making it penal for them to pray for their slaves, or to attempt their spiritual instruction in any way?

"Therefore all things, whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them; for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. vii, 12. On this and the foregoing passage it may be remarked, that if, as some attempt to show, they do not condemn slavery, then they do not condemn murder, they do not condemn adultery, nor theft, nor any other crime. If the system of slavery may be justified in view of these and similar passages, merely because Jesus

Christ did not mention it by name, then, by the same principle, we may justify offensive and wicked wars, the various games in vogue among the Greeks and Romans anciently, and so he may justify bull-baiting and the bloody gladiatorial exhibitions which also prevailed among those nations when our Savior was upon earth—neither of which practices was mentioned by Christ particularly, for the most obvious reason, that he exercised his ministry among the Jews, where such games and cruel exhibitions were not known.

“Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.” Col. iv, 1. This text alone, were it properly obeyed, would annihilate the system of slavery from the Church and the nation! And is it *just* and *equal*, when the poor slaves are compelled, often by the stroke of the club or the cow-hide, to toil in weariness and want, as long as they live, till they finally drop into the grave, without their ever being paid one penny as an equivalent for their labor?

“Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called, being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord’s freeman: likewise, also, he that is called, being free, is Christ’s servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men.” 1 Cor. vii, 20–23. From these words two things are apparent: *First*, that Christianity does not alter the civil connection which one man may sustain to another, merely by his embracing it. *Secondly*, slavery is here *condemned*, inasmuch as the apostle commands such as were slaves to embrace the first opportunity which might be afforded them for obtaining their liberty: *if thou mayest be made free, use it rather*; and he further enjoined it upon all such as are free never to become slaves: *be not ye the servants or slaves of men*. But such as were in slavery need not, on this account, be absolutely prevented from becoming Christians: *art thou called being a servant? care not for it*; that is, do not let this hinder your accepting of salvation—you may believe, nevertheless, and be saved. What the apostle would have said, had any of those slaves of whom he here speaks been prohibited from reading the epistles which he wrote to them, it is much more easy to conceive than it is to prove, as many have attempted to do, that in the above language he justifies *such* a system of slavery.

With just as much propriety a Christian might take to himself a half a dozen wives, and appeal to the Bible to justify his conduct. He might tell us of Solomon, of David, of Jacob, and of Abraham, whose example he was following! And he might exclaim with precisely as much consistency—“There is not one command in the Bible against polygamy,” as the Christian enslaver does—“There is nothing in the Bible against slavery.” The truth is, polygamy, and gladiatorial exhibitions, lotteries, theaters, rum-making and rum-drinking, offensive wars, and a thousand other abominations, equally as vile and hateful in the sight of God, may be justified by the Bible in one and the very same way that the enslaver refers to the Bible to justify the robbery and oppression of which he is guilty. There is no getting away from this conclusion; it is as clear as the glaring light of the sun at noonday.

So when St. Peter directs servants to be subject to their masters. Now, if these directions may be quoted to justify slavery, then we chal-

lenge any man in the world to show, by the same rules of interpretation, that the command of Christ, that his disciples should pray for their persecutors, does not justify persecution. And yet the words of St. Peter are often put into the mouths of the poor slaves by their masters to induce them to believe that the slaves, both male and female, must implicitly obey their masters, and do and consent to every thing they say!\*

It does really seem to us as one of the strangest inconsistencies which ever interested the attention of intelligent beings, when a professing Christian attempts to defend the system of slavery from the Bible! Slavery defended by the Bible! A system which outrages every principle of the Gospel, and sets at defiance the laws of God, supported by the Bible! A system which perpetuates the traffic in human souls, and human flesh and blood—which is nurtured by the groans and tears of husbands and wives, parents and children, brothers and sisters, parted and torn asunder—defended by the Christian Scriptures! A system which robs and grinds to the dust more than two millions of American citizens, which brutalizes their minds, and shuts from their intellects the lights of science and religion, upheld and supported by the friends of God! A system which is made up of the highest kind of theft, which defrauds the poor and friendless, destroys feminine modesty, and corrupts all classes of society where it prevails with every shade of vice and irreligion—such a system loved and cherished by the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, and to defend it they quote the testimony of that God whose name is *mercy*, and whose *bowels melt with love*!

That the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church opposes slavery, every one must know who has ever read it. Some inconsistencies may be readily detected in this book, in relation to this subject, it is true, but we shall see, nevertheless, upon examination, that the rules which it contains now, as well as those which it has contained heretofore, were designed to prevent the existence of slavery in this Church. The first rule we have on this subject is found in chapter 2, section 1, under the head of “The Nature, Design, and General Rules of our United Societies.” As if to insure the greater attention, it is printed in *italic*, and comes in with some other rules as follows: “It is expected of all who continue therein, [our societies, or in the Methodist Episcopal Church,] that they should continue to evidence their desire of salvation, by avoiding evil of every kind, especially that which is most generally practiced, such as the taking of the name of God in vain, the profaning the day of the Lord, drunkenness, or drinking spirituous liquors, unless in cases of necessity, *the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them, fighting, quarreling, brother going to law with brother—these are the General Rules of our united societies, all which we are taught of God to observe, even in his written word, and all these we know his Spirit writes on truly-awakened hearts.*”

From the above two things are undeniably evident and plain: 1. That no person who con-

\* It is not long since I saw a small book, which the title-page affirmed to have been written “for the Negroes,” by a “Methodist preacher” at the south, in which a long string of passages like the above were quoted together, to be said over to the slaves till they could repeat them from memory, for it must be remembered they are not learned to *read* any thing.—L. R. S.

tinues to profane the name of God, or to profane the Lord's day, or to *enslave men, women, and children*, can be continued a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, agreeably to the Discipline of this Church. 2. That no person who continues to *enslave men, women, and children* has been truly awakened to a sense of his condition.

The above are a part of the original Rules which were drawn up by the Revs. John and Charles Wesley, for the Methodist societies in England. When the Methodist Episcopal Church was formed in this country, in 1784, the same Rules were adopted, and they have been in force in this Church from that time to the present; and the highest ecclesiastical authority in this Church has no power to alter or change them in any way. (See Discipline, chapter 1, section 3.) The Church was organized under the following, among other restrictions: "The General conference shall not revoke or change the General Rules of the united societies."

Now turn to part 2, and section 9 of the Discipline, and you will find that the General conference has virtually "changed" one of the General Rules mentioned in the above restriction. Here it is declared that "no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom." "No slaveholder in our Church!" But how came an enslaver of "men, women, and children" in our Church? An enslaver in the Methodist Episcopal Church, when this Church has inquired from the first, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?" (Discipline, part 2, section 9,) and said in answer, "We declare that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery!" and one of her standing Rules, which she is solemnly pledged before heaven and earth never to "change," proclaiming, on the very face of her Discipline, that *no enslaver of men, women, and children is truly awakened*, and that such can not be continued members of this Church?

Here is a strange inconsistency: the General conference declare that they are as much "as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery," and yet add, in almost so many words, that it may exist in the Church! An enslaver of men, women, and children, whom our Discipline declares is not truly awakened, shall not, in certain places, be "eligible to any official station," but he may remain a member of the Church; he may be concerned in making those very laws which are designed to prevent the emancipation of the slaves, and yet remain a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, while he enslaves men, women, and children—our General Rules, and the solemn pledge of the General conference to the contrary notwithstanding!

Again: look at the following statement made by the General conference since it was solemnly pledged not to "change or revoke any of our General Rules." "When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives." (Discipline, part 2, section 9.) But suppose a traveling preacher buys some dozen or twenty "men, women, and children, with an intention of enslaving them," in a state

where the laws do not "admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slaves to enjoy freedom," what then? Do the laws of such states change the nature of the "GREAT EVIL" of which the Discipline declares the Methodist Episcopal Church is "as much as ever convinced?" Let us analyze the Rules laid down here, and see what they amount to:

1. Slavery is a "great evil," and we declare that we are "as much as ever convinced of it."

2. No "enslaver of men, women, or children" is "truly awakened," and hence he can not have a sincere "desire to flee from the wrath to come." (Discipline, chapter 2, section 1.)

3. No "enslaver of men, women, or children" can be received or continued a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church. (Dis., chapter 2, section 1.)

4. Traveling preachers in the Methodist Episcopal Church may become "enslavers of men, women, or children" in those states where the laws will not admit of their giving their slaves freedom, after they have bought them!

Suppose, again, that the General conference had made the same additional rules with respect to some other sin mentioned in the "General Rules," declaring it to be a *great evil* of which they were "as much as ever convinced," and then adding as follows: "No Sabbath-breaker shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives do not legalize Sabbath-breaking." "When any traveling preacher becomes a drunkard, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he can show that the laws of the state in which he lives sanction drunkenness."

And who does not see that the General conference might have made just such provision for any other "great evil," or sin, prohibited in our General Rules, with the very same propriety that they have made the above for the "great evil" of slavery? The Discipline of our Church does, indeed, make a distinction between the sin of slaveholding and some other sins "which are most generally practiced," as it declares slavery to be a "great evil," by which we understand it to mean that slaveholding is a greater evil than any other sin mentioned in the General Rules, because it is not said thus of any other one sin mentioned in the Discipline.

But whether all the delegates who have composed the three or four last meetings of the General conference were as much opposed to slavery, or whether they were "as much convinced of its great evil," as Wesley and the General conference were fifty years ago, is more than doubtful. The following items, taken from an edition of the Discipline published in 1804, we consider conclusive evidence to this point:

"No slaveholder shall be received into full membership in our society till the preacher, who has the oversight of the circuit, has spoken to him freely and faithfully on the subject of slavery." So, it seems, thirty years ago, an "enslaver of men, women, and children" might be received into full connection after he had been spoken to "freely and faithfully upon the subject of slavery," that unchangeable "Rule" and the "great evil" of his conduct to the contrary notwithstanding. But the "enslavers of men, women, and children" could not well bear this "free and faithful" talking to, and hence the above was abolished.

The following additional rules may be found also in this edition; and though they have long since been left out of the Discipline, yet the General conference declare that they are "as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery:"

"Every member of the society who sells a slave, except at the request of the slave, in cases of necessity and humanity, agreeably to the judgment of a committee of the male members of the society, shall immediately be expelled the society; and if any member purchase a slave, the ensuing quarterly conference shall determine on the number of years which the slave shall serve to work out the price of his purchase; and the person so purchasing, shall execute a legal instrument for the manumission of such slave at the expiration of the term determined by the quarterly meeting conference, and, in default, such member shall be excluded the society." To these Rules were added two items—that, "in the case of a female slave, all her children, also, should be free, the girls at twenty-one, and the boys at twenty-five; and that all terms of emancipation should be subject to the decision of the quarterly conference. Nevertheless, the members of our societies, in the states of North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee, shall be exempted from the operation of the above rules."

But what, it may be inquired, what changed the nature of this "great evil" in the states of North and South Carolina, Georgia, and Tennessee? If the slave-trade was a sin in any other state, it was most certainly a sin in these states, unless we suppose that state lines and geographical limits can change sin and make it no sin, or make a "great evil" no evil at all.

But we shall not dwell on this part of our subject; it is painful enough to think of, and as members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and as Methodist preachers, we readily confess we are exceedingly afflicted with the course which the General conference has taken with regard to this thing, and still more with a knowledge of the fact, that the "great evil" of slavery has been increasing, both among the membership and ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at a fearful rate for thirty or forty years past. The general minutes of our annual conferences announces about eighty thousand colored members in our Church, and it is highly probable from various reasons which might be named, that as many as sixty thousand or upward of these are slaves; but what proportion of these and others are enslaved by the Methodist members and Methodist preachers, we have no means of determining precisely, but the alterations which have been made in the Discipline show at once that the number is neither few nor small. And if this evil was a "great" one fifty years ago, what must it be now? What will it be fifty or a hundred years hence, should the Discipline be outraged and altered as it has been during a half century past? Who can tell where this "great" and growing "evil" will end? We frequently hear Christians and Christian ministers expressing the greatest fears for the safety of the political "union" of these United States, whenever the subject of slavery is mentioned; but no fears as to the prosperity and peace of the Christian Church, though this "evil" be ever so "great," and though it be increased every day a thousand fold. But can it be supposed that any branch of the Christian Church is in a healthy

and prosperous state, while it slumbers over and nurses in its bosom so "great" an "evil"? Let the fate of the seven Asiatic Churches answer this question.

We will now examine the views of the venerable founder of Methodism upon this subject; and we give the follow extracts from Wesley, and the doings of the British conference on the subject of slavery, not only because they are immensely important in the views which they exhibit, but because there is no other way in which we can spread them before the members and friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church; as there is not a paper or periodical of any kind published by this Church in America, into which an extract from Wesley, or Clarke, or Watson, or the doings of the Wesleyan conference in England on this subject, can find its way!\*

The following is from "Wesley's Thoughts on Slavery," contained in his works, vol. 6, p. 278. A few words are substituted in some of the paragraphs, to adapt them more strictly to the present state of slavery in this country. The want of room compels us to omit the most of this able production; the whole of which is every way worthy of the serious attention of every Methodist in this country.

"Slavery imports an obligation of perpetual service; an obligation which only the consent of the master can dissolve. It generally gives the master an arbitrary power of any correction not affecting life or limb. Sometimes they are exposed to his will, or protected only by a fine or some slight punishment, too inconsiderable to restrain a master of harsh temper. It creates an incapacity of acquiring any thing, except for the master's benefit. It allows the master to alienate the slave in the same manner as his cows and horses. Lastly, it descends in its full extent, from parent to child, even to the last generation.

"The negroes are exposed naked to the examination of their purchasers; then they are separated to see each other no more. They are reduced to a state, scarce any way preferable to beasts of burden. A few yams or potatoes are their food; and two rags their covering. Their sleep is very short, their labor continual and above their strength, so that death sets many of them at liberty before they have lived out half their days. They are attended by overseers, who, if they think them dilatory, or any thing not so well done as it should be, whip them unmercifully; so that you may see their bodies long after waled and scarred from the shoulder to the waist. Did the Creator intend that the noblest creatures in the visible world should live such a life as this?

"As to the punishment inflicted on them, they frequently geld them, or chop off half a foot! after they are whipped till they are raw all over, some put pepper and salt upon them; some drop melted wax upon their skin, others cut off their ears, and constrain them to broil and eat them. For rebellion, that is, asserting their native liberty, which they have as much right to as the air they breathe, they fasten them down to the ground with crooked sticks on every limb, and then applying fire to the feet and hands, they burn them gradually to the head!

"But will not the laws made in the colony prevent or redress all cruelty and oppression?"

\* This was true when the above was written.

Take a few of those laws for a specimen and judge.

"In order to rivet the chain of slavery, the law of Virginia ordains—'No slave shall be set free, upon any pretense whatever, except for some meritorious services, to be adjudged and allowed by the Governor and Council; and where any slave shall be set free by his owner, otherwise than is herein directed, the *church-wardens* of the parish wherein such negro shall reside for the space of one month are hereby authorized and required to take up and sell the said negro, by public outcry.'

"After proclamation is issued against slaves that run away, it is lawful for any person whatsoever to kill and destroy such slaves by such ways and means as he shall think fit.'

"We have seen already some of the ways and means which have been thought fit on such occasions, and many more might be mentioned. One man, when I was abroad, thought fit to *roast his slave alive!* But if the most natural act of running away from intolerable tyranny deserves such relentless severity, what punishment have those law-makers to expect hereafter, on account of their own enormous offenses?

"III. This is the plain, unaggravated matter of fact. Can these things be defended on the principles of even heathen honesty? Can they be reconciled, setting the Bible out of the question, with any degree of either justice or mercy?

"The grand plea is, 'They are authorized by law.' But can law, human law, change the nature of things? Can it turn darkness into light, or evil into good? By no means. Notwithstanding ten thousand laws, right is right, and wrong is wrong. There must still remain an essential difference between justice and injustice, cruelty and mercy. So that I ask, who can reconcile this treatment of the slaves, first and last, with either mercy or justice? where is the justice of inflicting the severest evils on those who have done us no harm? of depriving those, who never injured us in word or deed, of every comfort of life? of tearing them from their native country, and depriving them of liberty itself, to which an Angolan has the same natural right as an American, and on which he sets as high a value? Where is the justice of taking away the lives of innocent, inoffensive men? murdering thousands of them in their own land by the hands of their own countrymen, and tens of thousands in that cruel slavery, to which they are so unjustly reduced?

"But I strike at the root of this complicated villainy. I absolutely deny all slaveholding to be consistent with any degree of natural justice. Judge Blackstone has placed this in the clearest light, as follows:

"The three origins of the right of slavery assigned by Justinian are all built upon false foundations. 1. Slavery is said to arise from captivity in war. The conqueror having a right to the life of his captive, if he spares that, has a right to deal with as he pleases. But this is untrue, that by the laws of nations a man has a right to kill his enemy. He has only a right to kill him in cases of absolute necessity, for self-defense. And it is plain this absolute necessity did not subsist, since he did not kill him, but made him prisoner. War itself is justifiable only on principles of self-preservation. Therefore it gives us no right over pris-

oners, but to hinder their hurting us by confining them. Much less can it give a right to torture, or kill, or even enslave an enemy when the war is over. Since, therefore, the right of making our prisoners slaves depends on a supposed right of slaughter, that foundation failing, the consequence which is drawn from it must fall likewise. 2. It is said, slavery may begin by one man's selling himself to another. It is true, a man may sell himself to work for another; but he can not sell himself to be a slave as above defined. Every sale implies an equivalent given to the seller, in lieu of what he transfers to the buyer. But what equivalent can be given for life or liberty? His property, likewise, with the very price which he seems to receive, devolves to his master the moment he becomes his slave; in this case, therefore, the buyer gives nothing. Of what validity, then, can a sale be, which destroys the very principle upon which all sales are founded? 3. We are told men may be *born slaves*, by being the children of slaves. But this being built upon the two former false claims, must fall with them. If neither captivity nor contract, by the plain law of nature and reason, can reduce the parent to a state of slavery, much less can they reduce the offspring.' It clearly follows, that all slavery is as irreconcilable to justice as to mercy.

"That slaveholding is utterly inconsistent with mercy is almost too plain to need a proof. It is said, 'These negroes, being prisoners of war, our captains and factors buy them, merely to save them from being put to death. Is not this mercy?' I answer, 1. Did Hawkins, and many others, seize upon men, women, and children, who were at peace in their own fields and houses, merely to save them from death? 2. Was it to save them from death that they knocked out the brains of those they could not bring away? 3. Who occasioned and fomented those wars, wherein these poor creatures were taken prisoners? Who excited them by money, by drink, by every possible means, to fall upon one another? Was it not themselves? They know in their own consciences it was, if they have any consciences left. 4. To bring the matter to a short issue—can they say before God, that they ever took a single voyage, or brought a single African from this motive? They can not. *To get money, not to save lives*, was the whole and sole spring of their motives.

"But if this manner of procuring and treating slaves is not consistent with mercy or justice, yet there is a plea for it which every man of business will acknowledge to be quite sufficient. On meeting an eminent statesman in the lobby of the house of commons, he said, 'You have been long talking about justice and equity; pray, which is this bill? equity or justice?' He answered very short and plain, 'Damn justice; it is necessity.' Here also the slaveholder fixes his foot; here he rests the strength of his cause. 'If it is not quite right, yet it *must* be so; there is an absolute *necessity* for it. It is necessary we should procure slaves; and when we have procured them, it is necessary to use them with severity, considering their stupidity, stubbornness, and wickedness.' You stumble at the threshold; I deny that villainy is ever necessary. It is impossible that it should ever be necessary for any reasonable creature to violate all the laws of justice, mercy, and truth. No circumstances can make it necessary



for a man to burst in sunder all the ties of humanity. It can never be necessary for a rational being to sink himself below a brute. A man can be under no necessity of degrading himself into a wolf. The absurdity of the supposition is so glaring, that one would wonder that any one could help seeing it.

"What is necessary, and to what end? It may be answered: 'The whole method now used by the original purchasers of Africans is necessary to the furnishing our colonies yearly with a hundred thousand slaves.' I grant *this* is necessary to *that end*. But how is that end necessary? How will you prove it necessary that one hundred, that *one* of those slaves should be procured? 'It is necessary to my gaining a hundred thousand pounds.' Perhaps so; but how is *this* necessary? It is very possible you might be both a better and a happier man if you had not a quarter of it. I deny that your gaining one thousand is necessary to your present or eternal happiness. 'But you must allow these slaves are necessary for the cultivation of our islands; inasmuch as white men are not able to labor in hot climates.' I answer, 1. It were better that all those islands should remain uncultivated forever; yea, it were more desirable that they were altogether sunk in the depth of the sea, than that they should be cultivated at so high a price as the violation of justice, mercy, and truth. 2. But the supposition on which you ground your argument, is false. White men are able to labor in hot climates, provided they are temperate both in meat and drink, and that they inure themselves to it by degrees. *I speak no more than I know by experience.* The summer heat in Georgia is frequently equal to that in Barbadoes, and to that under the line; yet I and my family, eight in number, employed all our spare time there in felling trees and clearing of ground—as hard labor as any slave need be employed in. The German family, likewise, forty in number, were employed in all manner of labor. This was so far from impairing our health that we all continued perfectly well, while the idle ones round about us were swept away as with a pestilence. It is not true, therefore, that white men are not able to labor, even in hot climates, full as well as black. If they were not, it would be better that none should labor there, that the work should be left undone, than that myriads of innocent men should be murdered, and myriads more be dragged into the basest slavery. 'But the furnishing us with slaves is necessary for the trade, wealth, and glory of the nation.' Better no trade than trade procured by villainy. It is far better to have no wealth, than to gain wealth at the expense of virtue. Better is honest poverty than all the riches bought by the tears, and sweat, and blood of our fellow-creatures.

"When we have slaves it is necessary to use them with severity. What! to whip them for every offense till they are in a gore of blood? To take that opportunity of rubbing pepper and salt into their raw flesh? To drop burning sealing-wax upon their skins? To castrate them? To cut off half their foot with an ax? To hang them on gibbets that they may die by inches, with heat, and hunger, and thirst? To pin them down to the ground, and then burn them by degrees from the feet to the head? To roast them alive? When did a Turk or a heathen find it necessary to use a fellow-creature thus? To what end is this usage necessary? 'To prevent their running away, and to keep them constantly to their labor, that they may not idle away

their time. So miserably stupid is this race of men, so stubborn, and so wicked! Allowing this, to whom is that stupidity owing? It lies altogether at the door of their inhuman masters who gave them no means, no opportunity of improving their understanding; and, indeed, leave them no motive, either from hope or fear, to attempt any such thing. They were no way remarkable for stupidity while they remained in Africa. To some of the inhabitants of Europe they are greatly superior. Survey the natives of Benin, and of Lapland. Compare the Samoëds and the Angelans. The African is in no respect inferior to the European. Their stupidity in our colonies is not natural; otherwise than it is the natural effect of their condition. Consequently, it is not their fault, but yours; and you must answer for it before God and man. 'But their stupidity is not the only reason of our treating them with severity; for it is hard to say which is the greatest, this, or their stubbornness and wickedness.' But do not these, as well as the other, lie at *your door*? Are not stubbornness, cunning, pilfering, and divers other vices the natural, necessary fruits of slavery in every age and nation? What means have you used to remove this stubbornness? Have you tried what gentleness and mildness would do? What pains have you taken, what method have you used to reclaim them from their wickedness? Have you carefully taught them 'that there is a God, a wise, powerful, merciful Being, the Creator and Governor of heaven and earth; that he has appointed a day wherein he will judge the world, will take an account of all our thoughts, words, and actions; that in that day he will reward every child of man according to his works; that then the righteous shall inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world; and the wicked shall be cast into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels?' If you have not done this, if you have taken no pains nor thought about this matter, can you wonder at their wickedness? What wonder if they should cut your throat? And if they did, whom would you thank for it but yourself? You first *acted the villain in making them slaves*, whether you stole them or bought them. You kept them stupid and wicked by cutting them off from all opportunities of improving, either in knowledge or virtue; and now you assign their want of wisdom or goodness as the reason for using them worse than brute beasts.

"V. I add a few words to those who are more immediately concerned.

"1. To *traders*. You have torn away children from their parents, and parents from their children; husbands from their wives; wives from their beloved husbands; brothers and sisters from each other. You have dragged them, who have never done you any wrong, in chains, and forced them into the vilest slavery, never to end but with life; such slavery as is not found among the Turks, in Algiers, nor among the heathens, in America. You induce the villain to steal, rob, murder men, women, and children, without number, by paying him for his execrable labor. It is all your act and deed. Is your conscience quite reconciled to this? Does it not reproach you at all? Has gold entirely blinded your eyes and stupefied your heart? Can you see, can you feel no harm therein? Is it doing as you would be done to? Make the case your own. 'Master,' said a slave at Liverpool to the merchant that owned him, 'what if some of my countrymen were to come here and take

away mistress, and Tommy, and Billy, and carry them into our country, and make them slaves; how would you like it?' His answer was worthy of a man: 'I will never buy a slave more while I live.' Let his resolution be yours. Have no more a part in this detestable business. Instantly leave it to those unfeeling wretches, 'who laugh at human nature and compassion.' Be you a man; not a wolf—a devourer of the human species! Be merciful, that you may obtain mercy.

"Is there a God? You know there is. Is he a just God? Then there must be a state of retribution; a state wherein the just God will reward every man according to his works. Then what reward will be rendered to *you*? O! think betimes; before you drop into eternity! Think now! 'He shall have judgment without mercy that hath showed no mercy.' Are you a *man*? Then you should have a *human* heart. But have you, indeed? What is your heart made of? Is there no such principle as compassion there? Do you never *feel* another's pain? Have you no sympathy—no sense of human woe—no pity for the miserable? When you saw the streaming eyes, the heaving breasts, the bleeding sides, and the tortured limbs of your fellow-creatures, were you a stone or a brute? Did you look upon them with the eyes of a tiger? Had you no relenting? Did not one tear drop from your eye, one sigh escape from your breast? Do you feel no relenting *now*? If you do not, you must go on till the measure of your iniquities is full. Then will the great God deal with *you* as you have dealt with them, and require all their blood at your hands. At that day it shall be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah than for you. But if your heart does relent, resolve, God being your helper, to escape for your life. Regard not money. All that a man hath will he give for his life. Whatever you lose, lose not your soul; nothing can countervail that loss. Immediately quit the horrid trade; at all events, be an honest man.

"2. To *slaveholders*. This equally concerns all slaveholders, of whatever rank and degree; seeing men-buyers are exactly on a level with men-stealers. Indeed, you say, 'I pay honestly for my goods; and I am not concerned to know how they are come by.' Nay, but you are; you are deeply concerned to know they are honestly come by; otherwise you are partaker with a thief, and not a jot honest than he. But you know they are not honestly come by; you know they are procured by means nothing near so innocent as picking pockets, house-breaking, or robbery upon the highway. You know they are procured by a deliberate species of more complicated villainy, of fraud, robbery, and murder than was ever practiced by Mohammedans or pagans; in particular, by murders of all kinds; by the blood of the innocent poured upon the ground like water. Now, it is *your* money that pays the African butcher. *You*, therefore, are principally guilty of all these frauds, robberies, and murders. *You* are the spring that puts all the rest in motion. They would not stir a step without *you*—therefore, the blood of all these wretches who die before their time, lies upon *your* head. 'The blood of thy brother crieth against thee from the earth.' O, whatever it costs, put a stop to its cry before it be too late; instantly, at any price, were it the half of your goods, deliver thyself from blood-guiltiness. Thy hands, thy bed, thy furniture, thy house, and thy lands, at present are stained with blood. Surely it is enough;

accumulate no more guilt; spill no more the blood of the innocent. Do not hire another to shed blood; do not pay him for doing it. Whether you are a Christian or not, show yourself a man. Be not more savage than a lion or bear.

"Perhaps you will say, 'I do not buy any slaves; I only use those left by my father.' But is that enough to satisfy your conscience? Had your father, have *you*, has any man living, a right to use another as a slave? It can not be, even setting revelation aside. Neither war nor contract can give any man such a property in another as he has in his sheep and oxen. Much less is it possible that any child of man should ever be born a slave. Liberty is the right of every human creature, as soon as he breathes the vital air; and no human law can deprive him of that right which he derives from the law of nature. If, therefore, you have any regard to justice, to say nothing of mercy, or of the revealed law of God, render unto all their due. Give liberty to whom liberty is due, to every child of man, to every partaker of human nature. Let none serve you but by his own act and deed, by his own voluntary choice. Away with all whips, all chains, all compulsion! Be gentle toward all men, and see that you invariably do unto every one, as you would he should do unto you."

The following, also, are important testimonies from this same great and good man, nor should any one of his followers be ashamed to read or circulate them among the slaveholding Methodists of this country, especially in these degenerate times:

"That execrable sum of all villainies, commonly called the *slave-trade*. I read of nothing like it in the heathen world, whether ancient or modern, and it infinitely exceeds, in every instance of barbarity, whatever Christian slaves suffer in Mohammedan countries." (Journal, under date of February 12, 1772.) And yet in this very trade thousands of Christians at the present day are engaged.

Again, in a letter to Mr. T. Funnell, dated November, 1787, he writes as follows:

"DEAR BROTHER,—Whatever assistance I can give those generous men who join to oppose that execrable trade, I certainly shall give. I have printed a large edition of the 'Thoughts on Slavery,' and dispersed them to every part of England. But there will be vehement opposition made, both by slave merchants and slaveholders, and they are mighty men; but our comfort is, Ho that dwelleth on high is mightier.

"Your affectionate brother, J. WESLEY."

The following letter is exceedingly interesting, inasmuch as it was the last but two which Mr. Wesley ever wrote, and it is dated only four days before his death. It was written to the great and good Mr. Wilberforce, the pioneer of the abolition cause in England:

"London, February 26, 1791.

"DEAR SIR,—Unless the Divine power has raised you up as *Athanasius contra Mundum*, [Athanasius against the world,] I see not how you can go through your glorious enterprise, in opposing that execrable villainy, which is the scandal of religion, of England, and of human nature. Unless God has raised you up for this very thing, you will be worn out by the opposition of men and devils. But 'if God be for you, who can be against you?' O, 'be not weary in well-doing!' Go on in the name of God, and in

the power of his might, till even American slavery—the vilest that ever saw the sun—shall vanish away before it. Reading this morning a tract written by a poor African, I was particularly struck by that circumstance, that a man who has a black skin, being wronged or outraged by a white man, can have no redress; it being a law, in all our colonies, that the oath of a black against a white goes for nothing. What villainy is this!

“That He who has guided you from your youth up, may continue to strengthen you in this and in all things, is the prayer of, dear sir,  
“Your affectionate servant, J. WESLEY.”

The following is another extract from Dr. Adam Clarke:

“In heathen countries slavery was in some sort excusable; among Christians, it is an enormity and a crime for which perdition has scarcely an adequate state of punishment.”

And again he says:

“I here register my testimony against the unprincipled, inhuman, antichristian, and diabolical slave-trade, with all its authors, promoters, abettors, and sacrilegious gains; as well as against the great devil, the father of it and them.”

Now, we put it to any man of candor to say if any stronger language has ever been used by any abolitionist of the present day, in describing the sin of slaveholding, than the foregoing, which is used by two of the best men the world ever saw? And observe, too, that slaveholding in these extracts is put “exactly upon a level” with man-stealing and the traffic in human souls.

We do not suppose, however, that either of the above-named writers designed to be understood as saying that there are no degrees in the guilt of slaveholding; nor do we wish to be understood as applying all the foregoing remarks to all enslavers *indiscriminately*; nor yet is it for us to search out the individuals, if there be any, to whom they may not be applied; but we do say that every one who in any way countenances slaveholding, is justly chargeable, more or less, with the evils which flow from it. We say that Christian enslavers of the human species do the very same to perpetuate the system and evils of slavery, which the Christian rum-drinker, or the Christian distiller does to perpetuate the evils of intemperance; and it is remarkable that the intemperate do generally refer to the *good*, the *Christian rum-drinkers* to justify themselves in their habits, in precisely the same way that we are frequently referred to many Christians, and Christian ministers, who *hold their species in bondage*, as a *sufficient justification* of the system of slavery!

We beg leave also to commend the following testimony to your notice, and to bespeak for it a candid perusal. It is a document drawn up by the pious and able Richard Watson, and it was adopted unanimously by the Wesleyan Methodist conference of preachers, in England, in 1830. [For this extract see Document 2.]

Such, dear brother, are the views entertained by the venerable body of Wesleyan Methodist preachers in England, on this momentous question; and we candidly confess that we can not suppress our shame and extreme mortification, when we compare the principles of Wesley and the doings of this able body with the present state of feeling in the Church in this country on this most interesting subject. Here, one death-like silence reigns, with but a few exceptions, throughout the entire ranks of our six thousand living traveling and local preachers. No one of

our twenty conferences has lifted a finger, or uttered one word of pity for more than two millions of our brethren, who are now, as they have been for years, suffering a state of bondage worse and more cruel than any which ever disgraced the West India colonies. No voice of prayer ever goes up to Heaven for them in our prayer meetings or monthly concerts; for them the pulpit utters no notes of sympathy; not one of our widely-circulated papers or magazines is suffered to utter a word for the degraded millions of our slaves who are perishing for lack of knowledge; nay, if any one attempts to speak for them, by our principal periodical, they are denounced as “enemies to the slaves,” “enemies to the country,” and as “anti-republican, jacobinical, hot-headed speculators.”\*

And another number of this same paper pronounces slavery a *blessing*, and even intimates that every man in this country should be prohibited by law from opening his lips against it. It is but a few months since this paper held the following language:

“It strikes us as plainly resulting from the very nature of our political compact, that the government of no state should permit any of her citizens to pursue measures considered in any other state as dangerous to her peace and the lives of her people. With the persistence and increase of this evil [that is, the liberty of speech,] it will soon become the imperative duty of our Legislatures, in defense of our people, both black and white, to *prevent, by severe penalties* [death, for instance, such as may be inflicted in some of the southern states, for teaching a poor slave to read the word of God] the circulating among us of all newspapers, pamphlets, and speeches, which, under the garb of religion, are breathing ruin and war upon our institutions.”

And then, after preferring sundry heavy charges against the “anti-republican, jacobinical, hot-headed abolitionists,” this *Christian Advocate* addresses them thus:

“And now what have you to plead in extenuation of these weighty charges? Nothing—absolutely nothing—but an abstract philosophical principle about equality of rights—a principle we seek for in vain in the pages of revelation, in the moral government of God, or in the history of man. *Compulsory labor*, stripped of its abuses, and under the direction of benevolence and superior intelligence, *is not an evil in itself*; it may be made the source of great and invaluable blessings and advantages.”

And yet, passing strange as it may appear, the editors of this *Journal* tell us, for the thousandth time, in their number for December 12, 1834, that “they are of no particular party as editors,” that the paper never has and never will “take any part in the politics of the day,” that their course is uniformly “to leave it to political partisans to manage their own affairs in the way which may best suit themselves.” We confess we are astonished to see such statements in the *Christian Advocate* and *Journal*, while we know that it has ever been meddling with the “abolition question,” and this too when it has as uniformly affirmed that this question was one of “pure party politics,” and one which it positively declares “the anti-republican, jacobinical, hot-headed abolitionists” are advocating, “under the garb of religion.”

Now, if this question is one of a pure political

\* See *Christian Advocate* and *Journal* of June 20, 1834.

bearing merely, as the Advocate affirms in one of the foregoing extracts, and of such a political character, also, that it would be well for some of the states to prohibit the liberty of speech and the liberty of the press with regard to it, why, we beg leave to ask, why does the Advocate so very often give us an editorial on "abolitionism," and abolitionists, denouncing them as "anti-republican, hot-headed fanatics," and all that sort of a thing? especially when this paper has pledged itself so solemnly and so frequently to the public and the world that it always will "leave it to political partisans to manage their own affairs in the way which may best suit themselves."

And look at another fact in connection with this subject. The Christian Advocate has been solemnly and repeatedly pledged to defend the Discipline, and "to speak the voice of the Methodist Episcopal Church." The voice of this Church is heard in her Discipline; this declares that "*slavery is a great evil*, and that no one who enslaves men, women, and children, is truly awakened;" but the Advocate proclaims "*compulsory labor*," that is, *slavery, is not a great evil*; nay, it is no evil at all, and under the direction of benevolence and superior intelligence, it is a great blessing! And yet the editors of this same paper, under date of December 5, 1834, declare—"We are not the apologists of slavery, as it exists in this country;" that is, we suppose they mean, that they are the apologists for slavery in the abstract—for "compulsory labor in itself considered" they do apologize, as "it may be made the source of invaluable blessings and advantages."

And upon the same principle, why may they not contend for "perjury in the abstract," or "infidelity in itself considered," and "stripped of its abuse, under the direction of benevolence and superior intelligence;" for we see not, surely, why these or any other "great evils," might not "be made the source of invaluable blessings," by the very same process which the Christian Advocate and Journal proves that "the execrable sum of all villainies," as Wesley denominates it, "may become the source of invaluable blessings and advantages."

But we will now turn our attention to the Methodist portion of the "jacobinical, hot-headed abolitionists" in England. It is truly gratifying to find, according to a recent number of the Wesleyan Methodist Magazine, that the societies throughout that nation were not backward in engaging in the good work, according to the request of the conference; and the petitions which the Methodists alone forwarded to Parliament, the Magazine informs us, contained no less than *two hundred and twenty-nine thousand, four hundred and twenty-six* names, a larger number, considerably, than was forwarded by any other one denomination in the empire!

As might have been expected, the enslavers in the West Indies, and their abettors in Great Britain, stirred themselves in earnest to oppose the measures which were taken by Christians and Christian ministers throughout the nation to bring about the abolition of slavery; they raved and strove against them in various ways; they called it a "political question," and one about which those in England knew little or nothing; they denied them the right of meddling with it, and denounced them for "interfering" in the affairs of the distant colonies. But those measures prevailed, as "anti-republican, jacobinical, and hot-headed," as those might have been

thought to be who used them; and now the whole world knows that the liberation of eight hundred thousand slaves in the West Indies was effected by the influence of *Christian* efforts which were made on the distant island of Great Britain. And it is an interesting fact that the time arrived for them to be set free while the Wesleyan conference, which had labored and prayed so sincerely for this event, was in session. This was August 1, 1834.

In their annual address to the Methodist societies, they thus allude to this memorable event:

"It is a singular and very delightful circumstance, that, during the sittings of the conference, the day arrived when the state of slavery in the British West India colonies, according to the decision of the Legislature, should forever cease. We congratulate you on this happy accomplishment of your desires. The bondage of the negroes has now become a matter of past history, and no longer oppresses or demoralizes the master. We deeply regret the fact that there are yet states, professedly Christian, in which the sinfully-degrading *caste* of color exists in its most repulsive form; but we are willing to cherish the hope that the example of Great Britain will be followed by every other nation, and that slavery, at least among all people calling themselves Christian, will be allowed to continue no longer. 'God hath made of one blood all nations of men to dwell upon the face of the earth;' and we anticipate the time, by the admission and triumph of this great truth, when all civil distinctions arising merely from color and complexion shall be abolished.

["These anticipations are delightful; but there are others yet more so. Opposed and persecuted as the missionaries have too frequently been, yet their labors have been signally successful. And are we not justified in supposing that if the word of the Lord has thus been glorified, when its progress was obstructed by so many hindrances, far more efficient and rapid shall be its movements, far more bright its glory, now that, through the wonder-working providence of God, those hindrances continue no longer? We thank God, who has put it into your hearts to show already such liberal zeal for the spiritual welfare of the negroes, and we feel confident that you will enable us to embrace the increasing opportunities for useful labor which will now be afforded by the altered condition of West Indian society."\*]

But whether any of those generous-hearted and truly-Christian ministers will ever live to realize the pleasing anticipations which they here express, concerning the *Christian* states of which they speak, is extremely problematical; and what they would have said, had they fully known the real state of things with regard to slavery in the Church which bears their name in this country, it is not easy to conceive. One expression of their feelings they have given, however, we believe, from what little they did know a few years since; they have sent no one to represent them in this country, since the General conference delegated an *enslaver* to represent the Methodist Episcopal Church in England; one reason may be, that they have no *enslavers*

\* The part in brackets was omitted by Mr. Sunderland, though it contains an important part of the document. For the whole Address, see Western Advocate of December 12, 1834, Vol. 1, p. 130, col. 6, *infra*, and copied entire in Chapter VI, p. 7, of this work. C. ELLIOTT.

among their preachers, and of course they can not reciprocate the favor we did them in 1828, by sending one to represent the English connection here.

It is well known that the laws of the United States declare the African slave-trade to be *piracy*, and punishable with death; but what can render the foreign slave-trade so much worse than the same kind of trade carried on under circumstances a thousand times more aggravating, within the limits of the United States? And yet the traffic in human souls is carried on among us in these *free* and Christian states, with the very same kind of violence, kidnapping, and fraud which was ever perpetrated on the coast of Africa. Thousands are bought and sold and transported from one place to another in this country every year. For evidence on this part of the subject, see the doings of the New England Antislavery convention, held in Boston in May last.

Now, in view of these appalling facts, you will naturally be led to inquire, "What can we do?" To this inquiry we beg leave respectfully to answer, and to suggest a few things, which we humbly conceive every Christian, and especially every Christian minister, is at this time more than ever deeply concerned to do.

1. We should make ourselves well acquainted with the state of slavery in this country, especially as it is connected with the Christian Church. This subject is at the present time engrossing the attention of a great proportion of this nation; and by many, evils of the greatest magnitude are anticipated, merely from the free discussion of the slavery question, and for this reason, if for no other, we should inform ourselves upon this subject. Now, we might as well try to hide the light of the noonday sun as to prevent its discussion; and as to the evils feared by many, we conceive that they are already upon us—they have for years been palsying the energies of the nation, and eating out the vitals of the Christian Church. These evils have come upon us while we have been sleeping, and dreaming of peace and prosperity; and so we have been resting unconscious of any danger, till the horrid monster has insinuated himself into the Church of God, and blighted her fairest prospects with his pestiferous breath. And how can we be faithful to our solemn trust, without informing ourselves upon this momentous subject?

2. There is another thing which God himself commands us to do: "Remember them that are in bonds, as bound with them; them which suffer adversity, as being yourselves also in the body." Heb. xiii. 3. Two millions, five hundred thousand of our fellow-citizens or brethren are "in bonds," even in this land of boasted freedom. Do we remember them at the family altar? Do we remember them at the monthly concert for prayer? Do we remember that the great proportion of them are in their sins, going down to hell; that it is the grand policy of most of their masters to degrade and brutalize their minds, by withholding from them all knowledge; and consequently, if there be any one class of human beings upon the face of the globe who have a higher claim than all the rest for our

sympathies and missionary labors, the two millions, five hundred thousand slaves in our own land are that class? And we should remember, too, that these miserable beings are increasing at the rate of from sixty to seventy thousand every year, or about two hundred are added to the number every day!

3. "But when should the system of slavery cease?" We answer, if, as we trust it has been fully made to appear in the foregoing remarks, slavery is one general system of violence, robbery, injustice, vice, and oppression, then it is a sin in the sight of Heaven, and ought to cease at once, now and forever. But mark us here. We do not mean by this that all the slaves should be thrust out loose upon the nation like a herd of cattle, nor that they should be immediately invested with all political privileges and rights, nor yet that they should be banished from the land of their nativity to a distant clime. But we mean that the slaves should immediately be brought under the protection of suitable laws, placing them under such a supervision as might be adapted to their condition; one which would secure to them, by adequate and impartially-administered laws, the right of enjoying the fruits of their own labor, and the privilege of obtaining secular and religious instruction. And nothing in the world hinders the enactment of such laws, by which the slaves might be made free, with all imaginable safety, immediately, but the *wickedness* of those who hold them in bondage.

We would, dear brethren, in conclusion, commend this subject in all its important bearings, to your most serious and prayerful attention; and in doing this, as we can not enlarge upon it here, we would mention the letters of J. G. Birney, Esq., which have recently been published on the subject of African colonization and slavery; and for all the antislavery publications, we would respectfully bespeak a candid reading before you pass any judgment against them.

We leave it to your own consciences and the providence of God, to dictate to you the course of your duty. But we would respectfully suggest, whether the true friends of Methodism and the Church of Christ will have done their duty, if the next General conference is suffered to pass without having heard from our congregations and conferences upon this momentous subject. Why should we be so very far behind our brethren in England, in relation to this thing? Why should we be at all behind any of the good and the faithful in this country, in our efforts to relieve the Church of so "great" an "evil?" How can we stand still and pause, when God and the cause of bleeding humanity have claims so high!

Permit us to subscribe ourselves, dear brethren, with due respect and affection,

Yours, affectionately.

SHIPLEY W. WILLSON,  
ABRAM D. MERRILL,  
LA ROY SUNDERLAND,  
GEORGE STORES,  
JARED PERKINS.

Boston, December 19, 1834.

P. S. Perhaps we should add here, that we know a number of brethren, members of the same conferences with ourselves, who agree with the foregoing views of slavery, and we have no doubt but they would give their names to this appeal, if we could have an opportunity of consulting them. (Zion's Herald, Extra, February 4, 1835.)

\* The last Monday night in each month has been observed recently in many places as a concert for prayer for the slaves in this country, and their masters. We hope it will be observed by all who desire to obey the above command of God.

## DOCUMENT 17.

*A Counter Appeal to the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the New England and New Hampshire Conferences, dated March 27, 1835.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—With regret we observe that an attempt has been made, by a late publication in our official paper, to disturb, with a new and exciting discussion, the harmony and prosperity with which it hath pleased the providence of God heretofore to bless our ministry and Churches. Against that publication, fraught as it is with doctrines radically erroneous; arraigning as it does the fathers, the Discipline, and the institutions of our Church; and productive as we fear it must be of consequences deeply injurious to the holy cause in which the affections and powers of our souls are engaged, we firmly declare our dissent, and earnestly enter our protest.

In the free remarks which we are about to make, founded upon this document, but *not confined to it*, our strictures are intended not against our brethren—the authors—but against their course and their sentiments; our object is defense and not assault; our earnest wish is to conciliate and not to wound; our desire is to prevent and not to aggravate the divisions which severe imputations and warm feelings would fearfully introduce among us, and our earnest prayer to the Father of spirits, is, that neither of us may hinder the great cause of freedom to the oppressed, harmony to our Church, and peace to the Union. Earnestly invoking the same moderation, and the same prayer on your part, we ask your candid attention, while, in a spirit of brotherly kindness, frankness, and freedom, we bring the sentiments of the APPEAL, lately published in the Zion's Herald, Extra, to the calm test of reason, and the still more decisive authority of the oracles of infallibility.

More lavish in condemning the course which has been pursued, than in proscribing the operations which should have been adopted, our brethren give us no very specific plan of remedy for the evils against which they would awaken our active abhorrence. With regard to their theoretic view of slavery, the following sentence appears to convey the most concise and explicit expression: "*We say the SYSTEM is WRONG, it is cruel and unjust in ALL ITS PARTS and principles, and that NO CHRISTIAN can consistently lend his influence or example for ONE MOMENT in support of it, and consequently it should be ABANDONED NOW AND FOREVER.*" This general proposition has, like many other of the broad maxims used by the advocates of our brethren's views, the merit at once of a simple conciseness and sweeping comprehensiveness, which, however convenient for splendid declamation, even the authors find somewhat embarrassing when they are to be applied to practical operation. How our brethren succeeded in the practical application of these general views, we shall subsequently examine; but our present business is with the maxim itself. We understand it as declaring that no *part* of the system is just or humane, that no Christian can consistently support any part of it, and that the whole should be this moment abandoned. From other parts of the appeal we do also understand them to maintain, that they consider the doctrine of our disciplinary General Rule, to which they have, as Methodists, given their consent, is, that *no slaveholder is truly*

*awakened*, and therefore that *no slaveholder can rightly be permitted a place in the Christian Church.* Against this peremptory and comprehensive scheme of unchristianizing, we confess we have some very radical objections; founded not merely in the deep feeling we entertain of the piety, the usefulness, and the high proofs of Divine blessing upon their lives and labors, which many have exhibited, whom these summary dicta would sweep with the besom of spiritual and eternal death; but founded also, as we conceive, both upon the explicit directions of the Gospel, and upon the general spirit and tenor of New Testament Christianity. Following in the main the train of subjects presented in the appeal, we shall present, 1. The Scripture argument and its application to the course of our Church. 2. A defense of the Discipline and institutions of our Church. 3. An examination of the authorities quoted; and, 4. Our view of the measures now in operation, and the proper course to be pursued.

## I. SCRIPTURE ARGUMENT.

In our examination of the SCRIPTURE ARGUMENT upon this subject, we shall not amplify the discussion by any arguments which might be drawn from the Old Testament, not assuredly because we shall fail of finding full support for our views in its doctrines and examples,\* but because, when we had done, it might very properly, we admit, be replied that we are the children of a brighter dispensation; and because, also, if, as we trust can be clearly shown, the New Testament is perfectly explicit and decisive, from its authority there is no appeal. We shall, therefore, inquire, 1. What is the general spirit and tenor of the Gospel? and 2. What are the specific directions of the New Testament on this subject?

1. The *grand summary* of the law of nations and of men, condensed with an energy worthy a Divine origin into a brief clause, is, "*Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself—All things whatsoever ye would that men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them.*"

From these texts we think clearly results this simple rule: No man has a right to remove any providential evil upon himself, by imposing a still greater evil upon another. Whatever be the nature of any evil, imposed by Providence upon me—loss of health, of liberty, or of life—if I love my neighbor as myself, I shall continue that endurance rather than relieve myself by the infliction of still greater misery upon another. And, generalizing it, if any class of men to which I belong, by any dispensation of God, by birth, or otherwise, be placed in any circumstances of unhappiness, of whatever kind, they are bound, by the authority of the Golden Rule, to continue that state of unhappiness so long as it can be removed only by imposing a still greater amount of unhappiness upon society at large. If the circumstances are partly removable without creating more unhappiness than is diminished, that removal should be; but if they be in any way so organized into the structure of society that the wrecking of the removal would be pro-

\*Moses notices two or three sorts of slaves among the Hebrews, who had foreign slaves, obtained by capture, by purchase, or born in the house. Over these masters had an entire authority; they might sell them, exchange them, punish them, judge them, and even put them to death, without public process; in which the Hebrews followed the rules common to other nations.—*Robinson's Culmel—Article, Slavery.*

ductive of more evil than their longer continuance, no man can justifiably assume the responsibility of bringing about a revolution to effect their removal.

And it is on this principle—the obligation of the part to suffer for the good of the whole—that all human, to say nothing of the Divine, government, is founded. Not a single earthly enjoyment, not a single civil or political right, does social man possess, ease, liberty, or life, which many an individual has not, and any individual may not, by the obvious operation of the Golden Rule, be called upon, for a longer or shorter period, to offer up on the altar of GENERAL GOOD. To say nothing of the minor, the criminal, or the maniac, who are all obliged to make such a sacrifice, what beings suffer a more rigorous slavery than the thousands of armed soldiers, who, in defense of their country's liberties, like the patriots of our own memorable Revolution, under the pressure of martial law, the creatures, for the time, of a military despotism, are obliged to march to the field of battle, and pour forth their lives a sacrifice to the law of general good? This sacrifice of ease, of liberty, and of life, the hapless victim may not refuse, simply because he could avoid the miseries of his fate only by the infliction of still more terrible miseries on society at large.

And, in applying this same reasoning to the specific case of slavery, we should not be justified in revolutionizing its position, unless we had rational grounds to believe that such a process would add to the sum of happiness. Every diminution of the intensity of suffering, however, or of the amount of exercisable authority, which could be made, without creating more misery than it subtracts, ought instantly to be made; and the moment the whole can be diminished away, whether immediately or gradually, without causing more suffering than it destroys, then, and not till then, should it be absolutely and entirely annihilated. For ease of application, the results may be stated thus: 1. The authority of the master should terminate so soon as its cessation would not produce more evils than would its longer continuance; and, 2. The authority should be diminished in amount and severity when such a diminution would not produce more evil than it would subtract.

If the first of these propositions asserts that the general rule of Christianity not only permits, but, in supposable circumstances, enjoins a continuance of the master's authority, the latter does, on the other hand, enjoin the least possible unnecessary exercise of severity. And it may be well here to remark, the fallacy which both our brethren and others use, when urging the morality of this question, in founding their reasonings, not upon the relation itself, nor upon what that relation would be in the hands of a truly Christian master, but upon extreme cases of licentious and cruel abuse of that relation in the hands of a tyrant. Supposing the case of a Christian, necessitated to hold men in the relation of slaves, such would be the proper influence of the religion that, although the forms of slavery might remain, its infamies and its miseries would cease. When, therefore, our brethren, and others, portray the horrors of cruelty and abomination exercised by tyrannical masters, carrying out the specifics with all the exactness of surgical detail, and ask us if those barbarities are for a mo-

ment exercisable by a Christian, or justifiable by Scripture, we readily answer, *certainly not*. It is as certain that the *abuses* of the master's authority are not for a moment justifiable as that its existence in some circumstances is.

2. Such being, as we conceive, the view which the general spirit of the Gospel presents of this subject, we may next proceed to examine the SPECIFIC TEXTS. Of these, beside the two which we have, we believe, sufficiently discussed, our brethren favor us with an exegesis upon two others, which appear to our view somewhat unmanageable in their hands. Between text and commentary, there appears to us a fair combat; and as they come to no compromise, it is unnecessary to say which comes off with the mastery. To illustrate the justness of our strictures, we shall give entire their exegesis upon the first, prefixing, however, to the verse they quote the four verses preceding, which they chose to omit. Our brethren, by candidly conceding, save us the trouble of proving that the word here and elsewhere, rendered *servant*, properly means *slave*.\* We include their text and commentary in quotations.

“‘Servants [slaves] obey in all things your masters, according to the flesh; not with eye service as men-pleasers, but in singleness of heart, fearing God. And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. But he that doeth wrong, shall receive for the wrong which he hath done: and there is no respect of persons.’ Col. iii, 22-25. ‘Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in heaven.’ Col. iv, 1. This text alone, were it properly obeyed, would annihilate the system of slavery from the Church and nation. And is it just and equal when the poor slaves are compelled, often by the stroke of the club, or the cowhide, to toil in weariness and want as long as they live, till they finally drop into the grave, without their ever being paid one penny as an equivalent for their labor?”

This brief specimen of critical exposition contains an affirmation and a question. The question, in effect, asks, with a most ingenuous simplicity, whether the most tyrannical cruelty be equity and justice? We as ingenuously answer, we opine, *not*. Cruelty is not equity and justice, just as two and two are not five. The affirmation is slightly ambiguous, if it mean that by this text slavery would *instantly* be annihilated; that is the very thing to be proved, and not merely asserted. If it mean that by this text slavery would be ultimately annihilated, though this might bear a dispute, we have no objection to concede it. We have not, however, done with this text.

We say, then, that this text proves, *to a demonstration*, that, in the primitive Christian Church at Colosse, under the apostolic eye, and with the apostolic sanction, *the relation of master and slave was permitted to subsist*. The slave is addressed as continuing a slave, the master as permanently a master; the former is exhorted to obedience, the latter to justice and

\* The word *doulos*, which we translate *servant*, properly means a *slave*, one who is the entire property of his master.—Dr. Clarke.

equity in the exercise of his authority.\* Who can assert, in the face of this text, that no slave-master is "truly awakened," nor can be endured in a Christian Church?

"Let every man abide in the same calling wherein he was called. Art thou called being a servant? care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free, use it rather. For he that is called in the Lord, being a servant, is the Lord's freeman; likewise also, he that is called, being free, is Christ's servant. Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men." 1 Cor. vii, 20-23.

This text seems mainly to enjoin and sanction the fitting continuance of the present social relations; the freeman was to remain free, and the slave, unless emancipation should offer, *was to remain a slave*. We shall not amplify to show how conclusive this text may be for us, but will simply give an analysis of the exposition given by our brethren. They say, "From these words two things are apparent: first, that Christianity does not alter the civil connection which one man may sustain merely by his embracing it." On this statement we may remark two things: 1. The writer, in this simple sentence, concedes the whole question, and gives up the whole point. Is not the relation of master and slave "a civil connection," and will not Christianity "merely upon his embracing it," dissolve that civil connection? If not, then religion and slavery can exist together, and the dispute is at an end. 2. Our brethren grant more than we can accept. If embracing Christianity alters no civil relation, slavery, for aught religion does, may become perpetual; and thus the whole is conceded that the most inveterate slaveholder can desire. From such a liberality of concession we beg to be excused. "Secondly, slavery is here condemned, inasmuch as the apostle commands such as were slaves to embrace the first opportunity afforded for obtaining their liberty." Does the writer mean to say that the command to use his freedom, if obtained, implies a moral condemnation of his previous servitude? Surely, he can not. The justest governor that ever sent forth a criminal from his completed imprisonment, commands him to depart and use his freedom, but does not condemn his previous confinement; the vilest slaver that ever knocked off his victim's fetters, bids him use his release, but condemns not his former servitude. Beside, there happens to be no *command* in the case; the optative particle *rather*, expressive of mere preferableness, shows it to be merely a matter of recommendation or advice. That the apostle does not here denounce slavery, is evident from the direction to the slave to *care not for it*; nor can that phrase mean, as the writer, inveterately wrong, would make it say, *let it not hinder your accepting salvation*, since the Greek word for "care"—expressive of a centering of his mind upon his chains—proves that he simply forbids discontent; and, secondly, the advice happens to be addressed to those who had already accepted salvation. The writer then,

expatiating at some length on the abuses of slavery, denies that the apostle "justifies such a system of slavery," implying, apparently, by his emphatic *such*, that he does not condemn a less cruel maintenance of slavery; and thus the unfortunate critic, on this passage, would seem to close as it began, with a clear concession of the whole question in debate!

Here ends this specimen of Biblical commentary. Of all the numerous passages in the New Testament upon this subject, not another is brought under their critical canvassing, and we are left to ask, Why was the Scripture examination commenced, or why was it not, in some measure, completed? Was this random sermonizing upon a few *comparatively* indecisive texts, intended to be passed upon the unscrutinizing reader for a sifting of the Bible doctrines? or were the remaining texts given up, in honest despair, as impregnable to assault, and inflexible to perversion? But if, however, they thought most prudent to close here, we shall not; for, although we could confidently and safely rest even upon these few texts, we do conceive that there are other texts which, if there be meaning in words, or force in demonstration, do place this matter above the reach of debate or doubt.

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart as unto Christ; not with eye service as men-pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; with good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men; knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same thing unto them, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect to persons with him." Eph. vi, 5-9. On this text we remark, 1. It places it beyond debate or doubt that *the apostle did permit slaveholders in the Christian Church*. There were already such in the Church of Ephesus, or he would not have addressed them by the term master, as a legitimate and continuous title; without one word of emancipation he directly enjoins upon them the mild exercise of that authority, "forbearing threatening."

2. He exhibits the difference between slaveholding in the hands of a Christian master and a tyrannical and heathen master. While the former might exercise the proper duties of the station, the latter would no doubt be guilty of all the cruelties and abominations of which Greek and Roman slavery was preeminently full. Yet the enormity of its abuses did not, in his opinion, require the immediate abolition of the relation itself.

3. The New Testament, here and elsewhere, enjoins obedience upon the slave as an obligation *due* to a present *rightful* authority. They are to be "obedient," not deceitfully, but with "singleness of heart," and "to please them in all things, not answering again, not purloining, but showing all good fidelity." Titus ii, 9. It is perfectly ludicrous to pretend that this injunction is parallel with the command to be passive under inflictions for righteousness' sake. It is perfectly irrelevant for our brethren to "challenge any man in the world to show" how, by our rules of interpretation, the command to pray for persecutors does not justify persecution. To say nothing of the fact that we find no persecutors holding an acknowl-

\*Dr. Adam Clarke, a favorite authority with immediate abolitionists—with what propriety we shall soon show—thus gives us his view of justice and equity in this case: "As it is bondsmen or slaves of whom the apostle speaks, we may at once see with what propriety this exhortation is given." "Justice and equity required that they should have proper food, proper raiment, due rest, and no more than moderate work." In how many years, with a justice and equity like this, would slavery be annihilated?



edged standing in the primitive Christian Church; that we find no injunction to persecutors to discharge their duties with moderation, "forbearing threatening," that we find no successive addresses to Christians persecuted, and Christian persecutors, mutually to perform toward each other the correlative duties of those respective characters, "we challenge any man in the world to show" if the case of the slave and the persecuted Christian be parallel, how the former is not justified in "gain-saying," in refuting, in "answering again," and in fleeing from one city to another. What command obliged the persecuted Christian "to please his" persecutor "in all things," "with singleness of heart," and "with all good fidelity?" These are exhortations that sound like injunctions to perform duties of at least a present rightful relation. If that relation be invariably sinful, how, indeed, can any slave be justified in perpetuating the oppressive system upon others by submission to it himself? How could the apostle be justified in thus obliging them to aid in that oppression by even forbidding a breach of "fidelity?" and how are abolitionists justified—who repel the charge of preaching, insubordination, or escape—in conniving, by their silence, at the slave's ignorance of his rights, and thus combining with their oppressors in perpetuating the yoke?

"Servants, be subject to your masters with all fear, not only to those that are good and gentle, but also to the froward; for this is thankworthy if a man, for conscience toward God, endure grief, suffering wrongfully. For what glory is it if, when ye be buffeted [κλιζουμεθα, boxed, or cuffed on the ear] for your faults, ye take it patiently?" 1 Peter ii, 18, 19.

Here are some distinctions worth remarking. Some masters were pronounced froward, while others, strange to say, even in a holy apostle's view, were good and gentle masters; to submit to the former was a merit in his estimation, because it was "suffering wrongfully;" but it was no merit to submit in the latter, therefore he did not consider it "suffering wrongfully." Here, again, is a clear discrimination between the rightful existence of the relation in the hands of a Christian master, and its cruelties and iniquities in the hands of the froward. In the opinion of our brethren, slaveholders are "exactly on a level" with man-stealers, kidnappers, and slave-traders; how would sound, from an apostle's lips, the terms "good" man-stealers, and "gentle" slave-traders?

"Let as many servants [slaves] as are under the yoke, count their masters worthy of all honor, that the name of God and his doctrine be not blasphemed. And they that have believing masters, let them not despise them because they are brethren, but rather do them service because they are faithful and beloved, partakers of the benefit. These things exhort and teach. If any man think otherwise . . . he is proud, knowing nothing, etc." 1 Tim. vi, 1, 2, etc.

Here are "slaves"—"under the yoke"—with "believing masters"—who are "faithful and beloved," and "partakers of the benefit!" Now, if the apostle really believed as do our brethren, with regard to their comparative degrees of guilt, must he not have been equally willing to speak of "faithful" slave-traders, "beloved" kidnappers, and "believing" man-stealers? And when Christian and brotherly epithets like these are lavished by any one upon

even "believing masters," would not our brethren launch upon him the title of an "apologist for slaveholders," especially if he were an editor of the Christian Advocate, and not an apostle of the Gentiles?

Again, it is manifest from this passage—and we shall soon support the fact by good authority—that the question of slave emancipation did agitate the primitive Church in the apostle's day. Christianity arose, with the Golden Rule for its motto, and equalizing love for its spirit; and no question could be more natural, than whether it did not break every fetter and equalize the slave to his master. Upon this the apostle pronounces his decisive negative dictum; he superadds the confirmatory injunction upon Timothy, "These things exhort and teach," and completes with drawing a picture of immediate abolitionists, so true to life, that some of that class of the present day—a different stamp, we trust, from our brethren—seem to have sitten as the originals of his prophetic pencil. Yet immense indeed must have been its transforming effects upon the intercourse between master and slave, and upon the relation by which they were bound, when it authoritatively pronounced them "brethren." Yet neither this, nor the decision of the Golden Rule, broke the relations of authority and "obedience;" the slave might not, because their "believing masters" were "brethren," assume to "despise them," while the masters—slaveholders though they must have been, and, in the language of our brethren, supporting "a system unjust in all its parts," and "never truly awakened"—enjoyed the communion of the saints. We do humbly conceive that, if all the rest of the New Testament were blank on this subject, this text would present an impregnable demonstration that slaveholding is not in all cases and invariably sinful; that we may not say that no slaveholder is "truly awakened;" and that it does not, of itself, form ground of exclusion from the Christian Church.

From this view of the Bible doctrine we would draw the following general results:

*First.* Christianity spread in a land where slavery existed as cruel and licentious as ever existed in this country; yet it did not, on account of those heathenish abuses, pronounce the relation itself immutably wrong; "as cruel and unjust in all its parts;" it did not excommunicate the slaveholder as not "truly awakened;" and though he held in subordination men who themselves, or whose ancestry had been stolen, it did not pronounce the holder a man-thief, nor did it imperatively require of him the performance of immediate emancipation.

*Secondly.* Christianity, by proclaiming the immortal existence of every human soul, and pronouncing all equally responsible, and equally valuable in the eye of God, stamps the stigma of *libelous absurdity* upon the principle that man can, in nature, be a mere article of property. Whatever may be the temporary state of subjection which Christianity itself may, in prevention of higher evils, rightfully retain in transient existence, it does, at the same time, attest the innate ascendancy of his nature, by which he must inevitably rise above this fictitious and unnatural position of a mere chattel, into an elevation worthy his true character.

*Thirdly.* The letter of the Golden Rule and the spirit of the Gospel, operate with an irresistible tendency to the amelioration, diminution, and destruction of slavery, as a system; holding

forth its perpetuation as an abomination, and its continuance, by the authors of legislation, beyond the time of its practicable removal, a *sin*. With the qualifications, therefore, which we have above stated, we may affirm the proposition, that the Bible is opposed to slavery. We may perhaps illustrate the case by an analogy.

Absolute despotism is a greater evil and a greater sin than partial slavery, inasmuch as it is a bondage extended over the whole. At the time of the apostle's life, Nero, another name for monster, was swaying his bloody scepter over an imperial plantation of millions of trembling slaves, whose liberties and lives were literally his property. He had obtained this bloody patrimony, through inheritance, from the original man-stealer, who first effected the process of kidnapping this mighty mass of slaves with rivers of bloodshed.\* Yet persecutor, butcher, imperial slaveholder, and, if you please, *constructive man-stealer*, as he was, no man was justified in attempting a revolution, unless he had a decisive moral certainty, that such a revolution would not be less horrible in its effects than the *present* endurance of the despotism. Christianity, therefore, forbade the attempt; she sustained the fabric; and trusted to her gradual influences to produce amelioration and emancipation. Had Nero himself become a Christian, the apostle of the Gentiles would not have enjoined upon the royal conscience to resign his absurdly-inherited patrimony of kidnapped men; nor would he have bid him immediately abdicate his cart-whip scepter, and establish, without regard to consequences, a Roman democracy. Yet is the letter and spirit of the *Gospel opposed to imperial slavery* over a big plantation, as well as to nabob slavery upon a little plantation. True Christianity enjoined upon him, as she does upon every other possessor of power, of whatever kind, whether prince, pope, or planter, to abdicate just so much of its pressure as he could resign, consistently with the general good. In this qualified view of the subject we may affirm, that the Bible is opposed to all slavery and oppression.

If these be the correct views with regard to the principles, it is also historical fact that precisely in accordance was the primitive practical process of emancipation. "Slavery," says Paley, "was a part of the civil constitution of most countries when Christianity appeared." And giving reasons why it was not by Scripture command *immediately abolished*, he continues, "Slaves would have been tempted to embrace a religion which asserted their right to freedom; masters would have hardly been persuaded to consent to claims founded upon such authority; the most calamitous of all contests, a servile war, might probably have ensued, to the *reproach, if not to the extinction of the Christian name*. The truth is, the emancipation of slaves should be *gradual*, and be carried, by provisions of law, under the protection of civil government. Christianity can only operate as an alternative. By the mild diffusion of its light and influence, the minds of men are insensibly prepared to perceive and correct the enormities which folly, or wickedness, or accident, have introduced into their public establishments. In this way the Greek and Roman slavery, and since these, the feudal tyranny, has declined before it. And we trust that, as the knowledge and authority of the same religion advances in the world, they will banish what remains of

this odious institution." It is thus historically evident, that the apostles preached the Gospel to every creature under heaven—in the palace of the master, if accessible—in the hovel of the slave, if permitted; nor did they permit themselves to endanger the lives and safety of society by a reckless carelessness of results, nor, be it especially marked, did they proceed to *preclude the possibility of preaching to the slave by uncompromising injunctions of emancipation upon the master*.

Such, brethren, we believe to have been the apostolic process of procedure, and precisely upon this model has been shaped the course of our brother of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the south. The spirit of our ministering brethren in the south has borne the impress of the primitive type. They, like the early apostles, are a small minority, beneath a government—though nominally Christian—which has slavery constructed into its fabric, and is held by rulers who have the will and the power to pass laws of oppression, which mercy does indeed weep to see inflicted. It is no more necessary to defend that wicked system of legislation, in order to justify the *course of our brethren*, than it is necessary to justify the Roman government in order to vindicate the course adopted by the apostles. Of both it may, perhaps, with equal justice, be said, they have directly *refused to preclude the possibility of preaching to the slave by uncompromising injunctions of emancipation upon the master*. They do not close against themselves all access to the spiritual dungeon of the slave, by forsaking his soul to emancipate his body.\* They do not aggravate the utter desolation of him for whose welfare no man careth; nor, because rulers have abandoned him to temporal misery, do they increase a thousand fold the tyrant's cruelty, by surrendering his soul to eternal death. It is a striking, yet glorious fact in the annals of southern Methodism, that, while other denominations have comparatively forgotten the colored man, she has remembered him; the graves of her Cox and her Wright are lasting mementoes of the purity of her interest in his behalf; and while others have, as if by common consent, surrendered the southern slave over as the spiritual property of our Church, our brethren have applied themselves to the humble, yet glorious work, with a holy and enthusiastic emulation; they have not, at the distance of some thousand miles, in all

\* That these are the alternatives between which our brethren stand, the laws prohibiting education of slaves are at once a melancholy and gigantic demonstration. The following remarks of an intelligent eye-witness will set the matter in its true, impressive light. "Were I to stop here, I should sin against my brethren who are afflicted with this state of things. They desire to confer the highest good upon the poor negro," etc., "but even this work of faith and love they are obliged to approach with trembling caution. The planter who, in many cases, just consents to admit the missionary upon his plantations, is exceedingly jealous of northern influence; and while no other instructions are given them than are purely religious, our missionaries can have access to them, and thereby greatly elevate the moral and social character; but should they abuse this confidence, this opening door would be forever shut against them, at least for many years. . . . Whatever refers to Africa, especially to Liberia, is utterly and eternally proscribed. . . . Not one word must be said on the subject. . . . So excited is the community, that our brethren feel themselves obliged to observe an almost entire silence upon this subject. . . . They [the planters] are frank to avow it as their opinion, that *colonization is the first sure step toward final emancipation*; and hence the *unyielding* opposition manifested by most of them to that scheme; for it is a fact that most of the planters are utterly hostile to it.—Correspondent of the *Zion's Herald*.

the plenitude of pen and ink benevolence, speculated schemes and hurled injunctions of emancipation; they have not lolled upon palace sofas in all the luxury of clerical popularity and ease; they have stripped themselves to the downright drudgery and dirty work of benevolence with the energy of apostles and the devotion of martyrs, amid the fogs and miasmata of a healthless climate; they have rushed into the hot house and negro hut to secure the soul of the dying; and, though our brethren may deal out sarcasms because they have taught the apostolic precepts of obedience, we will remember, that by bestowing that Gospel without which no legislation can elevate the man to real freedom, the Methodist missionary is the true, practical, heroic emancipator; and though it subject us to the epithet of apologist for slavery, we shall feel honored to place ourselves defensively beside those devoted men, whom the inveterate slaveholder, and the immediatist, in chorus, despise and denounce, but whom the God of love has richly honored with overflowing blessings and success in the bestowment of many an immortal soul—many a star in the crown of their rejoicing.

## II. DEFENSE OF THE GENERAL CONFERENCE AND DISCIPLINE.

We next come to the imputation which our brethren have, with no small degree of freedom and special pleading, endeavored to fix upon our GENERAL CONFERENCE AND DISCIPLINE. We are obliged to state, then, briefly, but we hope explicitly and fairly, as we see nothing which is not, when correctly understood, perfectly defensible. They are as follows: We have in our book of Discipline a set of GENERAL RULES, expressed in Mr. Wesley's own words, which our General conference has no constitutional power to alter. One of these unalterable General Rules forbids "the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them;" and it is added, that "all these rules, we know his Spirit writes on all truly-awakened hearts." Now, our brethren show that there are in this same book of Discipline certain *special rules*, passed by the General conference, by which *slaveholders are permitted a place in our Church*. On these facts our brethren ground the charges of "inconsistency" in the Discipline, and an unconstitutional "change" of the General Rule by the General conference. We, on the other hand, think there is neither inconsistency nor unconstitutionality.

1. What does the General Rule forbid; and what does the Special Rule permit? The General Rule forbids *trading "with an intention to enslave;"* or, in other words, simply, *the slave-trade;* the Special Rule permits *slaveholding;* which is clearly neither "inconsistency" nor *alteration*. Hence the whole charge falls at once to the ground.

2. In strictness of language, the General Rule would not apply to every case, even of *internal slave-trade*. It forbids trading with an intention to *enslave*. Now, up to this time, we had supposed that to *enslave*, meant, as Mr. Webster defines it, "to reduce to slavery; to deprive of liberty and subject to the will of a master." We had also supposed, that the term "enslaver" meant, as Mr. Webster defines it, "he who reduces another to slavery." Now, when one purchases a man who is already a slave, there is no *reduction* in the case; he was *reduced* to slavery—*enslaved*—years, perhaps, before, by some professed en-

*slaver*. Now, although our brethren, who are nearly as unkind upon the English dictionary as they are upon the Methodist Discipline, used the terms *slaveholder* and *enslaver* as synonymous; the latter term happens to be truly applicable to the African trader, and other similar cases, who buys kidnapped or captured persons, with an intention to consign them to the horrible *slave-ship* and the resulting miseries of this *reducing* to slavery or enslavement.

3. Even granting—that is not true—that the General Rule, unlike the apostolic rule in the primitive Church, forbade the existence, in our Church, of slavery in every form, and the Special Rule permitted it, it would still be false to assert that our General conference are guilty of an unconstitutional alteration; for that alteration, if there be any, was made by a General conference, who did possess full power to make any alteration they pleased in the General Rules.

The following history of the real circumstances will prove this assertion. The Methodist Church was organized in 1784, with a provisional General conference, consisting, not like our present General conference, of delegates from the different annual conferences, but of all the ministers in the Church. This General conference had power to alter, or abolish, any, or all of our General Rules; and *by them* it was that the Special Rule was passed, which recognized the broad principle of the primitive Church, that "believing masters" should be permitted a place in the Christian Church. Years after this was established, in 1812, the first delegated General conference met under this provision: "The General conference shall not revoke or change the General Rules of the united societies;" a rule which could not operate to destroy any past alterations, introduced by a General conference who had full power to make any alteration. Hence no unconstitutional "change" has been made.

4. Even granting that a man of Mr. Wesley's known simplicity and directness should use terms so circumlocutory and inapposite to forbid all slaveholding, still it would not follow that there had been any unconstitutional alteration by the General conference. The General Rules, to which every Methodist gives his assent, were, with many other regulations, really new, established and enjoined upon them by the American General conference; and as they, and not Mr. Wesley, are the legislators in this case, their construction must be the authoritative construction, according to which the members of our Church are to be regulated. Now, it is clear, that the American General conference did *not* construe it to forbid cases of slaveholding; for the passing of the special rule, by which slaveholding was permitted, is a legislative commentary passed by the authority that established the law itself. Hence, even if Mr. Wesley meant, what his language does not mean, to prohibit all slaveholding, such is not the authoritative construction under which the members of our Church hold their standing.

We have thus, we think, proved, 1. That the General Rule does not forbid slaveholding. 2. That, in propriety of language, it does not forbid even all cases of internal slave-trade. 3. That were there any alteration of the General Rule, it was introduced by a General conference constitutionally competent to alter; and, 4. That there is conclusive proof that the authority which created this rule in the American Church, never meant by it to forbid slaveholding. Either of these

four propositions would demolish the charge of inconsistency and alteration.

The main charge thus effectively annihilated, a few words will dispose of some minor points. We are obliged to condense them into more concise language than our brethren use. They are as follows:

1. The General conference declare slavery a "great evil," and yet permit some of its members to hold slaves. But may not slavery as a civil institution, as a legislative system, be "a great evil" without making it, in all cases, sinful to hold slaves? Monarchy, the absence of republican liberty, is a great evil; yet is every support of monarchy sinful? Slavery in the Roman world was truly "a great evil;" but was the apostle guilty of wickedness in permitting "believing masters," or "enslavers," as our brethren, with great love of solecism, please to denominate them, in the Christian Church?

2. The General conference have a standing affirmation that they are "*convinced as much as ever*" of the great evil of slavery, and yet remove several regulations in opposition to it. Is not this inconsistent? Certainly not. Convinced as much as ever that the whole fabric of slavery was an evil, they were called upon to decide whether they would modify their disciplinary regulations on the subject, or give up entirely their own higher, more ministerial and appropriate work of saving the souls of the oppressed. In accordance with the apostolic example, they preferred the former, and however men may despise and denounce their work, God hath gloriously owned and prospered its performance.

3. The General conference prescribed emancipation in certain cases, with this proviso, that the rule should not be obligatory in those states where emancipation was forbidden by law. This, it is said, is supposing that state lines and geographical limits can change sin, and make it no sin. But be it remembered, that in the states which forbid emancipation, an emancipated slave is immediately taken up and sold to the highest bidder. Would it be humane or justifiable, then, in those states, by emancipating the slave, to hand him over to the hammer of the auctioneer? Hence the same act of emancipation, which might be a kindness in some states, would be an act of cruelty in others; and it is not conference who change their natures.

Thus, we think we may in full confidence say, does the integrity of the guardians and Discipline of our Church stand triumphantly vindicated. From sarcastic "reviewers," whose purpose is to find all, or make all wrong; from radical "reformers," whose motto is "divide and rule;" from antislavery lecturers, whose avowed object is to "split the great Methodist prop," these charges will, no doubt, be still reiterated and reechoed; but from our own membership, who rejoice in the great work which God hath wrought in our progress, from our own familiar friends with whom we took counsel, from our authorized ministry, empowered to prevent inveighing against our doctrines and Discipline, we would hope that we have heard the last of the charges of inhumanity, inconsistency, and unconstitutionality.

With regard to the train of strictures and epithets which our brethren have been pleased to bestow upon the editorial sentiments and course of the Christian Advocate, "cruel and unjust in all its parts and principles" as it is, we deem it perfectly superfluous for us—beyond the support

which our argument offers to these sentiments—to volunteer any defense; to the easy handling and ample refuting of the perfectly-competent pen of the author, we cheerfully and confidently assign them. That pen has been triumphantly wielded in defense of our Church and Discipline against more powerful attacks, when most of his present assailants were, perhaps, scarce competent to understand what Methodism was; and he might now justly address them, in the dignified rebuke, which the veteran Roman—Cicero—pronounced upon a youthful assailant of himself and the republic he had saved—*Contempsisti Catilinam gladios, non pertimescam tuos.*

Some glimpse of our brethren do afford us of a plan of emancipation, which we may very briefly notice, in order to show how quickly they refute in practice what they assert in abstract theory. They say, "We do not mean, by this, that all the slaves should be thrust out *loose* upon the nation like a *herd of cattle*, nor that they should be IMMEDIATELY invested with all political privileges and rights, nor yet that they should be banished from the land of their nativity to a distant clime. But we mean that the slaves should immediately be brought under the protection of suitable laws, by placing them under such a supervision as might be adapted to their condition," etc.

Our brethren here specify three essential parts of slavery to be retained: 1. The slaves are not to be "loose" "like a herd of cattle," that is, as it would seem, they are to be locally confined. 2. They are not to have all their political rights; and, 3. They are to be under the supervision of special laws.

How our brethren can assert, that "the system is cruel and unjust in all its parts," and yet that these "essential parts" are right; that "no Christian can lend his influence one moment to its support," yet coolly advise that these unjust parts should be supported; that the entire system should "be abandoned now and forever," and yet be retained indefinitely for years, is to us a "harmony not understood."

Again, does any believing master hold his slaves in a worse bondage than is here proposed and justified? And should the master, who brings his slaves as near to this point of happiness as the laws will allow, be excommunicated from the Christian Church as not "truly awakened?" Again, with what propriety can it be said that the General conference are inconsistent in saying that slavery is "a great evil," and yet may be endured in the Church? The "great evil," on their own plan, mitigated, but not abolished, may be endured in Church and state for years.

And, lastly, how can our brethren defend themselves against their own severe charge of apologizing for slavery? They lay this imputation upon the editor of the Advocate for using the following words: "COMPULSORY LABOR, stripped of its abuses, and under the direction of benevolence and superior intelligence, is not an evil in itself; it may be made the source of great and invaluable blessings and advantages." Upon this passage our brethren remark: "The Advocate proclaims '*compulsory labor*,' that is, SLAVERY, is not a great evil; nay, it is no evil at all;" and, for this language, they repeatedly style the editors of the Advocate apologists for slavery. But in what manner could they maintain their own proposed code of "*compulsory*" confinement, supervision, and withheld rights, if the slave could sit down in idleness, perfectly free from "*compulsory labor*, that is, SLAVERY?" And

what could justify our brethren in maintaining this "compulsory labor, that is, slavery," but because "it is no evil at all" "in itself considered," or, if they please, "in the abstract?" And what then are our brethren, by their own showing, but "apologists for slavery?"

Thus it usually seems to be the case, that the supporters of these views have a double set of opinions and maxims. At one moment dealing in pure abstractions, they appear to theorize us to the ultra length of immediate emancipation; but, the next moment, when they give us their detailed plan, they suddenly relapse into the most temporizing gradualism; the former seem well fitted for declamation and denunciation, but the moment their authors bring them to a practical bearing they refute their own notions, and instantly incur the anathemas themselves had fabricated.

### III. EXAMINATION OF THE AUTHORITIES QUOTED.

With regard to the AUTHORITIES *which our brethren have quoted*, in order to settle whether they side with themselves or with us, it is necessary first to settle which of the above two sets of opinions they are quoted to confirm. If they are quoted in defense of ultra-immediatism, they are very unfortunate citations indeed; if in support of gradualism, they make as much, at least, for us as for our brethren.

Not without some degree of sarcasm, as well as exultation, the truly eminent Dr. Adam Clarke has been quoted by abolition oracles as an "unbounded authority with every Methodist." From this "unbounded authority" our brethren quote two passages, one condemning the professors, etc., of that species of piracy called the slave-trade, and the other manifestly condemning, not the individual who may be possessed of slaves, but the *legislation* which sustains the system. That such is the fact, and that Dr. Clarke would have little fellowship with the ultraism of the day, let these passages show.

"It is very likely that some of the slaves at Corinth, who had been converted to Christianity, had been led to think that their Christian privileges absolved them from the necessity of continuing slaves, or, at least, brought them on a level with their CHRISTIAN MASTERS. A spirit of this kind might have soon led to confusion and insubordination, and brought SCANDALS into the CHURCH; it was, therefore, a very proper subject for the apostle to interfere in, and to his authority the persons concerned would, doubtless, respectfully bow." Comment on 1 Corinthians vii, 24. The same spirit and principle may produce like distraction in Churches at the present day. Happy, indeed, would it be could an apostle now interfere. Upon the passage 1 Timothy vi, 3, where the apostle prescribes obedience to "believing masters," Dr. Clarke thus comments: "It appears that there were teachers of a different kind in the Church, a sort of *religious levelers*, who preached that the converted *servant had as much right to the master's service* as the master had to his. *Teachers of this kind have been in vogue, long since the days of Paul and Timothy.*"

The resolutions passed by the British conference, and quoted by our brethren, is a document worthy our high regard, both from its intrinsic character and the respected source from which it came. We know that, on this subject, our brethren of England would not presume to dictate to us with regard to this

question, any more than we would dictate to them with regard to their own support of the National Church establishment; for we are aware that both questions present themselves in very different circumstances on different sides of the ocean. The question of abolitionism in England is no more the same question with abolitionism in America, than it is identical with abolitionism in Russia.

But, in fact, these resolutions support our own views of *gradual emancipation*. Their avowed purpose is, "to invite a general application to Parliament by petition"—not that slavery may be immediately abolished—but "that such *measures* may, in its wisdom, be adopted as shall *speedily lead* to the universal termination" of slavery. Parliament commenced a course of gradual abolition—which has been condemned by immediatists in this country—and the conferences say to their people, "We congratulate you on this happy accomplishment of your desires."

The name, brethren, of our venerable Wesley has suddenly become wonderfully popular with many abolition despisers of Methodism, and denouncers of our Church and Discipline. As if, however, even to gain their own purposes, they could not, for the moment, conceal their own antipathies, they have, scornfully enough, styled him what the Bible only is, "*the Oracle of Methodism*," "whom they *boast* as their head and founder;" and "they *profess to bow down* to John Wesley as their *earthly Oracle*." Repelling these imputations of idolatrous submissions to any human authority, and perfectly understanding their object, we affirm that we coincide with Mr. Wesley only as he coincided with the oracles of God. Adopting, like him, the great doctrines of evangelical Arminianism, we do not necessarily "bow down to John Wesley as our earthly oracle," either in natural, political, or moral philosophy. Yet, as it happens, on this subject it would be very difficult for the sudden devotees of Mr. Wesley's authority to show very tangible *opposition in principle* between Mr. Wesley and ourselves. Mr. Wesley commences by *defining* a slavery, such as no one can, for a moment, support, from the Bible, and *describes* such a slavery as we have repeatedly affirmed no Christian can perpetrate; and he concludes with exhortations to emancipation, without prescribing the mode or measures; but we may infer, from his approving letter to Mr. Wilberforce, that, like Mr. Wilberforce, as well as the Methodist conferences, Mr. Wesley was a gradualist.

Yet it does not follow that, because the blood-rousing style of Mr. Wesley was admirably adapted to the circumstances of England, that it is the style to do good with here, or that Mr. Wesley himself would have considered it as likely to forward the cause of southern emancipation. Let us view the contrariety of the cases, and then calmly judge. His circumstances were these:

The chains which bound the slaves in the West Indies were held by the hands of the English Parliament, assembled in London, and elected by the people of Britain. The path to emancipation, then, was plain and direct. Rouse, with thrilling peals, the public effervescence; rear a "system of agitation" through the land; swell up the surging tide of popular commotion, and Parliament must soon yield. This was perfectly *safe*; for those islands were

too minute to revolt and separate. It was perfectly *sure*; for every syllable that touched the national nerve sent its electric thrill into the soul of the Parliament. It was perfectly *right*; for with Britain, people and Parliament, was the power of liberation, and, therefore, the responsibility of the oppression. *In all these three respects we are precisely and diametrically the REVERSE.* With us it could not be *safe*; for the southern states, near half the nation in firm phalanx, would be perfectly able and ready to form themselves into an independent, perpetual slave empire; it could not be *sure*, for every impulse we could give could only reanimate the spirit and nerve the arm of that cruel legislation which now oppresses them;\* it would not be *right*, for we could not be morally justifiable in adopting measures rationally certain of resulting in increased cruelty, disunion, and confirmed slavery.

#### IV. OUR VIEWS OF PRESENT MEASURES.

In a tone of feeling, so forgetful of its own purposes, in the excitement of the moment; so self-defeating in its train of measures as those pursued, Mr. Wesley would have been, we hazard little in saying, the last man to participate. The discrepancy between those measures, and the end at which they aim, presents a contrast nearly ludicrous. Why, let us ask, is the whole rain of explosive epithets marshaled out in thundering array? Why are the powers of exaggeration exhausted to render the very name of a southerner execrable? Why is a relentless, unchristianizing, and unchurching sweep of anathema passed upon whole sections of our land, with a supplementary fulmination upon those who are styled their "apologists?" Why? To be sure, it is to infuse into "enslavers," a spirit of love, meekness, and benevolence; it is the *antislavery recipe* for transforming a monster to a lamb! We would anathematize him into Christian temper, and brand him into a spirit of humanity! We do most seriously submit whether, thus acting, the true perpetrator of slavery is not the immediatist himself? Proofs, "strong as Holy Writ," force themselves upon us, that many a keen-eyed slaveholder, upon principle, is secretly pleased with that overdoing violence, which disgusts and assails the friends of practicable emancipation at the south; which affords a pretext for stronger laws and tight fetters; which cools the hopes and silences the voice of the friends of liberty around him. They know that the only protection from the steady progress of free principles, is the vaulting violence of its fanatic advocates. What but the fiendish licentiousness of fraternizing ultraists has retarded, perhaps for ages, the rising hopes of universal liberty in other lands? The despot and the jacobin, though theoretic opposites, are virtual allies—just as are the immediatists and the slaver. In reverse ways, they are producing an identical end—the fastening the iron clasp and perpetuating the tyrannic power.

To another consideration we would invite your most solemn and prayerful attention. Unequivocal symptoms, language, and actions

portend that this question is to become a text of political candidacy; party proscriptions and nominations are already selecting their objects; party lines may, not far hence, be drawn, and the matter seized by demagogues and factions, and, involved in their caucusing and cabaling, will be lost in the vortex of intrigue and violence so essential to every political ferment.

Methodism has, hitherto, been evangelically powerful, because she has been politically neutral. Let her become proud of her influence, and impregnated with the spirit of politics, and her beams are shorn, her strength departed, and her ruin is nigh. Are we prepared, then, to pour through our conferences and Churches the flood-tide of party strife? Who does not remember how the timely wisdom, by the watchmen on her towers, saved our Zion from the breach of political antimasonry? Many a Church was swept by its tornado, piety was checked, and God departed. Are we thus prepared to cast away that calm self-possession with which we then protected our borders, and surrendered ourselves to the invasion of this excitement? Mark our words: the moment that the demon of "political action" is permitted to stalk lord of the ascendant into our sanctuary, he will be most emphatically and fearfully "the abomination of desolation, standing in the holy place."

Did we see prospective emancipation in such a path, we would bid the process of agitation God-speed. We do, indeed, believe that too quickly the course of oppressive legislation can not be changed; too soon the safe and happy liberation of the oppressed descendants of Africa in this land, can not take place; too rapid can not be the wing of that angel that bears freedom to the fettered hope of the despairing, and life to the dying. In every feasible effort of philanthropy—in every rational effort to spread just information—to create a healthful tone of public feeling, and to render the free air of our country unrespirable to a spirit of oppression, we rejoice to bear our part. Particularly would we commend to earnest attention a charity, in which our assailed brethren of the south have, in their permitted measure and sphere, far outdone us; the bestowing of the blessings of education, religion, and privileges of citizenship upon the hapless colored man of the north. It is not truth that we uphold any scheme for banishing him from his native land. Here, upon the soil of his nativity and ours, we firmly maintain his equal claim of voluntary permanence, and hold no fellowship with the crushing prejudice by which his rights are outraged, his heart made sad, and his home desolate.

We have not—we know not that in the nature of things we can have—demonstration that our brethren of the south have never, while laboring for the salvation of the slaves, omitted any opportunity of effecting their emancipation. Of this, from their own more intricate knowledge, they are best able to decide; and we have confidence in their piety that they will make, upon a subject so momentous, a conscientious decision. Yet to our brethren of the south, if our feeble voice may not be wholly unheard by them, in language which we are sure they will recognize as the general tone of Christian brotherly kindness, we would address our most intense entreaty, that, unless it be at the expense of higher and immortal interests, they would now, in this day of light, of peace, and of moral power, em

\* "Within the last two years the Legislatures of Maryland, Virginia, South Carolina, Louisiana, Alabama, and Tennessee, have passed laws respecting the free colored and slave population of these states, which are, in the highest degree, atrocious." (Annual Report of the New England Antislavery Society.) Those two years were a period of antislavery activity and operation.

ulate the memorable stand of our brethren of England, and, with the name of Wesley upon their banners, and his spirit in their hearts, would seize the timely honor of *leading* out the foremost van of the great Christian movements, which, in some of our states, are directing their onward march toward the ultimate achievement of universal emancipation.

But while we thus move them, Christian brethren of the north, if we have any the least hope of efficiency in such an appeal, it is because they know our friendly voice—*We stand apart from the system of agitation*. If, then, you would not paralyze your own influence—if you would not render your exertions ineffective for every thing but frenzy, disunion, and disorganization to every member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we would address the respectful, yet earnest warning, keep your hands from the machinery of excitement; stand aloof from the organized fraternities whose very anti-appellation carries assault in its meaning; frown upon the man who counsels "to split" our Church as a "prop" of slavery; and assist not in breaking the golden chain of Christian connection, which is the truest conductor from one extreme of our land to the other, of holy sympathies and philanthropic influences.

Cheerfully admitting that the movers of this excitement do forcibly propound many noble sentiments and striking truths, we can not but the more deeply regret that the better influence of those truths are counteracted and transformed by the spirit and measures in which they are enveloped. Against the fierce and scorching spirit of cart-whip itinerants; the publication of grouped and colored "tales of horror" and slave butchery, that make the very image of every southerner stand out to the fancy a fiend incarnate; the high-colored pictures, caricaturing and blackening the whole south into one bottomless abyss of debauchery and murder; the multiplication and transformation of periodicals into special engines for whirling up the fury of excitement; the importation of transatlantic lecturers, whose foreign patriotism has little interest in the preservation of our Union, to inflict a "system of agitation;" the formation of affiliated associations with a belligerent title, amply verified by a martial tone of spirit and language; the bold proclamation of a reckless disregard of consequences in driving on their impetuous measures; the daring avowal which has been made of a determination to split our Churches into northern and southern fragments, and the consequent introduction of a spirit of division into our ecclesiastical bodies; the unqualified denunciation of our national Constitution, its supporters and illustrious founders, and the pealing of the tocsin and rallying under the banner of political action, to carry out their fearful plans and principles—against these and all these we do most solemnly record our protest, as measures utterly ruinous to the cause they profess to sustain, and most sure to protract the bitter period of slavery and oppression.

Thus earnestly, but we trust not unkindly toward our brethren, would we express our views and feelings upon this momentous question. And while we would realize that it belongs to ourselves to act with the conciliatory and calm exercise of those faculties which he hath bestowed upon us, we would implore the God of wisdom, of peace, and of justice, to shed light upon our minds and counsels, to diffuse harmony and prosperity over our land, and to break every

yoke, and vindicate the righteous cause of the oppressed throughout the suffering earth.

W. FISK,  
JOHN LINDSEY,  
BARTHOLOMEW OTHEMAN,  
HEZEKIAH S. RAMSDELL,  
EDWARD T. TAYLOR,  
ABEL STEVENS,  
JACOB SANBORN,  
H. H. WHITE.

March 27, 1835.

I have read the above "counter appeal," and, in general, I believe the arguments and statements are correct; particularly those which refer to the acts of the General conference. I have seen, with much regret, that several of our brethren in this country, who write against slavery, do not understand its condition in the south, and that, therefore, they undesignedly misrepresent it. And I do most affectionately and earnestly entreat them to desist from the present course, being fully persuaded that such publications can afford no benefit to the slaves.

E. HEDDING.\*

#### DOCUMENT 18.

*Address of Bishops Hedding and Emory to the Ministers and Preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the New England and New Hampshire Annual Conferences, September 10, 1835.*

*Lansburg, N. Y., September 10, 1835.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—Grace to you, and peace from God, our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.

We have marked with deep solicitude the painful excitement which, in some parts of your section of our charge, has been producing disturbance on the subject of the immediate abolition of slavery in the slaveholding states. We are happy, at the same time, to be able to say that having now, between us, attended the northern and eastern conferences as far as the Troy, inclusive, we have found no such excitement, of any moment, within any of them except yours; and even within yours we know that a large and highly-respectable portion of yourselves, with, we are inclined to think, a majority of our members and friends, greatly disapprove and deplore the existing agitations on this question. That a large majority of our preachers and people within those of the non-slaveholding states generally, to which our recent visitations have extended, are decidedly opposed to the modern measures of immediate abolitionists, we are well assured; and believing, as we do, that these measures have already been productive of pernicious results, and tend to the production of others yet more disastrous, both in the Church and in the social and political relations of the country, we deem it our duty to address to you a pastoral letter on the subject.

Enjoying as we do, in common with all our fellow-citizens, the protection of the Constitution of the United States, and the inestimable blessings resulting from the general union of the states under its happy auspices, are we not bound, in conscience and honor, while we accept the benefit on one hand, to maintain on the other, in good faith, that fundamental principle of the original compact of union by which each

\* From Zion's Herald, Extra, April 8, 1835.

state reserves to itself, and has guaranteed to it by all the rest, the exclusive control of its internal and domestic affairs; and for which, consequently, the citizens of other states are no more responsible than for the domestic regulations under any foreign government? Can we, indeed, taking human nature and the established laws of intercourse between states and nations as they are, reasonably suppose that the peace of the country, or even of the world, can be preserved on any other principle?

That a deep political game is involved in the present agitation of this question, there are evidences too strong to be resisted. Will you take it amiss, then, if we warn you against being drawn into that vortex, or suffering yourselves to be made the instruments of drawing others in?

The question of slavery, itself, it is not our purpose here to discuss; nor is there any occasion for it. The sentiment of our Church on this subject is well known. Our object is rather to confine ourselves to the practical considerations which press upon us in the present crisis; and which, we presume, can not fail to arrest the attention of the humane, the pious, and the reflecting of all parties.

"Speak not evil one of another, brethren," is a sacred precept as binding on us, surely, as any other. Now, are the strong denunciations which we have reason to fear are indulged in even by some ministers against portions of their brethren who reside where the laws do not admit of emancipation without removal, compatible either with this precept, or with that common Discipline by which we are united and bound as one body, and to which we have solemnly pledged ourselves to conform? Can we be ignorant, either, that such a course must inevitably tend greatly to grieve and embarrass those of our brethren whose providential lot is within those states, if not materially to loosen and alienate their affections? Are those who so vehemently insist on universal, unconditional, and immediate abolition as an imperative and indispensable moral duty, regardless of all consequences, willing to change places with their southern brethren, and to preach and carry out in the south the principles which they maintain in the north? If not, what is it but the apprehension of *consequences* that deters them, and qualifies their convictions of duty? What brotherly kindness, then, nay, what justice, what consistency even, is there in urging upon others, painfully and involuntarily situated as our southern brethren are, the performance of that which we shrink from ourselves? It does not appear to us that this was the apostolical spirit, the apostolical principle, or the apostolical course of action; and we entreat that it may not be persisted in.

There is one other important practical bearing of the question which greatly affects us, and on which humanity itself demands of you the most serious reflection. We allude to the interests of the colored population themselves, both bond and free. That many well-meaning persons are totally misled on this point, we are entirely confident. One of us has traveled through every slaveholding state in the Union, except one; and the other through nearly all. We have conversed freely and extensively with intelligent men of all parties; and have narrowly observed the progress and bearings of the modern agitations on this subject; and on a review of the whole, we are compelled to express our deliberate conviction that nothing has ever occurred so seriously tending to obstruct and retard, if

not absolutely to defeat the cause of emancipation itself; to bring upon the slaves increased rigor of treatment and privation of privileges; to overwhelm the multitudes of free colored people in the slaveholding states with persecution and banishment; to involve the friends of gradual emancipation within those states in injurious and dangerous suspicious; and, above all, to embarrass all our efforts, as well as by the regular ministry as by missionary means, to gain access to and to promote the salvation of both the slaveholders and their slaves.

We know that the example of Great Britain, in regard to the slaves of the West Indies, is often referred to. But, conceding to that great nation all the credit it deserves, are you not aware that the circumstances of the two countries in relation to this question, are greatly, if not wholly dissimilar? There, the movement originated and was consummated among those who had constitutional jurisdiction in the matter, and who knew that the liberated population would be separated from them by a wide ocean. The claim of property, too, on the part of the masters, was respected, and liberally compensated—the British nation being one consolidated empire, whose resources were employed both in purchasing the slaves, in effect, and in compelling the mass of them still to submit to a state of political degradation; as is indeed the case with a large portion of its subjects, of all colors, throughout the globe. Whether all this be right or wrong, best or not best, as Great Britain is situated, it is not our object here to inquire. What we mean to say is simply that the circumstances of this country, and the measures urged by the immediate abolitionists here, are not analogous to those there; and, therefore, to guard you against erroneous deductions from inadequate or inapplicable premises. Were Congress even disposed forthwith and totally to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia, or the slaveholding states within themselves, yet the immediate abolitionists here insist, as we understand, that no compensation, in whole or in part, ought to be allowed; although it is well known that a large amount of the present property and productive capital of northern states, has grown from the proceeds of slaves formerly sold by northern citizens to the south. In view of which, if universal, immediate liberation be urged as a moral duty, on one part, can we be surprised if a question should be made whether there is no correlative duty of restitution on the other? In other words—if all the present progeny of the slaves thus sold in former years ought to be immediately discharged by those into whose hands they have come, by whatever means—whether it is perfectly clear that there can be no corresponding obligation in equity, for the restitution of the entire purchase money, with all its increase to the present day, into whatever hands it may have come, and through whatever channels? Without expressing any opinion on this question, it may not be amiss at least to consider the wide difference respecting it between the views of those who oppose the idea of any such conciliatory measure in this country as strenuously as they urge abolition itself, and those of British statesmen and moralists.

That the New Testament Scriptures, or the preaching or practice of our Lord or his apostles, were ever intended to justify the condition of slavery, we do not believe. Yet are we as well satisfied that the present course of immediate abolitionists is equally foreign from the practical



examples furnished us by those high and sacred authorities, and in circumstances less difficult than ours. For while within the Roman empire slaves were both more numerous, and their legalized condition worse than the legalized condition of the same class in any portion of our own country, there existed, at the same time, no such barrier, in case of liberation, to their enjoyment of the entire rights of citizenship, or even to amalgamation, as, in our circumstances, is utterly insuperable. The difficulty among us is increased, too, by the fact that the colonization, even with their own consent, of such as may be emancipated in this country, is equally opposed by immediate abolitionists. It is in such a state of things, in relation to this most perplexing of all our political or moral questions, that we have devolved upon us the embarrassing duty of administering a Discipline intended to be conformed to the principles of the Gospel, as illustrated by the practical course of our Lord, and the apostolical administration of the primitive Church. And as, on one hand, we are not disposed to relax its provisions, or to permit them to be trampled on, in administration, so neither, on the other, while it remains as it is, can we silently witness the arbitrary denunciations of one part of our charge by brethren of another part, who, except when assembled in General conference and in that collective capacity, have no jurisdiction over them.

We entreat, therefore, that none of you will take part in such measures, or in any others calculated to inflame the public mind with angry passions, and to stir up civil or ecclesiastical strife and disunion, in violation of our solemn vows. And if any will persist in so doing, whether from the pulpit or otherwise, we earnestly recommend to our members and friends every-where, by all lawful and Christian means, to discountenance them in such a course. The presiding elders, especially, we earnestly exhort to discountenance such practices, both by their counsel and example. And if any, of whatever class, go beyond their own bounds, or leave their proper appointments, whether under the pretext of agencies or otherwise, to agitate other societies or communities on this subject, we advise the preachers, the trustees, and the official and other members to manifest their disapprobation, and to refuse the use of their pulpits and houses for such purposes. Let us leave off contention before it be meddled with, and maintain and set forward, as much as lieth in us, quietness, peace, and love, among all Christian people, and especially among those committed to our charge.

Nothing herein said is intended, in the slightest manner, to abridge or impair any acknowledged right of any individual. The principles of positive compact under which we are associated, whether in civil or religious communities, are those which we now specially press on your attention. And so far as we are in any manner entitled to ask you to listen to our voice, or to be guided by our counsels or admonitions, in matters most deeply affecting the peace of the Church and the country, we do it solemnly by this communication, which we beg you to be assured proceeds from no other than the best feelings toward you, individually and collectively, in common with all other portions of our wide and weighty charge, and such as we trust may fitly actuate our hearts as your affectionate and faithful pastors.

In conclusion, permit us, beloved brethren, to cherish a confidence in the Lord touching you,

that ye both do and will do the things which we entreat you.

May we be mutually guided by that wisdom that cometh down from above: and the Lord direct our hearts into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ!

ELIJAH HEDDING,  
J. EMORY.\*

#### DOCUMENT 19.

*Address to the Public, issued by the Executive Committee of the American Antislavery Society, September 3, 1835.*

*New York, September 3, 1835.*

IN behalf of the American Antislavery Society, we solicit the candid attention of the public to the following declaration of our principles and objects. Were the charges which are brought against us made only by individuals who are interested in the continuance of slavery, and by such as are influenced solely by unworthy motives, this address would be unnecessary; but there are those who merit and possess our esteem, who would not voluntarily do us injustice, and who have been led by gross misrepresentations to believe that we are pursuing measures at variance not only with the constitutional rights of the south, but with the precepts of humanity and religion. To such we offer the following explanations and assurances:

1. We hold that Congress has no more right to abolish slavery in the southern states than in the French West India Islands. Of course we desire no national legislation on the subject.

2. We hold that slavery can only be lawfully abolished by the legislatures of the several states in which it prevails, and that the exercise of any other than moral influence, to induce such abolition, is unconstitutional.

3. We believe that Congress has the same right to abolish slavery in the District of Columbia that the state governments have within their respective jurisdictions, and that it is their duty to efface so foul a blot from the national escutcheon.

4. We believe that American citizens have the right to express and publish their opinions of the constitutions, laws, and institutions of any and every state and nation under heaven; and we mean never to surrender the liberty of speech, of the press, or of conscience—blessings we have inherited from our fathers, and which we intend, as far as we are able, to transmit unimpaired to our children.

5. We have uniformly deprecated all forcible attempts on the part of the slaves to recover their liberty. And were it in our power to address them, we would exhort them to observe a quiet and peaceful demeanor, and would assure them that no insurrectionary movement on their part would receive from us the slightest aid or countenance.

6. We would deplore any servile insurrection, both on account of the calamities which would attend it, and on account of the occasion which it might furnish of increased severity and oppression.

7. We are charged with sending incendiary publications to the south. If by the term *incendiary* is meant publications containing arguments and facts to prove slavery to be a moral and political evil, and that duty and policy

require its immediate abolition, the charge is true. But if this term is used to imply publications encouraging insurrection, and designed to excite the slaves to break their fetters, the charge is utterly and unequivocally false. We beg our fellow-citizens to notice that this charge is made without proof, and by many who confess that they have never read our publications, and that those who make it, offer to the public no evidence from our writings in support of it.

8. We are accused of sending our publications to the slaves, and it is asserted that their tendency is to excite insurrections. Both the charges are false. These publications are not intended for the slaves; and were they able to read them, they would find in them no encouragement to insurrection.

9. We are accused of employing agents in the slave states, to distribute our publications. We have never had one such agent. We have sent no packages of our papers to any person in those states for distribution, except to five respectable resident citizens, at their own request. But we have sent, by mail, single papers addressed to public officers, editors of newspapers, clergymen, and others. If, therefore, our object is to excite the slaves to insurrection, the MASTERS are our agents!

10. We believe slavery to be sinful, injurious to this, and to every other country in which it prevails; we believe immediate emancipation to be the duty of every slaveholder, and that the immediate abolition of slavery, by those who have the right to abolish it, would be safe and wise. These opinions we have freely expressed, and we certainly have no intention to refrain from expressing them in future, and urging them upon the consciences and hearts of our fellow-citizens who hold slaves or apologize for slavery.

11. We believe that the education of the poor is required by duty, and by a regard for the permanency of our republican institutions. There are thousands and tens of thousands of our fellow-citizens, even in the free states, sunk in abject poverty, and who, on account of their complexion, are virtually kept in ignorance, and whose instruction in certain cases is actually prohibited by law! We are anxious to protect the rights, and to promote the virtue and happiness of the colored portion of our population, and on this account we have been charged with a design to encourage intermarriages between the whites and blacks. This charge has been repeatedly, and is now again, denied; while we repeat that the tendency of our sentiments is to put an end to the criminal amalgamation that prevails wherever slavery exists.

12. We are accused of acts that tend to a dissolution of the Union, and even of wishing to dissolve it. We have never "calculated the value of the Union," because we believed it to be inestimable; and that the abolition of slavery will remove the chief danger of its dissolution; and one of the many reasons why we cherish, and will endeavor to preserve the Constitution, is, that it restrains Congress from making any law "abridging the freedom of speech or of the press."

Such, fellow-citizens, are our principles. Are they unworthy of republicans and of Christians? Or are they in truth so atrocious that, in order to prevent their diffusion, you are yourselves willing to surrender, at the dictation of others, the invaluable privilege of free discussion, the very birthright of Americans? Will you, in order that the abominations of slavery may be con-

cealed from public view, and that the capital of your republic may continue to be, as it now is, under the sanction of Congress, the great slave-mart of the American continent, consent that the General Government, in acknowledged defiance of the Constitution and laws, shall appoint, throughout the length and breadth of your land, ten thousand censors of the press, each of whom shall have the right to inspect every document you may commit to the post-office, and to suppress every pamphlet and newspaper, whether religious or political, which in his sovereign pleasure he may adjudge to contain an incendiary article? Surely we need not remind you that, if you submit to such an encroachment on your liberties, the days of our republic are numbered, and that although abolitionists may be the first, they will not be the last victims offered at the shrine of arbitrary power.

ARTHUR TAPPAN, *President.*

JOHN RANKIN, *Treasurer.*

WILLIAM JAY, *Sec'y of For. Cor.*

ELIZUR WRIGHT, JR., *Sec'y of Dom. Cor.*

ABRAHAM L. COX, M. D., *Rec. Sec'y.*

LEWIS TAPPAN,

JOSHUA LEAVITT,

SAMUEL E. CORNISH,

SIMEON S. JOCELYN,

THEODORE S. WRIGHT,

} *Members  
of the  
Executive Com.\**

#### DOCUMENT 20

*Report of the Committee on Abolition and Colonization, adopted by the Ohio Conference, August 25, 1835.*

THE Committee to whom the subjects of abolition and colonization were referred, beg leave to report, that they have taken the same under consideration, and are fully satisfied they are of sufficient importance to require, under the present state of things, an expression of the opinion of this conference. It is true, the abstract question of slavery needs no particular attention from us; on it the opinion of this conference is well known. As citizens of Ohio, and ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we are all opposed to the principle, and in favor of gradual, peaceable, constitutional emancipation. Whoever joins the Methodist Episcopal Church, virtually subscribes to this doctrine, for it is fully set forth in her Discipline. And your Committee are of opinion that neither our civil relations, as citizens of a free state, nor our duties as Christian ministers, require us to interfere with the political and domestic regulations of other states, in order to hasten, prematurely, what requires much time and sober wisdom to accomplish; that is, the abolition of slavery. Nor does the example of Christ and his apostles, in reference to such matters, authorize us to aid in getting up any political excitement on the subject of slavery, to loosen the bands of civil and domestic government; but it does authorize and require us to do what we can for the religious instruction and salvation of all servants; and this we understand to be the doctrine of our Church. Our Discipline, section 10, answer 3d, reads thus: "All our preachers shall prudently enforce upon our members the necessity of teaching their slaves to read the word of God, and to allow them time to attend

upon the public worship of God on our regular days of divine service."

But what we are *now* concerned about is, the *means* proposed for the removal or mitigation of the evil of slavery. These are chiefly two: One is a peaceable and constitutional remedy, called gradual emancipation, aided by education, religious instruction, and colonization; the other is immediate abolition; either of which a man may oppose on the ground of expediency, without advocating the evil itself. To argue that we can not oppose immediate abolition without advocating slavery, is to confound the disease with the remedy, and deceive the simple. We might, with the same propriety, argue that abolitionists are in favor of slavery, because they oppose colonization. Other considerations aside, and not to wander from the subjects referred to us, we have just to say the American Colonization Society is viewed by your Committee as a noble, benevolent institution, calculated to suppress the slave-trade, and afford facilities for introducing and extending civilization and Christianity in Africa; also to elevate the colored population of this country, by waking up attention to the subject, securing, indirectly, their religious instruction, and laying the ground-work of final emancipation, on principles safe and honorable, such as those on which slavery has been abolished in Pennsylvania, New York, and several of the New England states; that it has done much toward mitigating the rigors of slavery, and a little toward removing its evils, without, in any wise, disturbing the peace and harmony of society, which is more than can be truly said of some who oppose it, and contend for immediate abolition. Moreover, the American Colonization Society has been favorably recognized by the General conference, not only so far as to express an opinion favorable to its principles and objects, but also to recommend it to the patronage of our people, and even to authorize traveling preachers to take agencies therein, with the consent of their respective annual conferences. The same doctrine has been carried out by resolutions in most of the yearly, and many of the quarterly conferences; so that on this branch of the subject we need say no more at present.

As it regards abolition, in the present popular sense of the term, it is of later date; and, unless understood among our people, and that they may be better prepared to judge how far it is a suitable remedy for the evil complained of, your Committee think it would be proper to make some statements respecting the nature and effects of it, and the means by which it is disseminated. It proposes the immediate, indiscriminate, and unconditional manumission of all slaves, to remain among, and commingle with, the white population—for abolitionists are as much opposed to the colored people being removed from our country, even with their own consent, as they are to having them remain in bondage. This doctrine of amalgamation, inseparable from the scheme of abolition, is not only unacceptable, but also highly offensive to most of the American family. Wherever it has appeared, it has met the frowns of the sober-minded and discreet of both sexes; and where efforts have been made publicly to teach and enforce it on the people, they have been outraged in their feelings; and frequently in the east, west, north, and south, have resorted to irregular, illegal, and violent means to arrest

its progress. Abolition of this sort, and mobocracy, are so congenial in the spirit which dictates and nourishes them, that they have usually gone together, spreading moral desolation wherever they have appeared. The late efforts in favor of immediate abolition have generated principles of insubordination, affecting different classes and interests in society. They have embarrassed literary institutions, and procured the dismissal of large numbers of students in more instances than one; they have paralyzed the arm of our criminal courts, and substituted lawless mobs, alarming in numbers and in force; individuals have suffered personal abuse without redress; houses have been demolished, and lives destroyed. These facts are viewed by your Committee as fearful signs in a Christian republic. If encouraged, they may set in motion the elements of civil war and revolution, alike fatal to our civil and religious privileges; to prevent which patriots should rally to the Constitution, and Christians to the cross of Christ, and stay the march of desolation.

The means by which the doctrine of immediate abolition has been disseminated in our country are principally the following: Abolition and antislavery societies have been gotten up, mostly in the free states, whose plan appears to be, so to operate on the public mind, by traveling agents, through the press, and otherwise, as to produce a general excitement preparatory to the main object of a sudden universal emancipation of more than two million of slaves, to be turned loose in community, reckless of all consequences. The views and measures of these societies are seconded in the north by foreign agents, sent out from Europe, professing to be ecclesiastics, but whose movements are of political tendency, and calculated to exert a disorganizing influence on our civil institutions, as well as to sever the bands of ecclesiastical union which bind brethren of the north and south together. As the agents of these societies deem it prudent to confine their labors mostly to the free states, they have to rely, for the dissemination of their doctrine in the slave states, on the press, through which they are flooding the nation, at their own expense, with tracts, pamphlets, and newspapers of an offensive, inflammatory character. With these abolition documents, the United States southern mail has recently been burdened for gratuitous distribution. These movements, whether designed for good or evil, are to be regretted. Their appeal is not to the judgments, sympathies, or benevolent feelings of the south, but to their jealousies, fears, and most violent passions. They destroy confidence, engender strife, and cause the reins of domestic government, in slave districts, to be drawn with more severity, to keep the slaves in subjection under circumstances so alarming. The influence of these measures is unfavorable to friendly intercourse between the north and south, and calculated to produce bickerings in the councils of the nation, faction in states, and schism in Churches, which must exert a very unhappy influence on the whole community. Another serious objection we have to the proceedings of these societies is, they are calculated to throw difficulties in the way of our missionaries among the slaves of the rice, cotton, and sugar farms in the south, who, in our opinion, are doing a glorious work. While the fanatics in the north are denouncing them as

hypocritical tyrants, and oppressors of the colored man, and speaking great swelling words respecting his temporal bondage, our brethren in the south are nobly engaged, on their circuits and missions, in bringing the sons of Africa into the glorious liberty of the Gospel. Not less than eighty thousand are already recognized as members of our Church, and blessed with the stated means of grace. When abolitionists shall have proved the goodness of their cause, by producing more than that number of converts to Christ among the colored people, for whom they profess so much sympathy, and their sincerity in advocating it, by undergoing all the drudgery, and performing all the kind offices of faithful missionaries and pastors to those unfortunate people, we shall be prepared to bid them God-speed.

There is one other view of the subject on which we shall barely touch, for the purpose of calling to it the attention of all interested, that they may examine it at their leisure. The twenty-third article of our religion recognizes the constitutions of the United States, and of the several states, as the parent of our civil relations, as the general rules of our civil conduct, and as determining our civil obligations; and in the marginal note appended to the same, it is made our duty, as Christian ministers, to use all laudable means to enjoin obedience to the *powers that be*. To this article all Methodists subscribe by becoming members of the Church. Moreover, the Constitution of the United States, to which it refers, implicitly secures to the southern states the peaceable possession, and right of control over, their slaves, with which we of the free states have no right to interfere; therefore, in our opinion, those high-handed measures of the abolitionists, which produce such excitement and alarm in the south, and that officious meddling of strangers with their domestic relations, which gives so much offense, are at war with the principles of the Constitution, and, consequently, no Methodist can consistently advocate or approve their course.

To sum up the whole briefly, and call the attention of the conference to a few points more definitely, your Committee beg leave to submit the following resolutions for adoption, namely:

*Resolved*, That, as the friends of peaceable, gradual emancipation, we have no cause to regret the course which has been pursued by the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery, as set forth in the Discipline, but retain undiminished confidence in the same.

*Resolved*, That we continue to appreciate highly the principles and objects of the American Colonization Society, believing that it has exerted, and continues to exert a salutary influence in favor of the colored race, both in this country and in their native land.

*Resolved*, That we highly appreciate, and sincerely rejoice in the successful efforts of our brethren in the south, to instruct the slaves in the great truths of religion, and bring them to the saving knowledge of Christ, thereby preparing them for moral elevation in this life, and everlasting felicity in that which is to come.

*Resolved*, That we deeply regret the proceedings of the abolitionists and antislavery societies in the free states, and the consequent excitement thereby produced in the slave states; that we, as a conference, disclaim all connec-

tion and cooperation with, or belief in the same, and that we hereby recommend to our junior preachers, local brethren, and private members within our bounds, to abstain from any connection with them, or participation of their acts in the premises whatever.

*Resolved*, That those brethren and citizens in the north, who resist the abolition movements with firmness and moderation, are true friends to the Church, to the slaves of the south, and to the Constitution of our common country; and that to encourage inflammatory lectures by foreign agents, and sanguinary publications in favor of immediate abolition, is injurious to Christian fellowship, dangerous to our civil institutions, unfavorable to the privileges and spiritual interests of the slaves, and unbecoming any Christian, patriot, or philanthropist, and especially any Methodist.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

T. A. MORRIS,  
L. L. HAMLINE, } *Committee.*  
E. W. SEHON,

Although the Ohio conference, at the time when this report was adopted, was as strongly antislavery as any men consistently could be, they could not, in consistence, adopt the sentiments and measures of abolitionists of those times. On the report the editor of the *Western Advocate*, Rev. T. A. Morris, now Bishop Morris, remarks:

"ABOLITION, ETC.—We invite the attention of all readers to the report of the Committee on Abolition and Colonization. Our reason for doing so is, that report expresses the opinion of a large body of ministers on a subject which has produced, and is producing, much excitement, both in Church and state. When the paper was read to the conference, there were about one hundred and thirty preachers present. On putting the question to accept and have it published in the *Western Christian Advocate*, all voted in its favor but four, and they declined, not because they approved the doctrine and proceedings which it opposed, as they afterward explained, but from other considerations. It is believed that the preachers of the Ohio conference are unanimous on the following propositions: 1. Slavery is an evil. 2. It ought to be abolished in a gradual, constitutional manner. 3. The remedy proposed by 'abolitionists' is worse than the evil itself." (W., Vol. II, pp. 77, 78.)

#### DOCUMENT 21.

*Report of the Committee on Abolition and Colonization, adopted unanimously by the Kentucky Conference, September 13, 1835.*

THE committee to whom was referred the relative claims, respectively, of immediate and unconditional abolition on the one hand, and gradual emancipation and African colonization, as it regards the slaves of the United States, on the other, beg leave to report that they have addressed themselves to the task assigned them, fully sensible that the subject, in whatever aspect it may be presented, involves important interests, and calls for the most careful and thorough examination, not only by your committee, but by all concerned. Your committee would not gratuitously interfere with the rights of any; nor should they in this, nor in any other form, obtrude their opinions upon the notice of this

body, or the public, were it not that they had been gravely called upon to do so, not merely, as they conceive, by a resolution of the conference, but by the common interests of the American people throughout the entire confederacy of states and territories. Your committee can not disguise it from themselves, that late developments and movements, numerous and startling, connected with this subject, indicate but too clearly that the institutions and welfare, not less than the peace and stability of our whole country, are fearfully endangered by the indiscreet and ill-judged agitation of this, as we think, inopportune and unfortunate controversy. Although citizens of Kentucky, we are not the advocates of slavery. We believe it to be morally wrong, and relatively mischievous in all its tendencies. We consider it an evil, even in its most tolerable aspects. We deeply regret and anxiously deplore its existence in this or any other country; and in relation to our own particularly, we pledge our exertions and influence, in an appeal to all just and lawful means and methods for its removal, wherever such exertions and influence can be brought to bear without infringing the rights of others, constitutionally secured in the construction of the federal government. But while we avow these sentiments, and act upon the avowal, publicly and privately, we are compelled to believe and assume, that the rectitude, as well as the policy of action, will, in the existing state of things, in almost every instance, depend materially upon the means selected, and the manner of their application, to accomplish the object proposed. It must occur to the well-informed and discerning, in every division of our country, that the abolition of slavery in the United States is a question involving a great variety of rights and interests; a complication of relations and claims, the nature and bearing of which demand the most serious attention; and must be expected, and not without reason, to influence and modify the conduct and action, whether general or special, of the well-disposed and sober-minded, in all attempts to correct or exterminate the evil under notice. To attempt the correction of evils in a government or community, by means calculated to secure a larger amount of mischief than that complained of, is not only impolitic and unwise, resulting as it does in an aggravation of injury to the sufferers, but is, at the same time, a trespass upon well-known rules of moral action, which must always render such attempt criminal, as well as ill-advised; and unless we are greatly mistaken, such is the error of the present abolitionists of the United States. The elements of society and government, "both being necessarily imperfect in organization," are always numerous, and often of necessity more or less adverse and counteractive; in order, therefore, to the good of the one, and stability of the other, where evil does not manifestly preponderate, these elements and principles must be allowed, in action, to give color and modification one to the other; and all efforts in remedy of mischiefs of this kind, in contravention of such a result, must tend to the dissolution and overthrow of the body or polity, whether such tendency be evinced in the gradual progress of decay, or the more fearful explosions of violence. The application of these general views to the question in hand, must be obvious to every one acquainted with the subject; and your committee can not resist the conviction that the principles avowed and the course pursued by those styling themselves abolition-

ists, as distinguished from the friends and supporters of African colonization in the United States, are, in nature and aim, at war with the peace and quiet of the whole country; and, at the same time, constructively, if not to the letter, an invasion of the constitutional rights of the citizens of at least ten states, existing as parties to the federal compact. And whatever our views or feelings may be on the abstract question of slavery, in many of the southern and western states, as the rights of these states in this respect were defined and conceded in the federal constitution, in the case of some, before they would consent to confederate, and the rest were admitted into the Union, subsequently, upon the same terms and principles, specifically, any attempt now by the non-slaveholding states, to coerce their associates into measures, or compel them to a course of action against which they deemed themselves secure, by the foregoing stipulation, is, in the deliberate judgment of your committee, a flagrant violation of the federal compact, and calls for the prompt and indignant rebuke of all who value the constitution and general welfare of our common country. Slavery, originally entailed upon the nation against the will of the sufferers, has become a chronic disease in the body-politic; and in view of the only facilities offered for its removal, the remedy must be gradual. This necessity is found in the nature of things, and in its present application is inseparable from the character and condition of slaves, and the peculiar organization of society in the country. The view of the subject just taken, is also verified by the known inaptitude of large masses of population, to adjust themselves suddenly, in any hopeful way, to new scenes of trial and action, without proper preparatory discipline and training. The same result, moreover, may be found connecting itself with the laws of custom, and the force of habit, which with an ignorant and depraved population, must always operate as the strongest safeguard of virtue and order. The effect of letting loose nearly *three millions* of negro population, to blend as they may with the people of the several states and territories, may be judged of by the condition of the free people of color in those states where slavery is not tolerated, and where, under the fostering care of abolitionists themselves, they share all the blessings their benefactors of this description propose. Few facts are better established than that the free people of color, viewed as a *caste*, for they are not yet amalgamated with the mass, are in a more degraded and less eligible condition than even the slaves of the south and west. There is among them less virtue, less industry, and less love of character, while the ordinary details of vice and villainy are found in a much more fearful ratio. It is true they are not, like slaves, subjected to the capricious discipline of the whip and lash, and, it may be, the cruelty of unprincipled masters; and by how much these are worse than the deprivation of the rights of citizenship, amid the shouts and taunts of freedom, liability to banishment, the visitation of mobs, and the demolition and destruction of houses and property, by so far, they have the advantage of their brethren in slavery, and, so far as your committee can see, in nothing else. The nominal freedom they enjoy is the merest mockery, as it secures to them no essential good whatever, and almost invariably renders the condition of the emancipated slave less tolerable than a state of servitude; and as abolition, in the sense in which the term is now used in this country, contem-

plates only the state of things just noticed, as it regards the yet enslaved population of the United States, without providing in any way for the quiet and safety of the country, or the improvement and elevation of the colored race, we are obliged to look upon the entire project of the abolitionists as altogether premature, irrational, and dangerous, and as such, we oppose to it the resistance of whatever weight or consideration our opinion in the case may be entitled to. It is no part of our business to impugn motive; but of associations, measures, and policy, we are at liberty, as American citizens, to speak without disguise or restraint. We are opposed to abolition, not because we approve slavery, or desire its perpetuation among us—"no such motive applies to us;" but for the general reason already assigned—the means by which abolition seeks to accomplish its ends, are ill-selected, unjust, and directly calculated to endanger the public tranquillity. The attention of your committee has long been turned with jealous scrutiny and anxious solicitude to the character and operations of the American Colonization Society; and while they have seen some things they could not approve, "few, however, and unimportant," they have met with much to admire; and a trial of more than *eighteen* years, under the most adverse and discouraging circumstances, has commended this truly-national enterprise to their decided and cordial approval; and they are persuaded that the society is destined, in the purposes of Heaven, in relation to our beloved country and the African race, to accomplish much good, both immediate and final. The success of the enterprise may fluctuate—may appear uncertain, and in its actual results may vary with the temper and policy of the times; but still the society has, in the judgment of your committee, suggested the only available remedy. The abolition of slavery must be gradual, and should not greatly exceed the disposition and consequent ability of the country, to place the unfortunate children of slavery where they may share a perfect parity of rights and privileges with the rest of mankind; and preparatory to such a result, the American Colonization Society has achieved no little already. The plan has been fully discussed and finally matured. The great outlines of the enterprise have been adjusted and settled. The hopes of the nation have been turned to its pioneer operations. Emancipation has commenced upon the basis of its policy in the United States, and its beneficiaries are already reaping the fruits of freedom and independence upon the shores of Africa. It seems to present the only door of hope, especially to the slaveholding states, more immediately interested than the other members of the national confederacy. And what good reason, we ask—what indemnity against the alarm and mischief they are producing, can be urged by abolitionists for disturbing the reasonable hopes and anticipations, based upon the agency and means we are now considering? Is it a disposition to intimidate and alarm? Would they annoy and disquiet the slaveholding states, merely because they have it in their power to magnify themselves as disturbers of the public peace? We are unwilling to believe even the evidence of facts in the case. But the question recurs, why all these untiring efforts? Is it the love of humanity in the shape of degraded Africans? If so, why are so many thousands of this unfortunate class allowed, in the very bosom, and under the eye of these noisy philanthropists, to vegetate and perish, in a state

of utter destitution! Destitute alike, in the larger proportion of instances, of knowledge and virtue, the sympathies of neighborhood and social protection, the means of subsistence, or the facilities of bettering their condition. We submit these views and facts as sufficiently distinctive of the two opposing systems, whose claims we are called upon to examine, and respectfully leave all concerned to decide for themselves. Your committee are of opinion that the relative claims of abolition and colonization, as now technically used, are too well understood by all interested, to require any extended examination of the subject in this report. It has been their object merely to present a general view of the subject, that the opinions and feelings of the Kentucky annual conference, with regard to this very delicate, yet momentous question of social justice and moral right, may be known to those who might reasonably expect from us an expression of the opinions we entertain in relation to the subject-matter of this report.

In conclusion, your committee have performed the duty assigned them, with whatever ability they could, under the circumstances, anxious to direct attention at the present crisis, to truth and fact, without any unnecessary reference to men or parties; and would submit the whole by recommending to the conference the adoption of the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved, by the Kentucky annual conference,* That we strictly adhere to the principles of our Church on the subject of slavery, and that it is our purpose to persevere in the course hitherto pursued, without any alliance whatever, with men or measures, whose object may be an interference with the question of slavery, uncalled for by the common good, and productive of mischievous rather than beneficial results.

2. *Resolved,* That in the judgment of this conference, the interference of abolitionists and anti-slavery associations in the north, and elsewhere, by which the peace and quiet of a large portion of the nation are disturbed, and their common interests, laws, and safety placed in jeopardy, should be looked upon as an unwarrantable assumption of claim, and an abuse of the rights of citizenship.

3. *Resolved,* That in the opinion of this conference, whenever such interference with the rights of American citizens is attempted by *foreign emissaries*, whether as lecturers, ecclesiastics, or otherwise, all lawful means should be promptly resorted to, to arrest at once the mischievous tendency of their seditious intermeddling, and officious insolence.

4. *Resolved,* That without presuming to decide, we would respectfully suggest, that it is a dangerous maxim to be adopted by American citizens, in the present crisis, that we may appreciate as pure and correct, the motives of men whose measures and movements tend directly to subvert the Constitution and dissolve the government.

5. *Resolved,* That it is not considered by this body allowable for any minister or member of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the limits of this conference, or as we conceive elsewhere, to resort to any extrajudicial means whatever, for the purpose of interfering with the question of slavery.

6. *Resolved, finally,* That we continue to repose entire confidence in the rectitude, policy, and operations of the American Colonization Society, and that we commend it to all who are likely to regard our opinions, as

every way worthy their approval and patronage.

H. B. BASCOM, J. STAMPER, J. LITTLEJOHN, J. S. TOMLINSON, H. H. KAVANAUGH, R. CORWINE, J. TEVIS, J. BEATTIE,	}	Committee.
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*Shelbyville, Ky., September 23, 1835.*

The report and resolutions above, are forwarded for publication, by order of the conference, in the precise form in which they were adopted by that body *unanimously*.

H. B. BASCOM.\*

## DOCUMENT 22.

*Report of the Judiciary Committee, adopted by the General Conference of 1836, May 20th, on Petitions from Westmoreland and Lancaster Circuits.*

THE Judiciary Committee, to whom was referred the petition of the official members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on Lancaster circuit, Baltimore conference, report,

That the petition referred to is an able document, drawn up in the most respectful language, and signed by twenty individuals, who claim to be official members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on Lancaster circuit.

The petitioners first invite the attention of the General conference to the section of Discipline which states that "no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom," etc. They then produced an extract from the laws of the commonwealth of Virginia, showing their extreme rigor in this matter, "that any emancipated slave—with exceptions too rare to be looked for in one case out of many—remaining in the commonwealth more than twelve months after his or her right to freedom shall have arrived, contrary to the provisions of this act, shall be sold by the overseers of the poor, in any county in which he or she may be found, for the benefit of the literary fund." In view of this "act" they claim that they, as official members, are protected by the Discipline of the Church, as they deem it to be precisely one of the exceptions to the General Rule provided for in the Discipline; and especially as under the existing laws of the commonwealth to emancipate their slaves would in many cases be an act of cruelty to the slaves themselves.

The matter of complaint by the petitioners is, that the construction put upon this Rule by the Baltimore annual conference, in certain acts, respecting individuals connected with this section of the work, is subversive of their rights and oppressive in its bearings—that they require the same submission to the Rule, of persons in that state, as of those in sections where the legal disability to comply with it does not exist, regardless of the exceptions. And they respectfully solicit the interference of the General conference, either to revise the Rule, or give it such

construction as to afford them relief in the premises, or finally, if neither be done, to cause them to be set off to the Virginia conference.

It is due to the Baltimore conference to say, that the cases referred to as evidence of their improper application of this Rule are stated in terms too vague and indefinite to authorize the inference drawn by the petitioners. It is represented that a young man applying to be received into the itinerancy, is prevented by an application of this Rule—that it is in vain for him to urge upon a majority of the conference the impracticability of his complying with the Rule in consequence of the laws under which he lives, or any other consideration in favor of his being received; because he will not comply with the Rule he must be rejected. The same, it is assumed by the petitioners, is done with respect to those who apply for ordination. And it is inferred by them, that if the conference act consistently, stewards and leaders may be expected soon to be called upon to comply with the Rule, or forfeit their official standing in the Church.

Your committee view this subject in a very different light. In admitting a preacher to travel, or electing one to orders, a conference must have the right to act freely; and in cases which are not successful, it is wholly an assumption on the part of the applicants or their friends, to say what particular considerations dictated the vote, unless such considerations be distinctly avowed by a majority of the conference. And it is known to all conversant with the transactions of an annual conference, that no person applying to be received or ordained, ever enters as a party before the conference, pleading his own cause, and hearing and answering the objections which may be urged against his application. Any act of a conference, then, in these cases, can not be justly urged as evidence that the conference denies the party concerned the benefit of the special provision in the Rule. A conference, as other deliberative bodies, possesses, and in the nature of the case must possess the right to determine its own course, and vote freely in all such individual cases. Your committee, therefore, can not see that the privileges claimed by the petitioners have been contravened by any act of the Baltimore conference.

Having said this much respecting the alleged grounds of grievance, your committee agree in the opinion, that the exceptions to the General Rule in the Discipline, referred to by the petitioners, clearly apply to official members of the Church in Virginia, according to the laws of the commonwealth, and do therefore protect them against a forfeiture of their official standing on account of said Rule.

In addition to the petition of the official members of Lancaster circuit, a resolution of a quarterly conference of Westmoreland circuit has been referred to your committee, by which it appears that the members of said conference concurred in said petition.

Should the General conference agree in the opinions stated by the committee in this report, it is respectfully recommended, that after adopting it, they cause a copy of it to be forwarded to the official members in each of the above-named circuits.

All which is respectfully submitted.

DAVID YOUNG, *Chairman.\**

## DOCUMENT 23.

*Extract from the Pastoral Address of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1836, to the members and friends of the Methodist Episcopal Church, relating to Slavery and Abolition, dated May 26, 1836.*

WE now approach a subject of no little delicacy and difficulty, and which we can not but think has contributed its full proportion to that religious declension over which we mourn. It is not unknown to you, dear brethren and friends, that, in common with other denominations in our land, as well as our citizens generally, we have been much agitated in some portions of our work, with the very excitable subject of what is called abolitionism. This subject has been brought before us at our present session—fully, and we humbly trust, impartially discussed, and by almost a unanimous vote highly disapproved of; and while we would tenderly sympathize with those of our brethren who have, as we believe, been led astray by this agitating topic, we feel it our imperative duty to express our decided disapprobation of the *measures* they have pursued to accomplish their object. It can not be unknown to you, that the question of slavery in these United States, by the constitutional compact which binds us together as a nation, is left to be regulated by the several state legislatures themselves; and thereby is put beyond the control of the General Government, as well as that of all ecclesiastical bodies; it being manifest that in the slaveholding states themselves, the entire responsibility of its existence or non-existence rests with those state legislatures.

And such is the aspect of affairs in reference to this question, that whatever else might tend to meliorate the condition of the slave, it is evident to us, from what we have witnessed of abolition movements, that these are the least likely to do him good. On the contrary, we have it in evidence before us, that the inflammatory speeches, and writings, and movements, have tended, in many instances, injuriously to affect his temporal and spiritual condition, by hedging up the way of the missionary who is sent to preach to him Jesus and the resurrection, and by making a more rigid supervision necessary on the part of his overseer, thereby abridging his civil and religious privileges.

These facts, which are only mentioned here as a reason for the friendly admonition which we wish to give you, constrain us as your pastors, who are called to watch over your souls as they who must give an account, to exhort you to abstain from all abolition movements and associations, and to refrain from patronizing any of their publications; and especially from those of that inflammatory character which denounce in unmeasured terms those of their brethren who take the liberty to dissent from them. Those of you who may have honest scruples as to the lawfulness of slavery, considered as an abstract principle of moral right and wrong, if you must speak your sentiments, would do much better to express yourselves in those terms of respect and affection, which evince a sincere sympathy for those of your brethren who are necessarily, and, in some instances, reluctantly associated with slavery in the states where it exists, than to indulge in harsh censures and denunciations, and in those fruitless efforts which, instead of lightening the burden of the slave, only tend to make his condition the more irksome and distressing.

From every view of the subject which we have been able to take, and from the most calm and dispassionate survey of the whole ground, we have come to the solemn conviction, that the only safe, Scriptural, and prudent way for us, both as ministers and people, to take, is wholly to refrain from this agitating subject, which is now convulsing the country, and consequently the Church, from end to end, by calling forth inflammatory speeches, papers, and pamphlets. While we cheerfully accord to such, all the sincerity they ask for their belief and motives, we can not but disapprove of their measures, as alike destructive to the peace of the Church, and to the happiness of the slave himself. But while we thus express our disapprobation of these measures, we would, with equally strong and decided language, record our abhorrence of all unlawful and unscriptural means to check and to counteract them. All mobs, and violent movements of self-created tribunals, to inflict summary punishment upon those who may differ from them in opinion, are condemned alike by the laws of our land, and by every principle of Christianity. We should therefore be extremely pained and mortified, to learn that any of you should have lent your influence to foment a spirit of insurrection, in any manner, or to have given sanction to such violent movements as have, in some instances and places, disturbed the peace of society, and forestalled the operation of the established tribunals of justice to protect the innocent and punish the guilty. To be subject to the powers that be, is a duty enjoined no less by Christianity, than it is a dictate of common prudence, necessary to be observed for the preservation of good order and the support and perpetuation of those civil and religious institutions, which we so highly and justly value as freemen, as Christians, and as Methodists. The exercise of mutual forbearance in matters of opinion, is essential in a community where freedom of speech is guaranteed to the citizens by the Constitution which binds them together, and which defines and secures the rights and liberties of all. (W., Vol. III, p. 23.)

## DOCUMENT 24.

*Answer of the Wesleyan Conference of July, 1836, to the Address of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in May, 1836, from the British Minutes of 1836.*

WE regret that the allusion, in our epistle of last year, to the subject of slavery, should have occasioned you either pain or embarrassment. We claimed no right to suggest any thing to you on this confessedly-difficult question, beyond what our fraternal relationship would warrant; a privilege of friendship which we should as freely concede to you as exercise ourselves; and we utterly disclaim all responsibility for any other kind of foreign interference with your views and feelings, which may have been excited from any other quarter. We were aware, dear brethren, of the peculiar trials to which the evils of slavery have subjected you; and our sympathy with you was most sincere. But being called upon to address you, at a time when the blessings of emancipation had been secured to our own slave population, and when the question, as we knew, occupied much public attention in America, especially among re-



ligious men, we considered our duty to give our moral weight in support of those views which were held by our great founder, which have repeatedly been professed by the British conference, and which, indeed, have been for many years avowed in your own book of Discipline, and other public documents, and are, we believe, in strict accordance with our merciful and righteous Christianity. Into the details of any measures of emancipation we did not enter, but, in conformity with our well-known sentiments, we intended to affirm the principle that slavery is a system of oppressive evil, and is in direct opposition to the spirit of our divine religion, and we hoped that the time had arrived when our beloved sister connection in America would be prepared to act on these sentiments, and receive our suffrages with approving cordiality. Slavery in itself is so obviously opposed to the immutable principles of justice, to the inalienable rights of man, of whatever color or condition, to the social and civil improvement and happiness of the human family, to the principles and precepts of Christianity, and to the full accomplishment of the merciful designs of the Gospel, that we can not but consider it the duty of the Christian Church to bear an unequivocal testimony against a system which involves so much sin against God, and so much oppression and wrong inflicted on an unoffending race of our fellow-men. In common with others, the Wesleyan conference, and generally the people of their charge, took this course during the discussion of the question of emancipation in our own beloved country. The force of Christian principle, peaceably but firmly maintained, and legitimately urged, has overcome every difficulty. The black and colored population of our own colonies have entered into a state of freedom, and the inestimable advantages of religious liberty have been secured on the basis of an equal toleration. The conference has the means of knowing that the blessing of God has been graciously vouchsafed to this act of national justice, in the extension of the Gospel, in the conversion of great numbers of the negroes, and in the improved state of society in the colonies.

As it must always be the duty of Christians, ministers, and Churches, not only to embody the principles of their holy religion in their formalities of doctrine and codes of Discipline, but also to *act upon them*, the Wesleyan conference of this country trust that their American brethren may be enabled, by the constant avowal of the great principle of emancipation, to direct and urge forward their people to unite in the truly Christian enterprise of conferring upon the slave population of the United States the inestimable benefits of civil and religious freedom. In assuming the right of mildly but firmly pressing such sentiments on public attention, the conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America can not, any more than ourselves, be chargeable with an inconsistent zeal. While the Methodist connection in England zealously concurred in adopting measures to secure the emancipation of the slaves in the West Indies, they at the same time supported one of the most extended and expensive missions of modern times, in order to prepare them for the boon. We are aware that our brethren in America have in like manner, by their itinerant and missionary labors, done much in conferring the blessings of religious instruction on the slave population of their

country; and surely the men who have thus laid the foundation for a peaceful state of society, founded on freedom, can not but have the right to recommend and support all proper and lawful measures for the consummation of their own great work. But in addition to these inferior considerations, the conference can not but avow its conviction that in all cases it is most safe, and in the end most advantageous, that Christian Churches should act on the principle of religious obligation and duty. And although it deeply deplores that the Methodists of the United States should be exposed to inconvenience, obloquy, or danger, by the assertion of right sentiments on this subject, yet as the evil of slavery does exist there, as they are brought into immediate contact with it, as they are called in the order of divine Providence to maintain their long-published and Scriptural testimony against it, even in the midst of this state of things, and as the progress of events renders it impossible, even if it were lawful, that they should be neutral, the British conference trusts that it will not be considered in any way exceeding the privileges of the fraternal relation existing between the two parties, when it expresses its anxious and earnest hope that our American brethren will feel it their duty, in union with other Christians, to adopt such measures as may lead to the safe and speedy emancipation of the whole slave population of their great and interesting country. (*Z.*, Vol. VII, p. 205.)

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DOCUMENT 25.

*Professor M. Stuart on Slavery, in reply to Dr. Fisk's Queries.*

DR. FISK states that Professor Stuart did not write with the most distant idea of having his letter published, but afterward consented, at the earnest request of Dr. Fisk. We give it, with the introductory and concluding remarks of Dr. Fisk, in his reply to Mr. Merrit, in *Zion's Herald* of May 31, 1837:

"But that you and the public may see and feel that you have the ablest, and those who are among the honestest men of this age arrayed against you, be pleased to notice the following letter from Professor Stuart. I wrote to him, knowing, as I did, his integrity of purpose, his unflinching regard for truth, as well as his deserved reputation as a scholar and Biblical critic, proposing the following questions:

"1. Does the New Testament directly or indirectly teach that slavery existed in the primitive Church?

"2. In 1 Tim. vi, 2, 'And they that have believing masters,' etc.; what is the relation expressed or implied between *they* (servants) and *believing masters*? And what are your reasons for the construction of the passage?

"3. What was the character of ancient and eastern slavery; especially what (legal) power did this relation give the master over the slave?"

PROFESSOR STUART'S REPLY.

*Andover, April 10, 1837.*

REVEREND AND DEAR SIR,—Yours is before me. A sickness of three months standing—typhus fever—in which I have but just escaped death, and which still confines me to the house, renders it impossible for me to answer your letter at large.

1. The precepts of the New Testament respecting the demeanor of slaves, and of their masters, beyond all question recognize the existence of slavery. The masters are "believing masters," so that a precept to them how they are to behave, as *masters*, recognizes that the relation may still exist, *salva fide et salva ecclesia*—without violating the Christian faith or the Church. Otherwise, Paul had nothing to do but to cut the bond asunder at once. He could not lawfully and properly temporize with a *malum in se*—that is, in itself a sin. If any one doubts, let him take the case of Paul's sending Onesimus back to Philemon, with apology for his running away, and sending him back to be his servant for life. The relation did exist, may exist. The *abuse* of it is the essential, fundamental wrong. Not that the theory of slavery is in itself right; no, "love thy neighbor as thyself, do unto others that which ye would that others should do unto you," decide against this. But the relation once constituted and continued, is not such a *malum in se* as calls for immediate and violent disruption at all hazards. So Paul did not counsel.

2. 1 Tim. vi, 2, expresses the sentiment that slaves who are *Christians*, and have *Christian masters*, are not, on that account, and because as *Christians they are brethren*, to forego the reverence due to them as *masters*. That is, the relation of master and slave is not, as a matter of course, abrogated between all Christians. Nay, servants should in such a case, *a fortiori*, do their duty cheerfully. This sentiment lies on the very face of the verse. What the master's duty in such a case may be in respect to *liberation*, is another question, and one which the apostle does not here treat of.

Every one knows, who is acquainted with Greek and Latin antiquities, that slavery among heathen nations has ever been more unqualified, and at looser ends, than among Christian nations. Slaves are *property* in Greece and Rome. That decides all question about their *relation*. Their treatment depended as it does now on the temper of their masters.

The power of the master over the slave was for a long time that of life and death. Horrible cruelties at length mitigated it. In the apostles' day it was at least as great as among us.

After all the spouting and vehemence on this subject which have been exhibited, the good old book remains the same. Paul's conduct and advice are still safeguards. Paul knew well that Christianity would ultimately destroy slavery, as it certainly will. He knew, too, that it would destroy monarchy and aristocracy from the earth, for it is fundamentally a doctrine of *true liberty* and equality. Paul did not expect slavery or monarchy to be ousted in a day, and gave precepts to Christians respecting their demeanor *ad interim*.

With sincere and fraternal regard, your friend and brother,  
M. STUART.\*

#### DOCUMENT 26.

*Doings of a Meeting of the Abolitionist Members of the New England Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at the meeting of the Conference in Nantucket, June 7, 1837.*

The following resolutions were offered by Mr. Scott, and carried, on the 6th of June, the day previous to the opening of the conference:

"Resolved, That, immediately after the appointment of the regular committees to-morrow morning, we will peaceably, though *firmly*, claim the privilege of presenting our memorials on the subject of slavery, and of referring them to a select committee; and should this reasonable request be denied us, we will unitedly and utterly refuse to do any business till we have these our just rights.

"Resolved, That a committee be appointed to wait on the Bishop, and inform him of our wishes, and, if necessary, of our determinations."

Committee, Joseph A. Merrill, Isaac Bonney, Jotham Horton, S. W. Willson, and A. D. Merrill.

At half past seven on the morning of the morning of the conference, and before it was opened, the committee appointed to confer with Bishop Waugh made a report by their chairman, J. A. Merrill, as follows. We quote from Matlack's History, page 46, the following proceedings, collated from Zion's Herald, Vol. VIII, pp. 102, 103:

"June 6, 1837.

"BISHOP WAUGH.—These brethren and myself have been selected by the antislavery brethren, who are preachers, and most of them members of the New England conference, to inform you that memorials and petitions have been forwarded, from members of our Church, in different parts of the conference, praying the conference to take such action on the subject of slavery as is set forth in the petitions themselves; and the conference, for their brethren and themselves, would request the privilege of introducing them, and having them referred to a select committee, immediately after the appointment of the regular committees to-morrow. They would simply add, that the time for the introduction and reference of these memorials or petitions will probably be very short, as the reading of one will be altogether sufficient, inasmuch as they will all be of a similar description."

"We presented this address to Bishop Waugh, and he stated to us that he wished some time to consult some brethren on the subject, and to consider. He stated that what course he should take if we insisted on immediate action, he could not say; but he feared he should be obliged to act contrary to our wishes. We consented to wait for his answer till the next morning; and the next morning made this statement to him:

"We think we have good reason to believe that, if the privilege of introducing these petitions and memorials of our people is denied, the conference will refuse to act on any subject that shall be introduced.

"J. A. MERRILL, for the Committee."

"It was then voted that a committee of five be appointed to fix on some proper plan of operations, to be adopted by us in the conference, in case the Bishop refuses to grant us our request.

"Brothers L. R. Sunderland, T. Merritt, S. W. Willson, R. Ransom, and E. W. Stickney were appointed on this committee.

"Voted, that we will unitedly sustain any measures the committee shall propose, and this body concur in."

"The last vote was taken by rising, and all in the house, with one or two exceptions, rose in the affirmative, none in the negative.

"MEMORIAL TO THE BISHOP.—At another meeting, in the afternoon of the same day, the following memorial was signed by nearly sev-

\* Z., Vol. VIII, p. 85, col. 3.

enty members of the conference. The next day the number was increased to about ninety.

“*To Bishop Waugh*—Dear Brother,—The undersigned, members of the New England annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, now in session in this place, take this method to inform you that they have in their possession a large number of memorials on the subject of slavery—similar to the one previously shown you by the Rev. J. A. Merrill—which they wish the privilege of presenting to the conference to-morrow morning. We respectfully ask it, as our right as a conference, to appoint a committee to consider and report on the said memorials, as also the right to act, in a conference capacity, on any report from such a committee.

“We ask of you the favor to inform us whether we are to expect any opposition from yourself, as the president of the conference, against any action of the conference in the premises above stated.

“*Nantucket, June 7, 1837.*”

PROPOSED MEASURES.—“The committee to fix on a plan of operation then report as follows:

“The committee to whom was referred the question as to the best measures for the conference to take, in case the Bishop denies us the right of acting in a conference capacity on the memorials to be presented on the subject of slavery to-morrow morning, report,

“That, in their opinion, the best measure in the case above supposed, will be to lay every other question upon the table, till this right is granted us; as this question, under present circumstances, the committee believe to be paramount in its claims to any other which can, at this time, come before the conference; and should this plan fail, we recommend that the conference should adjourn to the commencement of another session, from time to time, till our rights are granted us, and that the interval be spent in solemn prayer; and the committee would also recommend that the accompanying memorial be circulated for signatures, and forthwith presented to the Bishop.

“*LA ROY SUNDERLAND, Chairman.*”

“*Nantucket, June 7, 1837.*”

COMMITTEE FROM THE BISHOP.—“A committee, consisting of brothers A. Kent, D. Kilburn, D. Fillmore, A. U. Swinerton, and H. H. White, announced themselves, by their chairman, brother Kent, as a committee of a council called by the Bishop on the subject of the memorials, and stated that they came under the sanction of the Bishop to see if some arrangement could not be made to avoid a collision between the antislavery brethren and the Bishop; and they requested that a conference might be held with them, either by a committee or otherwise:

“Whereupon the following brethren were appointed a committee to confer with them, namely: Brothers T. Merritt, O. Scott, I. Bonney, and L. R. Sunderland.

“The next meeting of the preachers was held June 8th, at which the brethren appointed to confer with the committee from the Bishop, reported in substance as follows:

“That the objections of the Bishop and the minority against what was asked in the petition to the Bishop were, that there was no need of conference action upon the subject of slavery, as our Church had always been an antislavery society; that the General conference had condemned the subject of abolition; that

any conference action would make the minority responsible for the views set forth; that it was not conference business; that it would unchristianize the south; that there was a real difference between abolition and antislavery; that the bishops had consulted together, and agreed to prevent, as far as possible, all conference action upon the subject; that one bishop had, since the General conference, refused to put a question upon the subject; that the conference was not a legislative body, hence the memorials could not be received; and, finally, that we could do all we wished to do just as well in our individual capacity, etc.

“To these objections it was replied that our Church was no more an antislavery society than it had always been a temperance society; and if it were an antislavery society, there could be no objection against our speaking out as a conference on this subject; that if the General conference had condemned this subject, the minority of that conference were as unjustly involved, and ‘made responsible for the views of the majority,’ as the minority would now be in this conference; that it was conference business, if the conference choose to make it so, as much as the subject of temperance or education; that our views on temperance unchristianized the south as really as our opinions on slavery; the south must take care of their own characters; that the objections to conference action, upon this subject, were new and unheard of before, as the General conference had acted on it, the Ohio, the New York, the Baltimore, Holston, and Maine conferences had also acted upon it, and no objections were raised by the presiding bishops; that the memorials of our people did not ask any legislation on this subject, but they asked the conference to express an opinion simply; and, finally, that we could not act as an antislavery society, merely, on those memorials, because they were not addressed to us as a society, but to the annual conference as such, and that the objection to conference action formed the strongest reason why an opinion should be expressed by that body in its conference capacity.

“The committee from the Bishop wished he might be allowed till Friday morning for consultation and deliberation, when his decision on the document presented to him should be given. At six o’clock this evening the preachers met, and spent about two hours in solemn prayer.

THE BISHOP’S ANSWER.—“At half past four, Friday morning, June 9th, the preachers met to hear the decision of Bishop Waugh, which was presented in writing as follows:

“*Nantucket, June 8, 1837.*”

“*To T. Merritt, I. Bonney, J. A. Merrill, and others*—Dear Brethren,—Last evening I received a communication signed by you, and upward of sixty other members of the New England conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in which you inform me that you have in your possession a large number of memorials on the subject of slavery—similar to the one shown me by the Rev. J. A. Merrill—which you wish the privilege of presenting to the conference. You also proceed to say, “We respectfully ask it, as our right as a conference, to appoint a committee to consider and report on the said memorials, as also the right to act in a conference capacity on any report from such committee;” and you close by asking me to inform you “whether you are to expect any

opposition from me as the president of the conference, against any action of the conference in the premises above stated." In reply to your communication, I respectfully and affectionately say to you, that, as far as may be consistent with my obligations to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, it will afford me pleasure to abstain from any course in which conflict or disagreement would be likely to rise on any subject which may come before the conference. I can not, however, admit the doctrine which you have set up in your communication, when you say that it is your *right* to appoint a committee to report on said memorial, and also to act on *any* report from such committee. I can not admit this unqualified and unlimited doctrine of right, because I know of no instrument, or organization, or established usage, which gives such a right to an annual conference. Annual conferences owe their existence to the General conference, and can not have organization without the action of that body in fixing the boundaries thereof. The General conference determines not only the locations and bounds of an annual conference, but defines the business to which its action extends. It will not be pretended by any one that an annual conference is a legislative body. Its functions are judicial and executive. Whence, then, the right claimed to receive memorials on the subject of slavery, to refer them to a committee, and to act on any report which may be made by such committee? Has any conference, but the General conference, jurisdiction over the subject of slavery? I believe not. It is, indeed, admitted that those conferences within whose bounds slavery exists can, and ought, to take such cognizance of the subject as they are empowered and directed to do by the General conference, and to perform executive acts in fulfillment of the regulations of the General conference; but what executive act can be performed by an annual conference on the subject of slavery, in whose bounds it has no existence? But the doctrine set up can not be admitted because of its destructive tendency. If an annual conference can extend its jurisdiction over questions other than those which are judicial and executive, then it may introduce and prosecute measures which may arraign, censure, or condemn the very body which gives it existence. It may appoint a committee to investigate and report on any of our doctrines, either favorably or unfavorably. It may take under its revision the very Discipline itself, and by report sanction or condemn it. Such a doctrine is too absurd and subversive of order to be admitted. But even if it were true that the right existed, would there be *expediency* in its exercise on the subject of slavery and abolition at the present time? Will you, brethren, hazard the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, destroy and break down her onward march, by agitating those fearfully-exciting topics, and that, too, in opposition to the solemn decision, and deliberate conclusion of the General conference? I can not think that many of you can see your way clear to go so far. Are you willing to contribute to the destruction of our beautiful and excellent form of civil and political government, after it has cost the labor, treasure, and blood of our fathers to establish it?—and who themselves agreed to place it, by compromise, on that very basis which is now sought to be overthrow? Can you indulge

in the zeal which hurries you on to the injury—if not the extermination—of the very race whose enslaved condition has so powerfully excited your sympathies? I beg you, dear brethren, to pause and consider before you proceed. I am not the apologist of slavery; I have, long since, settled my opinions against it. I would that it were obliterated from the earth; but, in view of the terrible consequences which are likely to follow the agitation of those exciting topics at the present, I can not consent to be participant, in any sense or degree, in those measures which are advocated by modern abolitionists. I am, nevertheless, earnestly desirous to avoid any collision with so large and respectable a portion of the New England conference as have signed the communication named in this reply. For all of you, brethren, I cherish the most kind and affectionate regard. Some of you are my intimate friends, in whose society I have spent many pleasant moments. You must know that I can have no motives of personal or selfish nature in the course which I pursue on this unhappy subject. I have deliberated and prayed; I have counseled and advised; and have, tremblingly, yet firmly, arrived at the following conclusions, and I now offer you the alternative. Before, however, I proceed to state them, I beg you to understand the ground on which the first proposition is predicated. It is offered as a conciliatory measure, and is distinctly declared to be without intention or design to have it understood that the New England conference, as such, is committed, by this peace-offering, to the cause of modern abolition. First, I will not oppose the reading of the memorials alluded to in the conference, nor will I object to putting the question to a motion to refer them to a committee to consider and report thereon; provided you will agree to two things, which are so reasonable in themselves, that I flatter myself they will readily meet your concurrence. These are, First, That, in your report, you will confine your action on the question of *slavery* to a respectful petition, or memorial, to the General conference of 1840; and, secondly, That you will agree not to publish your report to either the civil or religious community, so as to increase or keep up an excitement on the subject.

"But if you like not this course, nor agree to it, then I must say that, on a motion to refer the memorial to a committee, I shall deem it my duty, for reasons which I will assign at the time, to refuse to put the motion to the vote, and time and eternity must disclose the true doctrine of responsibility for the consequences resulting.

"Affectionately yours, B. WAUGH."

"After the above letter was read, it was voted that it be referred to the following brethren, as a committee for further conference with the Bishop: T. Merritt, O. Scott, J. Horton, La Roy Sunderland, and James Porter.

SECOND LETTER TO BISHOP WAUGH.—"On Saturday morning, June 10th, brother O. Scott, for the committee of farther conference with the Bishop, reported a letter which had been communicated by the committee to the Bishop, and also his reply to the same; and also that they had had a conversation with Bishop Waugh, in which he stated—in reply to a suggestion that his proposals, made in his first letter, were liable to different constructions—that he did intend, First, That the contemplated report should be simply and only a me-

morial to the General conference; and, secondly. That it should not be published at all in any way.

“ Nantucket, June 9, 1837.

“ To Bishop Waugh—Dear Brother,—The undersigned have been appointed a committee, by the brethren whose names were signed to the document presented you on the 7th instant, to confer with you in relation to your reply. Under the apprehension that you have misapprehended our wishes, as also the views of the memorialists to whom we have before referred, we beg leave to state,

“ 1. That the memorials which we wish to present to the conference do not ask for any legislative, judicial, or executive action of our conference. They simply ask that body to bear its solemn testimony against the great sin of slavery, and also to memorialize the General conference on the subject.’

“ 2. The members of the conference who have addressed you upon this subject, do not claim any right of legislative, judicial, or executive action. We wish simply to know whether you will oppose, as president of the conference, any proposed action of the conference, by which it may express and publish an opinion on the evils of slavery, and the best means for hastening its peaceful termination. The right which we claim to express and publish an opinion upon this subject, we conceive to be *the same as has already been exercised by the Ohio, Holston, Baltimore, New York, and Maine conferences, as well as the General conference*; and as the proposals in your communication of yesterday are, as we think, liable to different constructions, we respectfully request that you will give us in writing, as soon as may be, an answer to the following question:

“ Will you, as president of the New England conference, oppose any proposed action of that body, by which it may express and publish an opinion on the subject of slavery?

“ With due respect and sincere affection,  
 “ T. MERRITT,  
 “ O. SCOTT,  
 “ J. HORTON,  
 “ LA ROY SUNDERLAND,  
 “ JAMES PORTER, } Committee.’

ANSWER TO THE ABOVE.

“ Nantucket, June 9, 1837.

“ To the Rev. T. Merritt, O. Scott, La Roy Sunderland, Jotham Horton, and James Porter—Dear Brethren,—I have this day received your communication of this morning, informing me that you have been appointed a committee, by the brethren whose names were signed to a document presented to me on the 7th instant, to confer with me in relation to my reply, and saying that you were under the apprehension that I have “ misapprehended your wishes, as, also, the views of the memorialists, to whom you have before referred,” and requesting me to give an answer “ in writing as soon as may be.” You also state that the proposals in my communication of yesterday are, as you think, “ liable to different interpretations;” to which I respectfully and affectionately respond, that I regret that my reply should be either ambiguous or equivocal. I designed to speak a plain language, and if I have failed to express myself intelligibly, some apology may be found for me in the circumstances in which I have been placed, in our intercourse on the subject in controversy between us. I, however, must

do you the justice to say, that your communication of the 7th instant, to which my reply was made, is neither obscure nor equivocal. It will always speak for itself; and while words represent ideas, or convey sentiments, you will be understood to assert your “ right, as a conference, to appoint a committee to consider and report on said memorials, as also the right to act in a conference capacity on any report from such committee.” My reply was designed to show that, for certain reasons which were given, I could not, as the president of an annual conference, admit such a doctrine of unlimited right in an annual conference; and that I could not become a participant in any such claim by allowing the action of the conference on memorials which relate to slavery, and which also involve the doctrine of modern abolitionism. I regret that my offer of a conciliatory measure did not meet with favor in your eyes; and, in view of its rejection, I have only to repeat that I shall, as president of the New England conference, decline to put to vote any question of reference on memorials which seek to keep up an excitement, and produce agitation on topics which the wisdom and authority of the General conference have sought to quiet and put to rest.

“ Affectionately yours, B. WAUGH.’

“ On reading the above letter, after considerable conversation upon the subject, it was resolved to present the memorials to the conference, and, in case the president should refuse to put a motion to refer them to a committee, that a motion should be made to adjourn the conference, under the direction of a committee which had been appointed for this purpose.” (Matlack’s History, pp. 46-54; and Z., Vol. VIII, pp. 102, 103.)

#### DOCUMENT 27.

*The Substance of an Address delivered to the Oneida Annual Conference of Ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, August 31, and to the Genesee Conference, September 21, 1837; on the Subjects of the Duties of the President of an Annual Conference; on the Rights and Powers of such a conference; and on the Principles and History of said Church; on the Act of Holding Slaves; by ELIJAH HEDDING, President of said conferences; published by request of the two conferences.*

BEFORE we determine on the appointment of the proposed committee, it is necessary to observe that much has been said respecting the duties of the president of an annual conference, and the rights of such a conference. Both the duties of the president and the rights of conference are laid down in the book of Discipline. The president is authorized to appoint the day of the ordinations (Discipline, pp. 119, 124); consequently, it is his right so to arrange the business as to prepare for the ordinations.

The Discipline also gives the president the right to close the conference in a week from the commencement, if he can get through the proper conference business in that time. (See Discipline, p. 23.) “ They shall allow the annual conferences to sit a week at least.” This includes the right so to arrange the business as to close in a week, if practicable and necessary. And it is well the president has that right; for, if he had it not, contentious men might prolong the session to an unreasonable and burdensome

length. But, though the bishops have that right, they have always, so far as I know, yielded to the wishes and requests of brethren, when they could do so consistently with the general business of the conference, with the responsibility to the General conference, and their duty to the whole Church.

It has been contended that the president of an annual conference ought to put to vote every resolution that is offered; but this is too absurd to be believed by any considerate man who understands our plan of Church government. Under constitutional restrictions, this is true of the General conference, but not of an annual conference. The real question in debate is, whether a president is under obligation to put to vote any and every resolution an annual conference may wish to adopt.

An annual conference is not a primary, independent body. Though it was so originally, when there was but one annual conference, at the time our Church was organized, in the year 1784, it is not so now. When there was but one annual conference, that was also the General conference. After our Church was organized, the primary, independent conference met once in four years, under the name of General conference, consisting of all the traveling preachers in full connection; then, for a time, of all the traveling elders, and thus it continued till 1808. The General conference continued to exercise the same powers the original conference did when the Church was organized. During this time, from 1784 to 1808, temporary annual conferences were held, to do particular business, which could not be deferred four years. The bounds of the annual conferences were fixed sometimes by the bishops, and sometimes by the General conference, yet no one of the annual conferences was the primary body, but only a part of it.

Since the establishment of the delegated General conference, which was provided for in 1808, the whole traveling connection has been supposed to be present once in four years, by representation, in General conference assembled, and has continued to be the primary body—the same as that which organized the Church. And as the present annual conferences are controlled, divided, and bound by the General conference, and as any one of them may be scattered into other conferences, and thus annihilated, it is plain they are neither primary nor independent bodies.

An annual conference is constituted by the General conference; it is dependent on, and responsible to it. And the General conference has told the annual conference what to do; its duty and rights are laid down in the Discipline. That is its charter, and it has no other rights, as a conference, only those which are granted either by statute or by fair inference in that charter.

You have other rights as men, and as Christians, and as Methodist preachers, but not as an annual conference. The General conference appoints your president, and you and he are obliged by law to do just what the Discipline tells you, and no more. I say you are not obliged to do any more. Therefore, the conference can not compel the president to do any more, and the president can not compel the conference to do any more. If they do more, they do it by mutual agreement between the conference and the president, and both are responsible for what they do; but the president is so in a higher degree than the conference; for he may be punished for the transaction of improper business in an annual confer-

ence to a degree the conference can not. They may call what they do, over and above their duty, conference business, if they please, and place it on the journals, and if no harm is done, no one will complain. But if either party, the conference or the president, refuses to do more that the Discipline requires or authorizes, the other party can not justly complain.

The annual conference can do no business without the president. They can not remove him from the chair, nor appoint another, unless the lawful president be absent, and fail of appointing a president, which, in that case, he has a right to do.

In conferences where there are slaves and slave-owners, the question of slavery might come up as proper conference business, and often does so. It might there be said, "I object to this preacher because he has sold a slave," or "I object to that one because he does not emancipate his slaves." But in this conference, where you have no jurisdiction over slaves or slave-owners, it is impossible to make it appear that you have any authority in the case. You might, indeed, recommend to the General conference new rules, or alterations of the old ones, but that would be a very different thing from the subject of which we have been speaking.

The Discipline does not require the president to do this kind of business; he has never promised to do it, and the conference has no authority to command him to do it.

Yet, though I am under no obligation on the ground of "right," to put any such question to vote, still, on the ground of courtesy, I would do it most cheerfully, if I could consistently with other and higher obligations.

The moment I step beyond the law, and put any question to vote which that does not require or authorize, I act voluntarily, and I alone am responsible for my own act. What I have claimed on this subject is, a right to judge of my own duty in acts not required by the Discipline. But this *right* certain men have attempted to wrest from me, by claiming the right to govern me; and because I was not willing to submit, they have made this terrible outcry you have heard about the loss of "rights," which, in my opinion, they never possessed.

It has been said, "It is the prerogative of the [annual] conference to decide *what* business they will do, and *when* they will do it." But I deny it; this is assuming the rights of the General conference, and usurping the control over the president of an annual conference, which no body of men has a right to exercise but the General conference. And because I was unwilling to submit to this usurpation, I have been severely censured. I have been unjustly and cruelly held up to public view, by certain inconsiderate writers, as one who infringed on the "rights" of my brethren, merely because I did not consent to do what I was under no obligation to do, what I was bound by no law to do, and what I have never promised to do. And more than this, the acts I was called upon to do were such as I believed it wrong for *me* to do, and this, I believe, was well understood by those who have censured me.

The men who have written against me, have written against the General conference also, and hereby have clearly shown that they disregarded the authority of the Church in any department, unless it shall consent to adopt their creed, and to follow their measures. There has appeared to be a strong desire in these men to drive me

into measures which they knew I believed to be wrong, and which they knew also would be likely to bring me into collision with the General conference, as well as with some of the annual conferences. *Censures, hints of wrongs* where no wrongs were, and even threats have been employed to accomplish this work of tyranny.

If an annual conference possessed such rights as these writers have supposed, it might legally censure the very General conference, who gives it existence, and do other things which would scatter our connection to the four winds. And yet, because I could not consistently acknowledge such "rights," I have been indirectly accused of attempting to "RULE" a conference. I have attempted no such thing—I have only claimed the right to rule myself in my official duties—to judge for myself, as I must answer for myself, what it is lawful and expedient for me to do; that is, what motion I may or may not properly put to vote in an annual conference. And although I could not with propriety submit a question of this sort to the dictation of a few individuals, or to the decision of an annual conference, yet, I have uniformly acknowledged my responsibility to the General conference, whose agent I am, and to whom I am amenable for acting or not acting in all such cases. Yet, individuals have demanded of me, on the ground of "rights," services which the General conference never required, and thereby have attempted to govern me.

This subject has been connected with the "rights" of our people to send petitions to the annual conference. That the people have a right to petition the General or annual conference, I cheerfully admit. And that an annual conference ought to attend to their petitions on all business which the Discipline requires such conference to do, I admit also, and this is all the business we have covenanted with the people to do in an annual conference. But when they petition us to do such things as are foreign to our duty, I deny their right to *require* us to spend our time and strength in doing those things. If they ask us to do a thing for *them* as a favor, we will cheerfully do it if we can consistently; but if they *demand* such services as a "right," they must allow us to judge of our own obligations and duties.

The great subject on which this demand on our time and services is claimed, is slavery. And I have never refused to attend to it in annual conferences, so far as my time, health, and obligations to the whole Church would admit. But what I have done, I have done on principles of courtesy, not on the ground of obligation, or "right," for it is proper for me to do many things to oblige my friends, which neither friends nor enemies could demand of me on the ground of "rights." And my respected colleague, who has been represented to the public as taking to himself undue authority at the last session of the New England conference, acted, so far as I know, on the same principle I have. He offered to put to vote a motion to appoint a committee to consider and report on petitions and memorials from the people on that subject, on such conditions as he deemed consistent with his obligations to the General conference, and to the whole Church. But his conditions were rejected, and the reason why he declined to proceed and act in the case, was, claims were made on the part of the friends of the cause of modern abolitionism, to which the president could not,

in his judgment, constitutionally submit. For they claimed the "*right*," as a conference, to appoint a committee to consider and report on said memorials, as also the *right* to act in a conference capacity on any report from such committee. And, although, as has been reported, the president did not allow an appeal to that body, as he considered it a question of law, yet he distinctly admitted that the conference had the right to carry the subject up to the General conference.

Although I can not, any more than my colleague, admit what some brethren have claimed as "*rights*" on this subject, yet I am willing now, as I always have been, to do any thing I can do constitutionally and safely to oblige brethren. But I can not act as some have wished, and as I suppose some of you wish me to act, because I not only believe such act would be useless, but *wrong* and *injurious*. It would injure other conferences, and that I can not do. For I am superintendent—jointly with my colleagues—of the whole Church; I am required to "oversee the spiritual business" of the whole; I am related alike to all the conferences; therefore, I ought not to do any thing in one conference which I know has a tendency to injure another.

I believe such measures as have been proposed for conference action, would injure the poor slave. Instead of releasing them from bondage, these measures would make their bondage worse than it now is, and deprive those poor children of Ham of many privileges they now enjoy. It is not because I do not pity the poor slave as much as other brethren do, that I can not work with them on this subject, but it is because I believe their mode of working can never do the slaves good, but *only harm*. And I can not with my eyes open harm them, nor dare I be the means of stirring up others to harm them.

These measures tend to hurt the missionary cause. Who of you adopting the opinions, and practicing the measures of the modern abolitionists, could go to the south, and preach the Gospel to the poor slaves? And if none of your brethren could do for them what you can not, they might all go to hell together. Who with these views and practices would dare go to South America, where Justin Spaulding has gone? Or who would go as a missionary to any other slave country? If all the preachers felt bound to declare the doctrines, and to follow the practices just alluded to, it would be impossible to obey our Savior's commands, and preach the Gospel to all nations.

Another reason why I can not enter into these measures, and act on them as conference business, is, I am advised not to do so, and that by the General conference. In their "Pastoral Address" of May 26, 1836, they advise us all to abstain from all such movements. This advice was given by the highest authority in the Church—by the body to which I am responsible—by the collected wisdom of our religious community—by nearly all the delegates of all the annual conferences, which was the same in principles as all the annual conferences in General conference assembled, and by that body of men who know more on that subject than any other in this nation. A body of Christian ministers, collected from nearly all parts of this nation, who, for piety, benevolence, wisdom, zeal, labors, and sufferings in the cause of Christ, will not suffer by comparison with any other

body of the same number—after solemnly deliberating on this subject, have, in their official capacity, given me this advice. And, whatever others may think of it, I am religiously bound to govern myself by it.

Further, we ought to set a better example before our preachers and people, than to act on this subject, in conference capacity, in any way to produce excitement; for, if we act at all, it should be to allay excitement. The Church and the nation are already too much excited for the peace of the one, or the safety of the other. That the peace of the Church "*ought to be disturbed,*" is the doctrine of some who take the lead in this business; but it is not the doctrine of Christ and the apostles.

The subject has been carried into quarterly conferences, class meetings, and other religious assemblages—exciting contention, unholy passions, and producing a loss of confidence and brotherly love, greatly to the grief of many of the children of God.

Men who have professed that they were "inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon" them "the office of the ministry in the Church of Christ," have thought it their duty to abandon the regular pursuit of their holy calling, and have gone about lecturing on this subject, believing themselves justified, no doubt, in sowing discord among brethren, and occasioning disturbance and confusion in the house of God; contrary, as many believe, to their solemn promises, made at the time of their ordination. Some of these lecturers, *in holy orders*, by which they were bound to devote the Sabbath to religious services and spiritual improvements, have *desecrated* parts of that holy day to *lectures* on this exciting, political, and dangerous subject. Some writers on this subject have assailed the reputation of their brethren, throwing out insinuations against them, giving an untrue coloring of facts, stating facts without giving reasons why they occurred, repeating a part of a brother's words, and omitting another part necessary to an understanding of the whole; and in these ways committing the sin of evil-speaking, by publishing to the world what ought, if worthy of notice at all, to have been told only to the Church. These deeds are contrary to the covenant every traveling preacher makes when admitted to full connection—when he promises to "keep the rules of the preacher," one of which is, "speak evil of no one." With such men and measures I can not unite in any act beyond what the law of the Church requires, nor can I do any thing which may appear to countenance them in these matters.

If brethren judge it their duty to attend to this subject, let them do it as citizens, in an orderly manner.

To this course I have never objected; nor to a temperate, proper mode of discussion and reasoning on the subject. But I have objected, and must object to the modes of excitement and disturbance which have been employed, and are still intended to be carried into operation.

I have been indirectly and repeatedly charged before the public with partiality, because, in some conferences, I have put to vote resolutions relating to this subject, but have objected to doing so in other conferences. But my course has been steady and uniform. In some conferences I have put to vote resolutions, which, in my judgment, tended to allay improper excitement, to prevent discord, and to promote peace.

In others, I have declined putting resolutions to vote, which I believed to be of a contrary tendency, and in these measures I believe I have done my duty.

On this principle, and on no other, I am willing to act with you in this conference. For the claim on the ground of "conference rights," to compel me to attend to this business, I think, will now no longer be *assumed*; but if it should, there are two other considerations, which *alone*, if nothing had been said, would settle the question in the minds of all men, who judge without *prepossession*, and who are *acquainted* with our system of Church government. One of them is, when an annual conference, in conference capacity, has done those articles of business the Discipline *requires*, it has *finished* its duty, as a conference, for that session, and any member, or the president, is at perfect liberty to desist, and do no more. If the conference or the president does any more business, it is done on the principle of courtesy; it may be right in itself, but can not be demanded on the ground of "RIGHTS."

It ought to be further remembered, that the Discipline gives the president the right of appointing the times of the several annual conferences. And the interests of the Church often require, that one conference be appointed at so short a time after another, that there would be no more than time to do the business the Discipline requires in the first, in season for the president to travel to the second. Now, if any number of the preachers, or even a whole conference, had authority on the ground of the new *doctrine* of "conference rights," to compel a president to remain at one conference more than a week, to do other business, over and above what the Discipline requires, then that conference might hinder his going to the next one. Also, on this supposition, one conference might *rightfully* prevent the president attending all the others for the season; for, if a conference, by "right," could detain a president one hour beyond the time before named, by the same "right" they might detain him a month or a year; and altogether hinder his doing his duty in all the other conferences—the supposition of which is absurd.

I think it must now plainly appear, that the assumed "rights" claimed by those who have undertaken to rule in this matter, if admitted and carried out into practice, would completely prostrate the government of our Church, and throw all her great plans and interests into utter confusion.

One object of some conferences, so far as I know, in attempting to pass resolutions on this subject, has been to express sentiments which would imply, at least, if not expressly declare, a censure on the members of our Church in the south, for the simple act of holding servants in such a sense that the law of the land declares them to be property, or slaves. But the Church has permitted her members to hold slaves where the laws of the land are such that they will not allow of emancipation without subjecting the emancipated person to be again enslaved. This she has supposed to be a matter of necessity. But she has not designed to tolerate her members in exercising any cruel or oppressive rights which the law may have been supposed to give. By this the Church declares that she does not believe that those members are sinners *merely* on that account, and an annual conference has no right to condemn them, any more than it has to



deny them the communion of the Lord's table, or to call them to trial and expel them.

But it will be asked, what right has any member of our Church to own a slave? Before I answer this question, I will just say, and I wish what I now say to be distinctly remembered, I am ready to disapprove the *slave-trade*, the *system of slavery*, including all the unjust and cruel rights which any laws are supposed to give, and all the injustice and cruelties inflicted on slaves, as decidedly as Mr. Wesley did.

But all these points are aside of the main question. The main question is, what right have any of our members to hold slaves? Or, what right has the Church to allow them to hold slaves? Lest I be misunderstood, before I proceed, I beg you to observe, that owning, or holding a slave, does not include exercising all the rights which the laws are supposed to give the master over the servant, but only such as are necessary for the good of the servant and the safety of the master, all the circumstances being taken into the account. Now let us answer the question. The right to hold a slave is founded on this rule, "Therefore, all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you, do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets." Matt. vii, 12. All acts in relation to slavery, as well as to every other subject, which can not be performed in obedience to this rule, are to be condemned, and ought not to be tolerated in the Church. If no case can be found where a man can own a slave, and in that act obey this rule, then there is no case in which slave-owning can be justified. But if one case can be found where a man may hold a slave, and by the civil law own him, and in that act obey this rule, then there may be ten such cases, or ten thousand. And that there are many such cases among our brethren in the southern states, I firmly believe. If I did not believe this I could not do the duties the Church requires me to perform when I attend the southern conferences. If I had not believed it in 1824 I could not have accepted the charge committed to me when I was made one of the superintendents of the whole Church, including slaves and their masters. Not that they claim or exercise all their rights over their servants that the laws are intended to give them; this their Discipline, their conscience, their religion, and their Bible forbid; but they claim and exercise only so many rights as the laws of justice and mercy require. The law of Virginia forbids emancipating any slave after he is forty or forty-five years old, and even renders the thing impossible. What, then, can the Methodists in that state do with their slaves who are over that age, but hold them and act toward them according to the Savior's rule? In several of the southern states, if a slave is emancipated, and is not out of the state in a short time, the civil officer is required by law to take him and sell him at public vendue to the highest bidder. I have conversed freely and frequently with many of our members in several other different states, and their answer has been in substance, this: "We can not set our slaves free without injuring them, for they would go into worse hands, or into a worse condition. It would not be doing as we would be done by." And I believed them, and you would believe them if you knew them as well as I do. Will you say they do not all act up to this rule? That may be, but some do; and that is a good reason why you should not condemn them all as sinners. Our members

in the north do not all act up to that rule, even in buying and selling, and in the treatment of hired servants and day laborers. That, indeed, is a cause of lamentation, but not a reason for condemning all the people as sinners. Our people in the south have experienced the same religion as you have, and many of them love our blessed Lord and Savior as well as you do, and are willing to do and suffer as much for the cause of Christ as you are; and I am not authorized to be the instrument of passing conference resolutions which even imply that they are all sinners. Many of those people are also well enlightened, and yet they as really believe it is their duty, considering the laws and other circumstances under which they live, to hold, govern, and protect the slaves they have inherited from their fathers, as you believe it is your duty to hold, govern, and protect your sons at the age of eighteen or twenty. They believe that to emancipate their slaves would be breaking the rule, do as you would be done by. Some of them may err in judgment; if so we can not convince them by censuring them here—other means must be used if ever they are convinced. But that they are wrong in principle can not be proved, unless you can produce a precept of the Divine law equal to this, thus saith the Lord, "THOU SHALT NOT OWN A SLAVE." But this precept is not in the Bible.

There may be hypocrites among those brethren, who hold slaves for gain, or who treat them unjustly and cruelly. Let them be condemned with the sinners—let them be expelled from the Church; but do not condemn the righteous with the wicked, nor grieve those whom God has not grieved.

Will you say slavery is condemned in the parts which compose it? This is true of the slave-trade, of the system, and of all the injustice and cruelty inflicted on slaves; but it is not true in circumstances where the best possible thing a man can do for his slave is, to hold, protect, feed, and govern him. Will you say, "Undo every burden and let the oppressed go free?" But the people I have described are not oppressed by their owners. If their present owners should set them free, they would be oppressed by others. They are now held to protect them from oppression, and to own them is the only way to protect them.

The Methodists in that country are few and feeble in comparison with the multitude; they can not change the laws and the circumstances which render it necessary, in their estimation at least, to keep their slaves, any more than you can change or repeal the laws which permit making, importing, and vending ardent spirits.

The Church has declared the system of slavery to be a great evil. In the principles of her government she has uniformly condemned all injustice and cruelty toward slaves, as well as toward all other human beings; but she has never said, so far as I know, that there could be no circumstances in which a man could own slaves and yet be innocent—nay, she has said to the contrary.

In the year 1784, when our Church was organized, there were both preachers and private members in her communion who owned slaves, and I believe there never has been a day since but some such have been found among us. Some of the greatest revivals we have ever had were in the slave states, and those at times when we were receiving slave-owners into the Church; teaching those who could put away their slaves

on our Lord's rule, to do so; and also teaching those who could not *thus* release them, to conduct toward them as the Savior directed.

It is true when our Church was organized, some strong rules were made against slavery; but finding that they could not be enforced without doing more harm than good, the rules were suspended the same year; and I can not find that they were ever put in force. As the conference which formed the Church was held at about the close of the year 1784, the report of its acts is found in the Minutes for 1785; there you may find the following note: "It is recommended to all our brethren to suspend the execution of the minutes on slavery, till the deliberations of a future conference." See bound Minutes, vol. i, page 55. Mr. Drew relates that Dr. Coke and his associates, by preaching against the slave-trade, and making other great efforts for the removal of slavery at about this time, found themselves involved in such opposition and persecution, that they were in danger of being altogether hindered from prosecuting their ministry; and that from this consideration they found it expedient to change their course. And then says: "From their having, for a season, found it prudent to say nothing on the subject of the slave-trade, Dr. Coke prosecuted his journey through the states without any interruption." The same author further remarks, "If Dr. Coke had continued his direct attacks upon the slave-trade, he must have abandoned the United States, and desisted from his great work, without breaking the fetters which the Africans wore. But by observing a degree of prudent silence, which permitted him to preach the Gospel, those causes were called into operation which must eventually establish more liberal principles, and finally emancipate the whole of the human race. It was in subservience to these enlarged views he acted in the silence which he now observed." See "The Life of the Rev. Dr. Coke," pages 183-4. Thus we see, that strong as Dr. Coke's opposition to slavery was, he considered the salvation of souls of greater importance than even the abolition of slavery.

Great efforts were afterward made against slavery—some slaves were released, but the enemy only took occasion to make stronger exertions to hold the poor creatures with a yet stronger grasp. In 1800 the General conference sent out a powerful address to the people against slavery. But if you read Mr. Asbury's Journal for the following year, you will find that instead of releasing the slaves, that address was the occasion of a vast amount of injury both to them and to the work of God.

The first General conference I attended was in 1808. The subject was then largely discussed, as it has been frequently since, and I do not believe there are more owners of slaves now in the Church, in proportion to the whole number, than there were then. And, from the best information I have been able to obtain, the treatment and condition of the slaves have been greatly improved in that time, even among our people, and through their influence, among others, to a very great extent through the southern community. And writers on this subject, of late, have grievously erred in representing to the public that the Church has departed from her original principles and practices in relation to slavery. She has changed her measures from time to time, as the changes of circumstances seem to require, but never her principles. These authors have written what they did not

understand, and affirmed what they did not know. Let it be further remarked, that for several years before the organization of our Church, many of our preachers and people in the south owned slaves, but they were permitted to do it only under our Savior's rule. But who permitted those preachers and members to own slaves? You will be astonished when I tell you, it was Mr. Wesley. By his permitting it, I mean he did not hinder it when he had power to do so. The preachers in this country acted under his direction, and under that direction the preachers had the sole power of receiving and expelling members. Had Mr. Wesley then said to his preachers, "Receive no slave-owners;" or "Expel the slave-owners;" it would have been done as he commanded. But it was not done; therefore Mr. Wesley never commanded it. But why? Because of the laws or other circumstances, which rendered it possible for them to keep their slaves according to our Savior's rule.

In 1780 the conference, after declaring that the system of "slavery is contrary to the laws of God," asks the following question, "Do we pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom?" The answer is, "Yes." Bound Minutes, vol. i, pages 25-6. If the conference at this time had considered it a sin to hold slaves in the circumstances in which those members were placed, they would not have been satisfied with *barely* "advising their freedom;" but rather, under Mr. Wesley's authority, they would have commanded it, and expelled those who would not obey. Our last General conference expressed a "decided disapprobation" of the "measures" of modern abolitionists, and *advised* the people to "abstain" from them; but this does not prove that the conference believed all who pursued those "measures" were sinners.

In 1783 the conference asks, "What shall be done with our local preachers who hold slaves contrary to the laws which authorize their freedom in any of the United States?" Bound Minutes, vol. i, page 41. In 1784 the conference again asks, "What shall we do with our local preachers who will not emancipate their slaves in the states where the laws admit it?" Again in the same conference it is asked, "What shall be done with our traveling preachers who now are, or hereafter may be possessed of slaves, and refuse to manumit them where the law permits?" Bound Minutes, vol. i, pages 47, 48. I make these quotations barely to show that Mr. Wesley and his preachers in America did not at that time believe it was a sin to hold slaves, where the laws were such as to prevent their continuing free after being manumitted. The language they employ clearly shows that it was their opinion that their people might be innocent in holding slaves where the laws did not "permit" emancipation on Christian principles.

Mr. Wesley's views on this subject have been misunderstood and misrepresented. For, after all he said against the slave-trade, against the system of slavery as established by the British Government, and against men's holding slaves where the laws were such that they could put them away to the advantage of the slaves, he never said one word, that I can find, against the Christian man's holding his slave in circumstances where he could not put him away without injuring him. And the fact of his allowing some of his preachers and members in th

country to hold slaves for several years before our Church was organized, is sufficient evidence to my mind that he saw that nothing better could be done for the slaves, circumstanced as those owners were, than to hold, feed, protect, and govern them.

While this state of things continued, Mr. Wesley ordained a bishop and two elders for this country, sending them over to organize his preachers and societies into an Episcopal Church, at the same time appointing Mr. Asbury joint superintendent with Dr. Coke, when he must have known that many, both of his preachers and members in this country held slaves. Yet I have been severely condemned for expressing an unwillingness to put a resolution to vote in an *annual conference*, tending to censure our brethren in the south for doing the same thing which Mr. Wesley allowed their fathers to do when in connection with him, and when also he possessed full power to prevent their doing so, or to expel them.

Methodist societies were formed in the West Indies several years before the death of Mr. Wesley. They were under his superintendence, and, from the best information I have been able to obtain, slave-owners were admitted into those societies; and, in perfect accordance with the above views, that practice was continued up to the time slavery was abolished in those islands by the British Government. The views of the leading Methodist preachers in England, up to a late date, remained in perfect conformity to this practice, and probably do so still. In the report of the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society for the year ending April, 1833, in the instructions to missionaries, written some years before by Mr. Watson, we find the following sentiments: "As, in the colonies in which you are called to labor, a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the committee most strongly call to your recollection what was so fully stated to you when you were accepted as a missionary to the West Indies, that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you may have access, without, in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition. On all persons in a state of slavery, you are diligently and explicitly to enforce the same exhortations which the apostles of our Lord administered to the slaves of ancient nations, when by their ministry they embraced Christianity." Then they quote Eph. vi, 5-8, and Col. iii, 22-25.

In the course Mr. Wesley pursued on this subject, he doubtless believed he was following the example of the apostles. He believed St. Paul permitted Philemon to be a member of the Church at Colosse, while he held Onesimus as a slave. The evidence of this is in the preface to his notes on the Epistle to Philemon. There he says, "It seems Philemon not only pardoned, but gave him (Onesimus) his liberty." Whether modern commentators, who have dissented from this opinion, know more of this matter than Mr. Wesley did, is a question I will not now undertake to settle.

That Dr. Adam Clarke, Mr. Benson, Dr. Coke, and Mr. Watson, also believed that the apostles permitted slave-owners, in peculiar circumstances, to be members of the Church of Christ, is a fact too plainly declared in their writings to admit of any doubt. And these authors certainly must have believed, that the only principle on which the apostles could have

permitted some of their members to hold slaves, was our Savior's rule. For they could not have supposed that the apostle tolerated any deeds which could not be performed under that rule. These authors must have believed, that the apostles knew that the Christians of their day were under such laws, or other circumstances, that the only thing such of them as held slaves could possibly do for them, according to our Lord's rule, was to hold, protect, feed, and govern them. Otherwise it is to be presumed, that the apostles would have commanded all the Christians who held slaves to put them away.

But, probably, you will demand the evidence that these authors believed that the apostles permitted any of the members of their Churches to hold slaves. I can now give you but a small part of it. Dr. Clarke says, in his note on 1 Cor. vii, 24, "It is very likely that some of the slaves at Corinth, who had been converted to Christianity, had been led to think that their Christian principles absolved them from the necessity of continuing slaves, or, at least, brought them on a level with their *Christian masters*." Here it is plain that it was Dr. Clarke's opinion that there were slaves at Corinth owned by *Christian masters*. Again, in his notes on the Epistle to Philemon, the Doctor frequently declares his opinion in the plainest possible manner, that Onesimus was a slave to Philemon. Take only two examples, ver. 15, "He departed thy *slave*, thy *unfaithful slave*; he departed for a *short time*; but so has the mercy of God operated in his behalf, and the providence of God in thine, that he now returns, not an unfaithful slave, in whom thou couldst repose no confidence, but as a brother, a beloved brother in the Lord, to be in the same heavenly family with thee forever." Here, according to the Doctor's opinion, were a slave and his master going to heaven together. Again, on ver. 16, he says, "There is no reason to believe that Onesimus was of the kindred of Philemon: and we must take the term *flesh* here, as referring to the *right* which Philemon had in him. He was a part of his *property*, and of his *family*: as a slave, this was his condition. But he now stood in a twofold relation to Philemon. 1. According to the *flesh*, as above explained, he was one of his family. 2. *In the Lord*, he was now also a member of the *heavenly family*, and of the Church at Philemon's house. Philemon's interest in him was now doubled, in consequence of his conversion to Christianity." This sentiment is often repeated in various forms of expression in the Doctor's notes on those passages in the epistles, where the relations and duties of masters and of their servants are pointed out by the apostles.

Mr. Benson, also, was of the same opinion with Mr. Wesley and Dr. Clarke, with respect to the relation between Philemon and Onesimus, and also, with respect to other passages above alluded to, which any of you must know, who have attentively read his Commentaries. I will select only one passage from him. In his note on 1 Tim. vi, 1, 2, he says, the apostles enjoined "Christian slaves to obey their masters, whether *believers* or *unbelievers*." And farther, in the same note, he remarks, in the words of Macknight, "Instead of encouraging slaves to disobedience, the Gospel makes them more faithful and conscientious. And by sweetening the temper of masters, and inspiring them with benevolence, it renders the condition of slaves more tolerable than formerly. For, in

proportion as masters imbibe the true spirit of the Gospel, they will treat their slaves with humanity, and even give them freedom when their services merit such a favor."

Mr. Watson also, in his Dictionary, on the word Onesimus, says he was a "slave to Philemon, and a disciple of the apostle Paul;" and that his master, Philemon, was a "Christian."

Dr. Coke, also, was of the same opinion, as has been perceived by the passages quoted from his Life, and as may be more plainly seen by consulting his Commentary, though he was as great an opposer of the slave-trade, and of the system of slavery, as Mr. Wesley was.

After all these pious and learned authors have said in condemnation of the slave-trade, of the system of slavery, and of the injustice and cruelty committed by vicious men on slaves, still it appears beyond reasonable doubt, that they all believed, that in some circumstances, men might own slaves and yet be Christians—doing by their slaves, as, in a change of circumstances, they would have others do by them. And it is astonishing that late writers on abolitionism have quoted these authors, over and over, to prove that it is a sin, in all circumstances, to hold and govern slaves; when they knew, or ought to have known, before they undertook to write on the subject, that these venerable men never taught that doctrine; but that they taught directly the contrary. And while these writers have been extolling to the skies the opinions of Wesley, Clarke, Coke, Benson, and Watson, on the subject of slavery, they have been condemning Dr. Fisk and others, and holding them up in the newspapers to public contempt, for teaching precisely the same thing that those authors taught; namely, that some Christians in the apostolic Churches did hold slaves.

It is perceived that I have not entered into what has been called "the Bible argument"—only as a matter of history, to show what our standard authors have taught on that subject, and if any are pleased to dispute what has been said, let them remember, their attack is not on me, but on Wesley, Clarke, Coke, Benson, and Watson.

Though the Methodist Episcopal Church always permitted slave-owners to remain in her communion, where they could not put away their slaves without violating our Savior's rule, yet she labored hard and long, by various rules, and resolutions, and other efforts, all within the great principles above laid down, to prepare the way for and finally to accomplish a universal emancipation, especially in the Church. But she found, the more she exerted herself on this subject, the more hinderances were thrown in her way—by legal enactments, popular excitements, and by persecution. She found, that by trying, directly, to release the bodies of the slaves, she was hindered from using the means to save their souls, and that instead of removing their burdens, she was made the occasion of increasing them. The Church found herself driven to this alternative, either to cease using direct means to accomplish universal emancipation, or abandon the largest portion of the southern country. She chose the former—for she was called to preach the Gospel to all lands; and she determined to do all in her power to save both the slave and his master, and to reduce and keep both under our Lord's rule. The Church trusted that the providence of God, through that rule, operating on the hearts of both bond and free, would one day bring about universal emancipation.

By these measures the Church has held a powerful influence over thousands of both colors; she has prevented a vast amount of injuries, which otherwise would have been inflicted on the poor slaves; and she has carried, like the angels of God, many thousands of those children of Ham to Abraham's bosom. But still, the civil government of that country is not in the hands of the Methodists; and for them, if they were so disposed, to attempt to control it on this subject would only hinder their great work, and bring heavier afflictions on "God's suffering poor." It is my most solemn judgment, that the best means to accomplish universal emancipation in the south are the very means which our Church is now using in that country, as she has done for many years. Let the Gospel be preached to bond and free, and let our Lord's rule be enforced, "Do to others as you would have them to do to you," in public preaching, in private instructions, and in the Discipline of the Church; let that rule be enforced till the rulers and the great body of the people of both colors feel its influence, and then will the great jubilee come. And it is my opinion it will not come before, unless it be brought about by war, blood, and revolution!

But you ask, "How long will it take to accomplish the object in that way?" I know not. I only say, the Lord hasten it in his time. And if you wish to hasten it—if you feel as much benevolence for the slaves as our brethren in the south do—if you are willing to labor as hard, and to suffer as much for the benefit of the slaves as those preachers do, go and help them—there is work enough there for you all.

I think you can not fail of perceiving that I am on the ancient Methodist ground in relation to this subject—the ground trodden by Wesley, Coke, Clarke, Benson, Watson, Asbury, Whatcoat, Garretson—for he had the charge of circuits containing slaveholders—and many other wise and holy men who now rest in heaven; and you must not be astonished if I can not admit the new speculations which have lately been presented to us, under the specious pretensions that they are ancient Methodism. (C., Vol. XII, p. 33. W., Vol. IV, pp. 109, 110. Z., Vol. VIII, pp. 173–177.)

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#### DOCUMENT 28.

*Resolutions adopted by the Methodist Antislavery Convention, held in Lynn, Massachusetts, October 25 and 26, 1837.*

WE content ourselves with referring our readers to Zion's Herald, of December 13, 1837, for this document.

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#### DOCUMENT 29.

*Extracts from the Report of the Methodist Antislavery Convention at Lynn, Massachusetts, held October 25 and 26, 1837, on Conference Rights.*

THE committee to whom was referred the subject of conference rights, beg leave to report:

That they exceedingly regret the necessity which has imposed upon this convention the duty of expressing an opinion upon a subject involving, as this does, the official conduct of some among us, for whom we entertain senti-

ments of the most profound respect and esteem. In expressing this opinion, however, we beg it may be distinctly understood and remembered, that we are but performing a solemn duty, which, we believe, has been imposed upon us, by the course which has been taken by some of the superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church—a course which has denied to annual conferences what they believe to have been their just rights. So far, therefore, as we believe any of our conferences have been unjustly deprived of certain rights, it would seem but proper, in view of what has been said and done on the other side of this question, that an opinion should be expressed by this convention on this subject. It has been affirmed by some of our bishops, that annual conferences have no *rights* but such as have been specified in the Discipline, and of some of these it would seem that our bishops claim to be the sole judges, at least in the intervals of the General conferences.

#### RIGHTS CLAIMED BY THE CONFERENCES.

If we understand this subject, the rights claimed by some of our annual conferences, and of which they think they have been unjustly deprived, are such as involve *moral obligations*—obligations imposed upon them by what our Discipline pronounces a “great evil;” and an evil which exists in the Church of which we are members. The cries of suffering humanity, and of those perishing for lack of knowledge, urge us on to the performance of those duties which some of our presidents have prohibited.

But in approaching this subject, we protest against the supposition that this defense of conference rights, rights which are common to all Protestant ecclesiastical bodies, does in any way conflict with the *proper duties imposed by the Discipline upon our Church officers*. We have no controversy with Episcopacy, *as such*. Our object is simply to maintain our own rights as Christians, and Christian ministers, in the proper discharge of our duties to God, and our fellow-men.

#### GROUND ASSUMED BY THE BISHOPS.

The ground assumed by two of our bishops, is, that they are *not obliged* to put any question to the vote, in an annual conference, except such as is specified in the Discipline; and that an annual conference is *not obliged* to do any other business. It is admitted that an annual conference can not *force* its president to put *any* question to the vote, whether specified in the Discipline or not; neither can the president *force* the conference to do any business, more or less. But it appears to your committee that both the nature and fitness of things, requires annual conferences to do all the business, which, in their judgment, the interests of the Church demand; provided they do not conflict with the provisions of the charter. The conference, we think, should be the judge—providing it keeps within the provisions of the charter—as to *what business* the interests of the Church require to be done. A whole conference may err; but will it be as likely to err as one man? Is it safe for one hundred to give up their solemn judgment to one? And above all, ought the one to require this of the many? If the many do this *once*, may they not be called upon to do it *again*? And if they do it on *one subject*, may they not be required to do it on *others*? If annual conferences are under moral obligations to exert their influence to promote what they solemnly believe to be the best

interests of the Church, then it follows, as a matter of course, that no man has a right to *prevent* their doing this.

#### ABSURDITIES.

To suppose that one man can be under a moral obligation to prevent a hundred others from performing what they conscientiously believe to be a Christian duty, is absurd. And to suppose the conscience of a president is the standard by which the consciences of the whole body are to be tested, is equally absurd. The president has a conscience as well as the members; and if he can not conscientiously perform the duties of the chair, he can resign his office. But while he fills the chair, has he any right to make his conscientious scruples a pretext for laying heavy burdens on the consciences of hundreds of ministers and thousands of Church members? The conference does *what it does*, on moral subjects, *under a sense of moral obligation*. The president puts these matters to the vote, not because HE believes the measure *judicious* or *injurious*, but because HE IS PRESIDENT. He has not been appointed to that office to do certain things, and nothing else; but to put to the vote any business the conference may wish to act upon, providing it keep within the provisions of the constitution. And if it be *contrary* to the Discipline to express an opinion on the evils of slavery, let it be shown. If, therefore, an annual conference feels itself religiously bound to oppose any sin, and especially such sins as the Discipline acknowledges to be moral evils, the president can have no right to prevent such expression of opinion; and to do so, is to establish a *principle* dangerous as a *precedent*, and oppressive in its *nature* and *tendency*.

#### DISCIPLINARY AUTHORITY FOR CONFERENCE ACTION.

As to the authority for conference action on the subject of slavery, we would remark,

In the first place, there is nothing in the *Discipline which forbids* expressing in conference capacity an opinion on the evils of slavery. And the plainest principles of Christianity show that *in the very nature of things*, a body of Christian ministers must have a right, in their associated capacity, to express an opinion on what they believe to be a moral question. And no human tribunal can possibly deprive them of these rights of conscience and opinion. Secondly, the Discipline not only provides, “that every person,” “on these occasions,” [at the conferences,] may “speak freely whatever is in his heart,” but expressly declares, “that we are as much as ever convinced of the *great evil of slavery*; and “the buying of men, women, and children, with an *intention* to enslave them,” is as strongly prohibited in the Discipline, as drunkenness and fighting. To pretend, therefore, that the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church gives no authority to a company of Methodist preachers, in conference assembled, to oppose what it opposes, [that is, slavery,] is *absurd*.

#### PROPER CONFERENCE BUSINESS.

The bishop is *not the conference*, but merely the *president*. As *president*, he has no right to refuse to do the proper duties of the chair; and the proper duties of the chair extend to all proper conference business; and *all business which is not contrary to the Discipline, and which is in accordance with the genius of Methodism, is proper conference business*. Bishop Hedding has defined proper conference business to be, “such business

as is specified in the Discipline, either by express provision, implication, or inference;" and in such matters, he said, he was *under obligation* to put all questions to the vote. Then he is under obligation to put anti-slavery resolutions to the vote. How is it possible for the Methodist Discipline to oppose slavery as strongly as it does, and give no "inferential," or "implied" authority to a conference of Methodist preachers to oppose it? But suppose it does not; will it be pretended at this late period, that Christians have no right to oppose all sin without human authority, or that human authority can deprive them of *this right*? We hope not. (Matlack, pp. 166-169.)

## DOCUMENT 30.

*Bishop Hedding's Letter on Conference Rights to Gershom A. Cox, Editor of the Maine Wesleyan Journal, dated Lansburg, N. Y., December 11, 1837.*

THE following letter from Bishop Hedding, it will be perceived, was written before he had seen our last three articles upon the subject in question. And not knowing how we explained any part of our first remarks, he has misapprehended us—especially on the words *control* and *will*, on which most of his argument rests—as also upon the responsibilities of the bishop, etc. But as we do not wish to prejudice his letter for the reader, and as it has been thought that editors have the advantage of others, by appending their objections to an article on its first appearance, and wishing for truth only, and as we have been requested to make no reply, we withhold further remarks, at least for the present.\*

DEAR BROTHER COX,—I was sorry to see your editorial remarks on "Conference Rights," in your number for the 25th ult., for you have *certainly* misunderstood our system, so far as that subject is concerned.

The foundation of your mistakes seems to be this: you suppose the bishop is not responsible to the General conference for *his own* acts in transacting the business of an annual conference. You say, "The bishop is not and can not be responsible for the acts of the annual conferences." That is true, so far as your words express ideas; but that truth is employed, in its connection, to convey the idea that the bishop is not responsible for *his own* acts in a conference, which is not true. The conference has its duties, and the bishop his; and each is responsible separately for doing or not doing.

In all the acts performed by vote of a conference, and authorized by the Discipline, the bishop's duty is to preside and keep order, and he is not responsible for the *decisions* of the conference. But in other *proposed* acts, not thus authorized, the General conference holds the bishop *strictly responsible* for his *own* acts, and would censure him for knowingly submitting to vote any resolution contrary to the Discipline, to the will of the General conference, or to the peace and prosperity of the Church.

This view is supported by the following question and answer:

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

"Answer. To the General conference, who

have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary." Discipline, p. 27.

I believe this rule is generally understood by the preachers throughout the Church, to apply as well to the official acts as to the private conduct of a bishop; to his presiding in the conference, and to his fixing the appointments of the preachers. And if it do not authorize him to decline putting to vote what he believes to be an "improper" resolution, it does not prohibit his making what he believes to be an "improper appointment."

It is true he may err in judgment, or knowingly do wrong in either case; but where is the remedy? Not in the judgment of an annual conference, but in that of the General conference. To that tribunal let the injured party complain.

You make the bishop's duty, while presiding, subject to the "*will*" of an annual conference, and farther say, "He is under obligation to put to vote any question that the conference may require of him." Not so, as long as the above rule is in the Discipline. The bishop can not serve two masters, much less twenty-nine; one General conference, and twenty-eight annual conferences.

The "*will*" of the General conference "requires" of the bishop one act, and the "*will*" of an annual conference "requires" of him a contrary act; which is he to obey?

Suppose an annual conference "*wills*" to adopt a resolution censuring one of my colleagues, or the General conference, and "*requires*" me to put it to vote, am I "under obligation" to do it? And, then, must I be expelled by the General conference for such "improper conduct?" Alas, for bishops, if your doctrine be true! Who that has common sense would ever be one?

Before your doctrine can go into effect, the rule above quoted must be repealed, or the General conference must declare that it does not apply to the act of a bishop in putting an improper resolution to vote in an annual conference. And, then, to prevent the annual conferences becoming independent, and separating from the body, it will be necessary to make new rules, making them responsible to the General conference, in the same degree the bishops now are, and laying them liable to be expelled from the Church for passing "improper" resolutions. Will the annual conferences agree to this? If they will, the burden of fixing the appointments must be removed from the bishops—for, on your plan, they can never bear it—and laid on the annual conferences. Other rules must be altered to conform to your system, for on that plan the bishops could never obey them.

On your plan, the "*will*" of the New England conference, at its ensuing session, *might* "require" services of the bishop to detain him so long, that he could not do his duty in the Maine conference; and if he were to submit to that "*will*," who would be responsible for his neglect of his duty in your conference—the New England conference, or the bishop? What would the General conference say to such an event?

Observe, we are now speaking of "conference rights." We are not, therefore, to reason on what would be *expedient*, but on what would be possible under such "rights," as you suppose an annual conference possesses. How would you obtain an expression of the "*will*" of the New England conference to take up a proposed subject, but by motion and vote? Suppose, on the first day of the session, a motion is made to take up a subject not required by the Discipline; a large majority opposes it; the bishop has no power to put it off; for he is subject to the "*will*" of

\* Editor of Maine Wesleyan Journal.

the conference, and he must first know what that "will" is; that minority, by offering amendments, and other modes of disposing of the question, and by protracted debates, might detain the bishop three weeks, that is, till your conference meets, before he could even know what the "will" of the New England conference is. If one question would not answer the purpose, twenty might be invented, and the bishop, upon your plan, being subject to the "will" of the conference, must attend to every motion that may be offered, and listen to all the debates on each, before he can know what that "will" may "require" of him.

Pray tell me, upon this plan, what would become of the business the Discipline requires the bishop to do in those two conferences? And how could he answer to the General conference for neglecting his duty?

The plan you propose for an annual conference is, at least in part, that on which the General conference has a right to proceed, and does act, for the "will" of that body, so far as conference business is concerned, is the rule of the bishop's duty. But in that body, by the measures above supposed, I have frequently seen a large minority tire a majority, and thus defeat it. In this way, I believe, the temperance measure was lost in the last session of that body. And when your plan goes into operation, the same modes of defeat, and of protracting conference sessions will be employed.

You say the bishop "has no control over an annual conference." True, but he has control over himself, and over his own official acts till the General conference control him, which they—not the annual conference—have a right to do. I believe no bishop has ever claimed a right to "control," as you suppose. You certainly must be capable of seeing the difference between a bishop's having a "control" over an annual conference, and his having a right to decline acting himself, in a case where he believes his act would be contrary to the judgment and "will" of the General conference.

But you will say, if the bishop does not act, the conference can not. Be it so; that is not the fault of the bishop. It is a want of power in the annual conference to act without his act. If an annual conference want more power, let them ask the General conference to give it to them, and to reduce that of the bishop, if they wish it; but do not blame the bishop because they lack power to do all they may wish to do.

If they wish to do what I believe to be wrong, and have not power to do it without my help, certainly I am not blamable for not helping them. And this was the intention of the authors of our system, to limit the annual conference, and hold the bishop rigidly responsible for his acts, and thus prevent mischief, for they knew it was easier to prevent wrong acts, than to correct them after they were past. And thus, in case of a difference of opinion between the conference and the bishop, action is suspended till the General conference can meet and decide.

You probably will say, as others have said, it is the bishop's duty to *preside*. True, it is, in all such business as he believes the Discipline requires or authorizes. But not in doing "any" and every kind of business a conference may happen to have a "will" to do, much less in an act he knows to be contrary to the "will" of the General conference.

If it had been the intention of the General conference to leave the bishop, as you suppose,

to have his "duty"—"limited" to "the will of the [annual] conference"—"under obligation to put to vote any question that the conference may require of him," doubtless they would have left his election to the annual conference, also; and made him amenable to the same body, allowing each annual conference to have a bishop; and then he might justly have been governed by the "will" and "requirements" of the annual conference.

You say, "But we can not contend that the bishop is to judge the annual conference." Nor I, nor any of my colleagues. We never claimed this, nor any thing like it. But we claim the right to judge ourselves, and to judge of our duty, till the proper time for the General conference to judge us.

But your theory places us under the judgment of twenty-eight annual conferences, acting separately, subject to their separate, distinct, and contradictory "wills;" to have our "duty" prescribed as each one of them may "require." And how many contradictions, and contentions their "wills" and "requirements" would bring us under, no mortal can imagine.

You speak sound truth when you say, "This never was intended by Methodism, and we believe is not desired by the Episcopacy. Indeed, we know they do not wish it." But you fall into a great error when you say, "They have only assumed it," etc. Assumed what? "To judge the annual conferences!" Never! We "reverently obey" those "unto whom is committed the charge and government over" us, that is, the General conference; and must this be called judging the annual conferences? We have not "judged," nor "assumed," nor acted in any of these matters. We have only declined to act in cases where we believed an authority above us, to which we are "amenable," prohibited our action.

From what has been said it will follow, that you had not obtained sufficient "light," when you said, "It seems to us that one or two of our bishops may have, with the most upright intentions, transcended, in some degree, their trust."

To this we plead, NOT GUILTY.

There have been many erroneous opinions respecting the degree in which the annual conferences are responsible to the General conference. And I see some of them, as I think, in your remarks. There is no rule in the Discipline which says they are thus responsible; and the fact is only inferred from the provision, that "a copy" of their journals may be "sent to the General conference." But what punishment can the General conference award, under our constitution, to an annual conference for an "improper" act? They can barely disapprove the act. But they can "expel" the bishop for his "improper conduct" in submitting that very question to the vote of the conference. And yet you suppose the "WILL" of the annual conference must govern the bishop in this matter.

You and others seem to suppose that the course which two of the bishops have taken is a new one. This is a mistake. The same thing, in principle, has been frequently done, ever since I have been in the habit of paying strict attention to the practices of bishops while presiding in annual conferences. And from conversations I have often heard among the preachers, I believe it has been generally approved, till lately. Indeed, I never heard it disputed, neither did I ever suppose any preacher thought it improper till I saw brother Scott's published letter to me

about fifteen months since. The excitement it has lately occasioned, has occurred probably, only because it has been connected with an unusually-exciting subject.

I ought, before I close, to acknowledge the truth of your remark, that annual conferences are not primary bodies; and several other of your opinions I deem perfectly correct. But I think you should not have given judgment against the bishops till you had studied the subject more thoroughly, and then not in your paper till the judgment of the General conference could be obtained. To that body the subject must be referred. No authority below that can decide it. To the decision of that conference I shall reverently bow, if I be spared to hear it.

I highly appreciate the kind manner, and in-offensive language with which you treat this subject; and especially the Christian and brotherly spirit which breathes through the whole of your remarks. And I do most sincerely thank you for your friendly "apology" for what you suppose to be our errors.

Though I have spoken plainly of our difference of opinions, I beg you to be assured I feel not the least diminution of that friendship and brotherly affection which I have entertained for you from our first acquaintance.

Yours, etc.,

E. HEDDING.\*

#### DOCUMENT 31.

*Extract on American Slavery, from the Address of the British Conference, held in Liverpool, August 6, 1839, to the Bishops and Members of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America.*

But while we freely indulge in sentiments such as these, we can not forget that on one subject especially—the subject of American slavery—you, our beloved brethren, are placed in circumstances of painful trial and perplexity. We enter, with brotherly sympathy, into the peculiar situation which you are now called to occupy. But, on this question, we beg to refer you to what occurs in our address to you from the conference of 1836, a proper copy of which will be handed to you by our representative; as also to the contents of our preceding letter of 1835. To the principles which we have affectionately, but honestly, declared in these two documents we still adhere, with a full conviction of their Christian truth and justice.

The time which has elapsed, and the events which have taken place, since the preparation of the above-mentioned papers, serve only to confirm us yet more in our views of the moral evil of slavery. Far be it from us to advocate violent and ill-considered measures. We are, however, strongly and unequivocally of the opinion that it is, at this time, the paramount Christian duty of the ministers of our most merciful Lord in your country to maintain the principle of opposition to slavery with earnest zeal, and unflinching firmness. May we not also be allowed, with the heart-felt solicitude of fraternal love, to entreat that you will not omit or qualify the noble testimony which we have extracted, in a note to our address, from your book of Discipline, but that you will continue to insert it there in its primitive and unimpaired integrity? (W., Vol. VII, p. 101.)

#### DOCUMENT 32.

*Extract on Slavery, from the Address of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to the General Conference of 1840, dated Baltimore, May 4, 1840, and signed R. R. Roberts, Joshua Soule, E. Hedding, James O. Andrew, B. Waugh, Thomas A. Morris.*

In a body so numerous as the Methodist connection, embracing twenty-eight annual conferences, extended over these United States and territories, and connected with different civil domestic institutions, it is hardly expected that all should see, "eye to eye," relative to the meaning and administration of the Discipline of the Church, or the fitness and expediency of measures which may be adopted in conformity to such a state of things.

It has been the constant aim and united endeavor of your general superintendents to preserve uniformity and harmony in these respects, and, as far as practicable, prevent conflicting action in all the official bodies in the Church. But, although we record, with unfeigned gratitude to the God of all grace and consolation, the general peace, and harmony, and prosperity of the body since your last session, it becomes our painful duty to lay before you some exceptions to this happy and prosperous condition.

At the last session of the General conference, the subject of slavery and its abolition was extensively discussed, and vigorous exertions made to effect new legislation upon it. But, after a careful examination of the whole ground, aided by the light of past experience, it was the solemn conviction of the conference that the interests of religion would not be advanced by any additional enactments in regard to it.

In your pastoral address to the ministers and people at your last session, with great unanimity, and, as we believe, in the true spirit of the ministers of the peaceful Gospel of Christ, you solemnly advised the whole body to abstain from all abolition movements, and from agitating the exciting subject in the Church. This advice was in perfect agreement with the individual as well as associated views of your superintendents; but, had we differed from you in opinion, in consideration of the age, wisdom, experience, and official authority of the General conference, we should have felt ourselves under a solemn obligation to be governed by your counsel. We have endeavored, both in our official administration, and in our private intercourse with the preachers and members, to inculcate the sound policy and Christian spirit of your pastoral address. And it affords us great pleasure to be able to assure you that our efforts in this respect have been very generally approved, and your advice cordially received and practically observed in a very large majority of the annual conferences, as will more fully appear to you on the careful examination of the journals of those bodies for the last four years. But we regret that we are compelled to say, that, in some of the northern and eastern conferences, in contravention of your Christian and pastoral counsel, and of your best efforts to carry it into effect, the subject has been agitated in such forms, and in such a spirit, as to disturb the peace of the Church. This unhappy agitation has not been confined to the annual conferences, but has been introduced into quarterly conferences, and made the absorbing business of self-created bodies in the

\* C., Vol. XI, p. 100.



bosom of our beloved Zion. The professed object of all these operations is to free the Methodist Episcopal Church from the "great moral evil of slavery," and to secure to the enslaved the rights and privileges of free citizens of these United States. How far the measures adopted, and the manner of applying those measures, are calculated to accomplish such an issue, even if it could be effected by any action of ecclesiastical bodies, your united wisdom will enable you to judge.

We can not, however, but regard it as of unhappy tendency that either individual members, or official bodies in the Church, should employ terms, and pass resolutions of censure and condemnation on their brethren, and on public officers and official bodies, over whose actions they have no legitimate jurisdiction. It requires no very extensive knowledge of human nature to be convinced that if we would convert our fellow-men from the error of their ways, we must address them, not in terms of crimination and reproach, but in the milder language of respect, persuasion, and kindness.

It is justly due to a number of the annual conferences in which a majority, or a very respectable minority, of the members are professedly abolitionists, to say that they occupy a very different ground, and pursue a very different course, from those of their brethren who have adopted ultra principles and measures in this unfortunate and, we think, unprofitable controversy. The result of action had in such conferences on the resolution of the New England conference, recommending a very important change in our General Rule on slavery, is satisfactory proof of this fact, and affords us strong and increasing confidence that the unity and peace of the Church are not to be materially affected by this exciting subject. Many of the preachers who were favorably disposed to the cause of abolition, when they saw the extent to which it was designed to carry these measures, and the inevitable consequences of their prosecution, came to a pause, reflected, and declined their cooperation. They clearly perceived that the success of the measures would result in the division of the Church, and for such an event they were not prepared. They have no disposition to criminate their brethren in the south, who are unavoidably connected with the institution of slavery, or to separate from them on that account. It is believed that men of ardent temperament, whose zeal may have been somewhat in advance of their knowledge and discretion, have made such advances in the abolition enterprise as to produce a reaction. A few preachers and members, disappointed in their expectations, and despairing of the success of their cause in the Methodist Church, have withdrawn from our fellowship, and connected themselves with associations more congenial with their views and feelings; and others, in similar circumstances, may probably follow their example. But we rejoice in believing that these secessions will be very limited, and that the great body of Methodists in these states will continue, as they have been, one and inseparable. The uniformity and stability of our course should be such as to let all candid and thinking men see that the *cause* of secessions from us is not a change of our doctrine or moral discipline—no imposition of new terms of communion—no violation of covenant engagements on the part of the Church. It is a matter worthy of particu-

lar notice, that those who have departed from us do not pretend that any material change in our system, with respect either to doctrine, discipline, or government, has taken place since they voluntarily united themselves with us. And it is ardently to be desired that no such innovation may be effected, as to furnish any just ground for such a pretension.

The experience of more than half a century, since the organization of our ecclesiastical body, will afford us many important lights and landmarks, pointing out what is the safest and most prudent policy to be pursued in our onward course as regards African slavery in these states, and especially in our own religious community. This very interesting period of our history is distinguished by several characteristic features, having a special claim to our consideration at the present time, particularly in view of the unusual excitement which now prevails on the subject, not only in the different Christian Churches, but also in the civil body. And, First. Our General Rule on slavery, which forms a part of the constitution of the Church, has stood, from the beginning, unchanged, as testamentary of our sentiments on the principle of slavery and the slave-trade. And in this we differ, in no respect, from the sentiments of our venerable founder, or from those of the wisest and most distinguished statesmen and civilians of our own and other enlightened and Christian countries. Secondly. In all the enactments of the Church relating to slavery, a due and respectful regard has been had to the laws of the states, never requiring emancipation in contravention of the civil authority, or where the laws of the states would not allow the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom. Thirdly. The simply holding or owning slaves, without regard to circumstances, has, at no period of the existence of the Church, subjected the master to excommunication. Fourthly. Rules have been made, from time to time, regulating the sale, and purchase, and holding of slaves, with reference to the different laws of the states where slavery is tolerated, which, upon the experience of the great difficulties of administering them, and the unhappy consequences both to masters and servants, have been as often changed or repealed. These important facts, which form prominent features of our past history as a Church, may very properly lead us to inquire for that course of action, in future, which may be best calculated to preserve the peace and unity of the whole body, promote the greatest happiness of the slave population, and advance generally, in the slaveholding community of our country, the humane and hallowing influence of our holy religion. We can not withhold from you, at this eventful period, the solemn conviction of our minds, that no new ecclesiastical legislation on the subject of slavery, at this time, will have a tendency to accomplish these most desirable objects. And we are fully persuaded that, as a body of Christian ministers, we shall accomplish the greatest good by directing our individual and united efforts, in the spirit of the first teachers of Christianity, to bring both master and servant under the sanctifying influence of the principles of that Gospel which teaches the duties of every relation, and enforces the faithful discharge of them by the strongest conceivable motives. Do we aim at the amelioration of the condition of the slave? How can we so effectually accomplish this, in

our calling as ministers of the Gospel of Christ, as by employing our whole influence to bring both him and his master to a saving knowledge of the grace of God, and to a practical observance of those relative duties so clearly prescribed in the writings of the inspired apostles? Permit us to add that, although we enter not into the political contentions of the day, neither interfere with civil legislation, nor with the administration of the laws, we can not but feel a deep interest in whatever affects the peace, prosperity, and happiness of our beloved country. The union of these states, the perpetuity of the bonds of our national confederation, the reciprocal confidence of the different members of the great civil compact—in a word, the *well-being* of the community of which we are members, should never cease to lay near our hearts, and for which we should offer up our sincere and most ardent prayers to the almighty Ruler of the universe. But can we, as ministers of the Gospel, and servants of a Master "whose kingdom is not of this world," promote these important objects in any way so truly and permanently as by pursuing the course just pointed out? Can we, at this eventful crisis, render a better service to our country than by laying aside all interference with relations authorized and established by the civil laws, and applying ourselves wholly and faithfully to what specially appertains to our "high and holy calling;" to teach and enforce the moral obligations of the Gospel, in application to all the duties growing out of the different relations in society? By a diligent devotion to this evangelical employment, with a humble and steadfast reliance upon the aid of Divine influence, the number of "believing masters" and servants may be constantly increased, the kindest sentiments and affections cultivated, domestic burdens lightened, mutual confidence cherished, and the peace and happiness of society be promoted.

But while we sincerely and most affectionately, and, we humbly trust, in the spirit of the Gospel of Christ, recommend to you, and to all the ministers and members you represent in this body, to pursue such a course in regard to this deeply-exciting subject, we think it proper to invite your attention in particular to one point, intimately connected with it, and, as we conceive, of primary importance. It is in regard to the true import and application of the General Rule on slavery. The different constructions to which it has been subjected, and the variety of opinions entertained upon it, together with the conflicting acts of some of the annual conferences of the north and south, seem to require that a body, having legitimate jurisdiction, should express a clear and definite opinion, as a uniform guide to those to whom the administration of the Discipline is committed. (Journal of 1840, pp. 133-137.)

## DOCUMENT 33.

*Communication of Bishop Hedding to General Conference of Methodist Episcopal Church of 1840, dated Baltimore, May 6, 1840, in reference to the New England Conference.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—In a session of one of the annual conferences in the year 1838, two preachers were accused, tried, and acquitted; but, in my judgment, they were acquitted con-

trary to law and evidence. Of this I informed the said conference at the time, stating that I believed that they had erred in judgment, but not intentionally. I believe so still: nevertheless, that error has done much injury, and in my opinion will do much more, unless it be corrected.

Those brethren were accused of supposed wrongs done to me, and by acquitting them, the conference has impliedly censured me, and by that act, as I believe, encouraged the same brethren, and others, to inflict on me still farther injuries, which they have done to a great extent.

I informed that conference that I should lay this matter before the General conference—not by way of appeal, as I supposed I had no right to an appeal in this case—but by way of inviting the General conference to examine the acts of the annual conference in the premises.

As the appropriate committee may differ from me in judgment, in this matter, I forbear mentioning the name of the conference at this time, unless this body shall request me to do so; but by your direction I will state the case to the committee, and refer them to the journals of the said conference. Yours, etc.,

(Signed) ELIJAH HEDDING.\*

## DOCUMENT 34.

*Speeches on Dr. Bangs's Report on Slavery, presented May 21, 1840, to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church.*

WE find our space will compel us to give references, in the place of quoting some of our documents. In this case we must give the references to the speeches, in the place of quoting them.

Mr. Scott's speech, see W., Vol. VII, p. 34, col. 3, 4. Dr. Bangs's, W., Vol. VII, p. 34, col. 4, middle. E. Rierson's, W., Vol. VII, p. 34, col. 4, below. Dr. Capers's, W., Vol. VII, p. 34, col. 5. T. Crowder's, C., Vol. XIV, col. 1-2.

## DOCUMENT 35.

*Discussion on Colored Testimony, at General Conference of 1840.*

WE must here refer our readers to the discussion as published at the time, as we find our space calls for this course.

Wm. A. Smith, W., Vol. VII, p. 33, col. 1, 2. J. Horton, W., Vol. VII, p. 33, col. 2. D. Ostrander, W., Vol. VII, p. 39, col. 3-5. Bishop Soule, W., Vol. VII, p. 39, col. 5. N. Wilson, W., Vol. VII, p. 42, col. 1-4.

## DOCUMENT 36.

*Petition, from the official members of the Sharpstreet and Asbury colored Methodist Episcopal Churches, Baltimore, to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, convened in the city of Baltimore, May, 1840.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—We have learned with profound regret, with unutterable emotion, that your

\* W., Vol. VII, p. 25, col. 2.

venerable body adopted on the 18th instant, a resolution which substantially declares, that it is inexpedient and unjustifiable, to admit the testimony of colored persons against the white members of the Church, in those states where colored testimony against white persons, in civil and criminal cases, is illegal.

The adoption of such a resolution, by our highest ecclesiastical judicatory, a judicatory composed of the most experienced, and the wisest brethren in the Church, the choice selection of twenty-eight annual conferences, has inflicted, we fear, an irreparable injury upon eighty thousand souls for whom Christ died—souls, which, by this act of your body, have been stripped of the dignity of Christians, degraded in the scale of humanity, and treated as criminals, for no other reason than the color of their skin! Your resolution has, in our humble opinion, virtually declared, that a mere physical peculiarity, the handiwork of our all-wise and benevolent Creator, is *prima facie* evidence of incompetency to tell the truth, or is an unerring indication of unworthiness to bear testimony against a fellow-being whose skin is denominated white.

Believing that the adoption of this resolution, by your venerable body, is eminently calculated to foster and strengthen that unholy pride of caste, and those unchristian prejudices which are trampling us in the dust, and marring, as far as they can do it, the ineffaceable traces of the image of God, stamped upon our deathless spirits; believing that the deed you have done could not have originated in that love which works no ill for its neighbor, but in a disposition to propitiate that spirit which is not to be appeased, except through concessions derogatory to the dignity of our holy religion—knowing that the adoption of this soul-sickening resolution has destroyed the peace and alienated the affections of twenty-five hundred souls, members of the Church in this city, but who now feel that they are but spiritual orphans or scattered sheep, who are doomed to wander, if not to perish, having no spiritual shepherd who, they believe, cares for them; we say, being thus impressed, and thus circumstanced, we feel called upon most solemnly to protest against this act of the General conference, whereby every colored member of the Church is unjustifiably and unnecessarily disfranchised and degraded. We protest against this act of the conference, because it justifies the wicked and “condemns the just,” and is, consequently, an “abomination to the Lord;” because its tendency is to make one portion of the community proud, haughty, vainglorious, and overbearing; and produces in the other a state of imbittered feeling, which effectually impedes the free course of the Gospel among them, when proclaimed by those to whom they have been accustomed to look as their spiritual guides.

Brethren, out of the abundance of the heart we have spoken. Our grievance is before you! If you have any regard for the salvation of the eighty thousand immortal souls committed to your care; if you would not thrust beyond the pale of the Church, twenty-five hundred souls in this city—a few words lost—if you would not incur the fearful, the tremendous responsibility, of offending not only one, but many thousands of his “little ones;” we conjure you to wipe from your journal the odious resolution which is ruining our people.

Brethren, we are led to believe that, could the

instigators and supporters of this most exceptionable resolution, only see the evil which its adoption by the conference has already done—could they witness the heart-rending spectacle of a whole people in sackcloth, they would see cause to go out speedily and weep bitterly. To those of our brethren, from whatever part of the Union they may have come, who espoused our cause in the hour of trial, we tender our heart-felt thanks; they have our prayers and our tears, the blessing of the poor, and these we know are not unheeded by the great Head of the Church, who is no respecter of persons.

Finally, brethren, if you expunge from your Conference Journal the resolution in question, we shall be greatly relieved, and shall regard the act as an evidence that you are not unmindful of our spiritual interests. On the contrary, if you, upon a reconsideration of the subject—for which we pray—justify the deed you have done, you will, to say the least, render it impossible for us to esteem you very highly in love for your work's sake.

And now, brethren, in giving you an honest expression of our convictions and feelings, we have, in your view, “gone forth beyond discretion's mark,” or employed a phraseology savoring of asperity, we beseech you, before you pass judgment upon us, in this respect—for we wholly disclaim any intention of offending or irritating—to review the character of the resolution adopted, and its disastrous effects upon our interests and happiness; reflect that we are men, and have all the sensibilities of men; and you will, perhaps, come to a different conclusion, or pass upon us a mitigated sentence.

That the great Head of the Church may guide you in your deliberations, and conduct you to the best conclusion, is the fervent prayer of your much afflicted brethren. (Matlack, ch. XII, pp. 218-220.)

#### DOCUMENT 37.

*Debates on that part of the Report of the Committee on Itinerancy, relating to the acts of the Georgia and New England Conferences, before the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, June 2, 1840.*

THE New England conference, as has appeared to the committee, have been, during the last four years, disorganizing in their proceedings—indeed, to have pursued a course destructive to the peace, harmony, and unity of the Church, in that,

1. They have gone beyond the proper jurisdiction of an annual conference, and in doing so have pronounced upon the characters of those brethren who were not at all responsible to them. In that,

2. The journals of that conference exhibit no grounds on which they acquitted Orange Scott, who, by direct implication, had been found guilty, by a large majority of the last General conference, of publishing statements concerning members of that body which were gross misrepresentations, or flagrant and scandalous falsehoods. In that,

3. The same absence exists of all showing of reasons for acquitting Orange Scott and La Roy Sunderland, on sundry charges of evil doing, growing out of abolition movements in which they were engaged. In that,

4. The said conference, disregarding the established usages of Methodism, permitted the members of their body to be present during the examination of their own characters. In that,

5. The conference did, by an official act, advise, or request, that La Roy Sunderland should be left without an appointment. In that,

6. The conference did sustain Orange Scott in neglecting his appropriate work as a Methodist preacher, while he was prosecuting an agency unknown to, and not recognized by, the Discipline.

The question now being on the adoption of the whole report,

Rev. J. Dodge offered an amendment to the preamble condemnatory of the Georgia resolutions. He thought that, as the action of several conferences had received animadversion, impartially required that there should be uniformity of treatment. He, therefore, moved to amend the report by adding, "The action of the Georgia conference, in declaring that slavery, as it exists in these United States, is not a moral evil, contradicts the sense of the General Rule and the tenth section of the Discipline on the subject, and is, therefore, irregular."

Rev. W. Winans explained that the committee were directed by the journals and the representatives of the several conferences.

Rev. S. Miner moved that the amendment proposed by Rev. J. Dodge be laid on the table.

Rev. S. K. Hedges requested that the motion be withheld till he had corrected the views just presented, in respect to the Georgia resolutions; and, that he might be more readily understood, he begged leave to read them. They read thus:

*Whereas*, there is a clause in the Discipline of our Church that states that we are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; and whereas, the said clause has been perverted by some, and used in such a manner as to produce the impression that the Methodist Episcopal Church believed *slavery* to be a *moral evil*; therefore,

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Georgia annual conference that *slavery*, as it exists in the United States, is not a *moral evil*.

*Resolved*, That we view slavery as a civil and domestic institution, and one with which, as ministers of Christ, we have nothing to do, farther than to ameliorate the condition of the slave, by endeavoring to impart to him and his master the benign influences of the religion of Christ, and aiding both on their way to heaven.

And now, said Rev. S. K. Hodges, the meaning of the resolutions is plainly and intelligibly that slavery, as it exists among us, is not a *damning* *sia*. To confess ourselves in the constant practice and sanction of a moral evil, would be to acknowledge ourselves guilty of transgression against the law of God. Do brethren deny this? Let them do so. We wish to understand them distinctly on this subject.

The Georgia conference is not to be reprobated for assuming an attitude merely defensive. We accused no one—made no ungenerous reflections on any sister conference—did not contradict the sentiments of the Discipline, but have simply declared that we do not believe ourselves to be sinners because of the existence of slavery among us. But why this act? Why, I will tell you, sir. A crusade has been commenced against us—against our dearest interests—and circum-

stances, imperative and uncontrollable, imposed upon us high obligations to resist, with honesty of heart, with firm attachment to Methodism, and with resolute determination, the aggressions of pseudo-philanthropists, whose sympathy for the colored man evaporated in fumes of gross slander and obloquy of the white, and of the whole Southern Church.

The facts of the case stood thus: A distinguished gentleman, who had been among the first to patronize our missions among the slaves, had been excited by the publications of the abolitionists, to examine the Discipline of the Church, and, finding the chapter on slavery, declared and determined, if the Church adopted the abolition interpretation of that section of the Discipline, we could visit his plantation no more. He said that he had confidence in our missionaries, but that in the changes which our economy involved, he knew not who might be appointed to labor among his people, and feared that, in time to come, when his slave might, perchance, be brought to the gallows for the murder of his family, he might retort upon the executioners of the law, "The men whom you permitted to come among us as our spiritual guides, taught us the doctrines which has conduced to this fatal issue." Were we to hesitate in declaring our honest sentiments? Our expulsion from the premises of the gentleman to whom allusion has been made would have been the signal for the ejection from every field occupied by our missionaries. Our brethren had preached the Gospel of the Son of God to master and to slave—they had said to each, "Jesus died for you," and the word had been accompanied with the Holy Ghost and power, and had widely prevailed. Hundreds had been converted to God, and gathered into the Church. Were we to abandon the children of the kingdom, and leave the whole colored population to the grossest superstition, and the most degrading vices? We could not find it in our heart to do it. An expression of sentiment was imperiously demanded by the circumstances of our condition. We made it openly—inoffensively—without recrimination of those who had grossly abused us, and who had jeopardized by their *ultraism*, interests dear to us, and dear to the Church of God. We have expressed the sentiments of the Methodist Episcopal Church; the resolutions coincided with the uniform policy of the Church in England and America. Slavery is a civil and domestic institution, belonging to the jurisdiction of the state, and not to the Church. Such is our ground. Is it not Methodistic and tenable? Is this conference prepared to deny it, and condemn us? Let them do it; we want the question settled. We have received the Discipline, and lived by it; have asked no change, sent up no memorials; and, for *twenty years*, have maintained the institutions of the Church, and submitted to offensive legislation without complaint. Yes, sir, we receive the Discipline as it is, not as it may be made.

The amendment was, on motion, laid on the table.

On motion, the session was continued fifteen minutes.

Bishop Hedding said that if conference would indulge him, he felt it to be his duty to offer a few observations. He had strong and ardent feelings of friendship for the New England conference; and, though they had erred in some of their acts, still, as a body, they certainly

were good men and fast friends of the Church. If he might be permitted to give his advice on the subject now occupying their deliberations, he would state immediately what it was, and then offer some of the reasons which influenced him.

His advice, then, was, that the committee amend the report by striking out that part which relates to the New England conference. One reason justificatory of this recommendation was, that the brethren of that section had been under strong excitement; so powerful that, to his belief, they had not understood the real nature and bearing of their own official acts. Many causes had been operative in the production and sustaining of that excitement; one which had operated to increase and prolong it was the act of the Georgia conference. That act, it is true, is explained by the delegates from that conference, has a very different interpretation from that which the words employed in the resolutions would signify, and from that which had been attached to them by the northern people. The comments and explanations did not accompany the resolution. It is understood by those of the north to mean what the phraseology, naked and unqualified, literally imports. Had the resolution said, as it seems to have been intended to do, that slavery, as it exists in the Methodist Church, is not a moral evil, the great body of the northern membership would unhesitatingly have believed it. And probably but little would have been said about it one way or the other. But the resolution affirms that slavery, as it exists in the United States, is not a moral evil. The northerners say that slavery, as it exists in the United States, confers upon the master unlimited power to dispose of the slave, even to the extent of an involuntary separation of man and wife; that this is frequently done; and this they declare to be a moral evil. They contend that slavery in practice frequently inflicts great injuries on the subjects of it through the ownership of drunkards, infidels, and other immoral individuals. And they, construing the resolution according to the import of the terms, affirm that it declares that the exercise of all the power allowed to the master, and all the practices incident to the condition of slavery, as existing in this country, are not moral evils. Now, though we are convinced that the Georgia brethren never intended to convey this idea, yet so have they been understood by many of their brethren in the north.

You have been invited to give an opinion on that resolution; you decline doing so, and, as things now are, you have probably acted wisely; for no opinion could be given which would not be liable to misconception, either in the north or south, and thus be productive of evil somewhere. As you have not seen fit to express your opinion on that resolution, it seems to be reasonable that you should not pass judgment on the acts of the New England conference.

Another reason is, that the excitement in the north is diminishing; and, if we do nothing to revive it, it is hoped that it may die away. But a declaration of opinion on the acts of the one conference, and not on the other, will certainly increase and swell the agitation. It is plain that the brethren of the north and of the south do not understand each other on this subject. But when they shall become calm, and their judgments unswayed by prejudice, and allow them mutually to defer to each other's

opinions, they will recede from the extremes to which they have pushed themselves, and meet on the true principles of Methodism—become content to treat the subject after the manner of St. Paul, and live together in harmony and brotherly love. (W., Vol. VII, pp. 46, 47. See special notes in the general collection.)

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DOCUMENT 38.

*Report on the Westmoreland Petition, passed by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, June 3, 1840. H. B. Bascom, Chairman.*

THE committee, to whom was referred the memorial and appeal of some fifteen official members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Westmoreland circuit, Baltimore conference, on the subject of alleged withholdment of right from a portion of the local ministry within the limits of that conference, and to whom was likewise referred the report of the Judiciary Committee, upon a similar remonstrance from the same division of the Baltimore conference, signed by about thirty official members of the Church, and addressed to the General conference in 1836, after giving to the subject the attention its obvious importance demands, beg leave to report the following as the result of their deliberations:

The particular portion, or rather general section, of country in which these remonstrances have their origin, although belonging to the Baltimore conference, is found within the limits of the state of Virginia; and the memorialists represent, in strong but respectful terms, that local preachers within the jurisdiction of the Baltimore conference, but residing in the commonwealth of Virginia, have, in considerable numbers, and for a succession of years, been rejected as applicants for deacon's and elder's orders in the ministry, solely on the ground of their being slaveholders, or the owners of slaves. In the memorials referred to, it is distinctly stated that election and ordination have been withheld from the applicants in question on no other ground, or pretense, than that of their being the owners of slave property; and it is further argued that the Baltimore conference avows this to be the only reason of the course they pursue, and which is complained of by the petitioners. The appellants allege further, that the laws of Virginia relating to slavery forbid emancipation, except under restrictions, and subject to contingencies amounting, to all intents and purposes, to a prohibition; and that the Discipline of the Church, having provided for the ordination of ministers thus circumstanced, the course pursued by the Baltimore conference operates as an abridgment of right, and, therefore, furnishes just ground of complaint. The memorialists regard themselves as clearly entitled to the protection of the well-known provisional exception to the General Rule on this subject, found in the Discipline, and assume, with confidence, and argue with firmness and ability, that no other objection being found to the character of candidates for ordination, it is a departure from the plain intendment of the law in the case, and a violation of not less express compact than of social justice, to withhold ordinations for reasons which the provisions of the law plainly declare are not to be considered as a

forfeiture of right. It is set forth in the argument of the appellants that, attaching themselves to the Church as citizens of Virginia, where, in the obvious sense of the Discipline, emancipation is impracticable, the holding of slaves, or failure to emancipate them, can not be pleaded in bar to the right of ordination, as is the case in states where emancipation, as defined and qualified by the rule in the case, is found to be practicable. In the latter case, the question is within the jurisdiction of the Church, inasmuch as the holding or not holding of property of this kind depends not upon the constitution and regulation of civil property, but upon the will and purpose of individuals. Under such circumstances the conduct in question is voluntary, and, in every final sense, the result of choice. In the former, however, where emancipation is resisted by the prohibition of law, it may be otherwise; and, in many instances, is known to be resulting entirely from the involuntary relations and circumstances of individuals connected with the very structure of civil polity, and the force and array of public opinion and popular interest. The memorialists advert to the fact, that we have in the Discipline two distinct classes of legislative provision in relation to slavery—the one applying to owners of slaves where emancipation is practicable, consistently with the interests of master and slaves, and the other where it is impracticable, without endangering such safety, and these interests on the part of both. With the former, known as the General Rule on this subject, the petitioners do not interfere in any way, and are content simply to place themselves under the protection of the latter as contracting parties with the Church; and the ground of complaint is, that the Church has failed to redeem the pledge of its own laws, by refusing or failing to promote to office ministers, in whose case no disability attaches on the ground of slavery, because the disability attaching in other cases is here removed by special provision of law, and so far leaves the right to ordination clear and undoubted, and hence the complaint against the Baltimore conference. In further prosecution of the duty assigned them, your committee have carefully examined the law, and inquired into the system of slavery as it exists in Virginia, and find the representation of the memorialists essentially correct. The conditions with which emancipation is burdened in that commonwealth, preclude the practicability of giving freedom to slaves as contemplated in the Discipline, except in extremely rare instances, say one in a thousand, and possibly not more than one in five thousand. The exception in the Discipline is, therefore, strictly applicable to all the ministers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church holding slaves in Virginia, and they appear clearly entitled to the benefit of the rule made and provided in such cases.

As emancipation, under such circumstances, is not a requirement of Discipline, it can not be made a condition of eligibility to office. An appeal to the policy and practice of the Church for fifty years past will show, incontestably, that, whatever may have been the convictions of the Church with regard to this great evil, the nature and tendency of the system of slavery, it has never insisted upon emancipation in contravention of civil authority; and it therefore appears to be a well-settled and long-es-

tablished principle in the polity of the Church, that no ecclesiastical disabilities are intended to ensue either to the ministers or members of the Church in those states where the civil authority forbids emancipation. The General Rule, therefore, distinctly and invariably requiring emancipation as the ground of right, and the condition of claim to ordination where the laws of the several states admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, and which, in the judgment of your committee, should always be carried into effect with unyielding firmness, does not apply to your memorialists, and can not, by any fair construction of law, affect their rights.

On the other hand, your committee have given the most careful consideration to the position of the Baltimore conference complained of by the appellants. The journals of the several sessions of the Baltimore conference, for a series of years, have been carefully examined, and found to be silent on the subject of the rejections in question, except the single statement that A, B, and C, from time to time, applied for admission, or orders, and were rejected. We find no rule or reason of action, no evidence of preconcertion, no grounds or reasons of rejection, stated in any form, directly or indirectly. Nothing of this kind is avowed in, or found upon, the face of the journals of that body. The charge of particular motives, it occurs to your committee, can not be sustained in the instance of a deliberative body, say the Baltimore conference, unless it appears in evidence that the motives have been avowed by a majority of the conference; and it is not in proof that the conference has ever had an action to this effect, whatever may have been the declaration of individuals sustaining the charge of the appellants. The fact charged, without reference to motives, that there has been a long list of rejections, both as it regards admission into the traveling connection and ordination, till the exception seems to be made a general rule, is, undoubtedly, true, and is not denied by the defendants. The evidence, however, in relation to specific reasons and motives is defective, and does not appear to sustain the charge of contravention of right by any direct accredited action of the Baltimore conference had in the premises.

That this view of the subject presents a serious difficulty, is felt by your committee, and must be so by all. The rule applicable in this case allows an annual conference to elect under the circumstances, but does not, and, from the very nature and ubiquity of the case, can not require it. Among the unquestioned constitutional rights of our annual conferences is that of acting freely, without any compulsory direction, in the exercise of individual franchise. Election here is plainly an assertion of personal right on the part of the different members composing the body, with regard to which the claim to question or challenge motives does not belong even to the General conference, unless the result has turned upon avowed considerations unknown to the law and rule in the case. The journal of the conference is the only part of its history of which this body has cognizance, and to extend such cognizance to the reasons and motives of individual members of conferences not declared to be the ground of action by a majority, would be to establish a rule at once subversive of the rights and independence of annual conferences. In the very nature of the case, an annual conference must possess the right of free and uncontrolled determination, not only in the choice

of its members, but in all its elections; and, keeping within the limits and restrictions of its charter, as found in the Discipline, can only be controlled in the exercise of such right by moral and relative considerations, connected with the intelligence and interests of the body.

The memorialists prayed the last General conference, and they again ask this, to interfere authoritatively, by change or construction of rule, so as to afford relief; and, in failure to do so, in the memorial of 1836, they ask to be set off to the Virginia conference as the only remaining remedy. In their present petition they are silent on the subject of a transfer to Virginia. Under all the circumstances of the case, and taking into the account the probabilities of future action in the premises, your committee can not but regard this as the only conclusive remedy. But how far this may be considered as relatively practicable, or whether advisable, in view of all the interests involved, the committee have no means of determining, and, therefore, leave it to the judgment of those who have. That the petitioners, in accordance with the provisions of the Discipline, whether said provisions be right or wrong, are entitled to remedy, your committee can not for a moment doubt, inasmuch as they are laboring, and have been for years, under practical disabilities actually provided against by the Discipline of the Church. The alleged grievance is by the petitioners themselves regarded as one of administration, not of law. No change of legislation is asked for, unless this body prefer it; and it does not appear to your committee to be called for by any view of the subject they have been able to take.

Your committee are unwilling to close this brief view of the subject, without anxiously suggesting that, as it is one of the utmost importance, and intense delicacy in its application and bearings throughout our entire country, involving, in greater or less degree, the hopes and fears, the anxieties and interests of millions, it must be expected that great variety of opinions, and diversity of conviction and feeling, will be found to exist in relation to it, and most urgently call for the exercise of mutual forbearance and reciprocal good will on the part of all concerned. May not the principles and causes giving birth and perpetuity to great moral and political systems or institutions be regarded as evil, even essentially evil, in every primary aspect of the subject, without the implication of moral obliquity on the part of those involuntarily connected with such systems and institutions, and providentially involved in their operation and consequences? May not a system of this kind be jealously regarded as in itself more or less inconsistent with natural right and moral rectitude, without the imputation of guilt and derelict motive, in the instance of those who, without any choice or purpose of their own, are necessarily subjected to its influence and sway?

Can it be considered as just or reasonable to hold individuals responsible for the destiny of circumstances over which they have no control? Thus conditioned in the organic arrangements and distributions of society, is there any necessary connection between the moral character of the individual and that of the system? In this way the modifying influence of unavoidable agencies, or circumstances, in the formation of character, is a well-known principle, and one of universal recognition in law, morals, and re-

ligion, and upon which all administration of law, not unjust and oppressive, must proceed. And your committee know of no reason why the rule is inapplicable, or should not obtain in relation to the subject of this report. In conclusion, your committee would express the deliberate opinion that, while on the General Rule on the subject of slavery, relating to those states only whose laws admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, *should be firmly and constantly enforced*, the exception to the General Rule applying to those states where emancipation, as defined above, is not practicable, should be recognized and protected with equal *firmness and impartiality*. The committee respectfully suggest to the conference the propriety of adopting the following resolution:

*Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences, in General conference assembled, That under the provisional exception of the General Rule of the Church on the subject of slavery, the simple holding of slaves, or mere ownership of slave property, in states or territories where the laws do not admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom, constitutes no legal barrier to the election or ordination of ministers to the various grades of office known in the ministry of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and can not, therefore, be considered as operating any forfeiture of right in view of such election and ordination.* (Journal of 1840, pp. 167-171.)

#### DOCUMENT 39.

*Extracts on Slavery, from the Answer of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1840, to the Reverend, the President, and Members of the Wesleyan Methodist Conference of Great Britain.*

We have considered, with affectionate respect and confidence, your brotherly suggestions concerning slavery, and most cheerfully return an unreserved answer to them. And we do so the rather, brethren, because of the numerous prejudicial statements which have been put forth in certain quarters to the wounding of the Church. We assure you, then, brethren, that we have adopted no new principle or rule of discipline respecting slavery since the time of our apostolic Asbury; neither do we mean to adopt any. In our General Rules—called the “General Rules of the United Societies,” and which are of constitutional authority in our Church—“*the buying and selling of men, women, and children, with an intention to enslave them,*” is expressly prohibited; and in the same words, substantially, which have been used for the rule since 1792. And the extract of part 2, section 10, of our book of Discipline, which you quote with approbation, and denominate “a noble testimony,” is still of force to the same extent that it has been for many years; nor do we entertain any purpose to omit or qualify this section, or any part thereof. For while we should regard it a sore evil to divert Methodism from her proper work of “*spreading Scripture holiness over these lands,*” to questions of temporal import, involving the rights of Cæsar, yet are we not the less minded on that account to promote and set forward all humane and generous actions, or to prevent, to the utmost of our power, such as are evil and unchristian. It is our first desire, after *piety toward God*, to be “*merciful after our*

*power; as we have opportunity, doing good of every possible sort, and as far as possible to all men*—"to their bodies," but especially, and above all, "to their souls."

Of these United States—to the Government and laws of which "according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the Union, and the constitutions of the several states," we owe, and delight to render, a sincere and patriotic loyalty—there are several which do not allow of slavery. There are others in which it is allowed, and there are slaves; but the tendency of the laws, and the minds of the majority of the people, are in favor of emancipation. But there are others in which slavery exists so universally, and is so closely interwoven with their civil institutions, that both do the laws disallow of emancipation, and the great body of the people—the source of laws with us—hold it to be treasonable to set forth any thing, by word or deed, tending that way. Each one of all these states is independent of the rest, and sovereign, with respect to its internal government—as much so as if there existed no confederation among them for ends of common interest—and therefore it is impossible to frame a rule on slavery proper for our people in all the states alike. But our Church is extended through all the states, and as it would be wrong and unscriptural to enact a rule of Discipline in opposition to the Constitution and laws of the state on this subject, so also would it not be equitable or Scriptural to confound the positions of our ministers and people—so different as they are in different states—with respect to the moral question which slavery involves.

Under the administration of the venerated Dr. Coke, this plain distinction was once overlooked, and it was attempted to urge emancipation in *all* the states; but the attempt proved almost ruinous, and was soon abandoned by the Doctor himself. While, therefore, the Church has encouraged emancipation in those states where the laws permit it, and allowed the freedman to enjoy freedom, we have refrained, for conscience' sake, from all intermeddling with the subject in those other states where the laws make it criminal. And such a course we think agreeable to the Scriptures, and indicated by St. Paul's inspired instruction to servants, in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, chap. vii, ver. 20, 21. For if servants were not to care for their servitude when they *might not* be free, though if they *might* be free they should use it *rather*; so, neither should masters be condemned for not setting them free when they *might not* do so, though if they *might* they should do so *rather*. The question of the evil of slavery, abstractedly considered, you will readily perceive, brethren, is a very different matter from a principle or rule of Church discipline to be executed contrary to, and in defiance of, the law of the land. Methodism has always been—except, perhaps, in the single instance above—eminently loyal and promotive of good order; and so we desire it may ever continue to be, both in Europe and America. With this sentiment we conclude the subject, adding only the corroborating language of your noble Missionary Society, by the revered and lamented Watson, in their instructions to missionaries, published in the Report of 1833, as follows:

"As in the colonies in which you are called to labor, a great proportion of the inhabitants are in a state of slavery, the committee most strongly call to your remembrance what was so

fully stated to you when you were accepted as a missionary to the West Indies, that your only business is to promote the moral and religious improvement of the slaves to whom you have access, without, in the least degree, in public or private, interfering with their civil condition." (Journal of 1840, pp. 154-156.)

#### DOCUMENT 40.

*Extract on Slavery, from the Pastoral Address of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1840.*

SINCE the commencement of the present session of the General conference, memorials have been presented, principally from the northern and eastern divisions of the work, some praying for the action of the conference on the subject of slavery, and others asking for radical changes in the economy of the Church. The results of the deliberations of the committees to whom these memorials had a respectful reference, and the final action of the conference upon them, may be seen among the doings of this body, as reported and published. The issue in several instances is probably different from what the memorialists may have thought they had reason to expect. But it is to be hoped that they will not suppose the General conference has either denied them any legitimate right, or been wanting in a proper respect for their opinions. Such is the diversity of habits of thought, manners, customs, and domestic relations among the people of this vast republic, and such the diversity of the institutions of the sovereign states of the confederacy, that it is not to be supposed an easy task to suit all the incidental circumstances of our economy to the views and feelings of the vast mass of minds interested. We pray, therefore, that brethren whose views may have been crossed by the acts of this conference, will at least give us the credit of having acted in good faith, and of not having regarded private ends or party interest, but the best good of the whole family of American Methodists. (Journal of 1840, p. 159.)

#### DOCUMENT 41.

*Address to the President of the United States from the Committee of the British and Foreign Anti-slavery Society, dated 27 New Broad-street, London, March 5, 1841.*

For this document see Zion's Herald, Vol. XII, p. 108, col. 1.

#### DOCUMENT 42.

*The Colored Population of Maryland.*

THE following is a copy of a remonstrance against the bill relating to the colored population, which has been sent to the senate of Maryland, in behalf of the male members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the Baltimore City station:

*To the Honorable, the Senate of Maryland,—* At a meeting of the male members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the Baltimore City station, of the age of twenty-one years and upward, held in the Light-street church, February 28th, the undersigned were unanimously



appointed a committee to present to your honorable body, a respectful but strong remonstrance against the bill which has passed the house of delegates, entitled "An act for the better security of negro slaves in this state, and for promoting industry and honesty among the free people of color."

Did the provisions of the bill correspond with its title, we should not have been called thus to address your honorable body. While we have ever regarded slavery, in the language of our Discipline, as "a great evil," we have steadily and strongly opposed the abolition agitation, and have looked for the extinction of slavery, to the gradual and safe, but certain operation of the great principles of political wisdom and Christian ethics. This bill, however, tends to arrest the operation of these causes, and to perpetuate slavery in the state—a calamity hitherto deprecated alike by Christians and patriots.

"The promotion of industry and honesty among the free people of color," is certainly a most laudable object. But we can not see how this is to be secured by inflicting upon thousands of them who have heretofore been both industrious and honest, penalties which would be severe even against the worthless and vicious, and by withholding from all, in future, the principal inducements to industry and honesty. The enforcement of the proposed law must inevitably banish from the state many free persons, who are here without any fault of their own, and must subject to hopeless slavery many others equally innocent. So intricate is the labyrinth of legal formalities through which they are required to pass from year to year, and on every change of residence, however temporary—and so tempting are the rewards offered to informers, that few can escape from falling, sooner or later, into some of the snares which beset their path.

When it is considered that, of the people, who are to be the subjects of these enactments, many are united with us in Church fellowship, we can not but implore your honorable body to save them from a persecution more horrible than the African slave-trade.

Considering the peculiar importance of moral training to this class of our population, and the deep interest which the Methodist Church has taken in this work, we have been not a little surprised to find ingrafted upon the bill, provisions which would most effectually subvert the whole economy of our Church in reference to the colored people, and render it totally impossible to extend to them the instruction and direction of her ministry, without subjecting them to great risk as to their personal liberty. It is due to the colored members of our Church, to say that, as far as it is possible for us to ascertain, they have submitted quietly to the laws of the state. And we fully believe it is their wish and purpose to continue to do so. For their conduct, our ministry might possibly become responsible, at least in meetings under their immediate control.

But over the great mass of those attending our churches, who are not connected with us, it is utterly impossible and improper, that they should assume any such responsibility; although, doubtless, unwearied efforts will be continued by them to prevent any thing that might have the slightest tendency to interfere with the rights of slaveholders, "stir up to insurrection," or "excite discontent" among the people of color.

Revolting as would be the operation of the

proposed law on the people of color, we deprecate, almost as much, its corrupting influence on the whites. The making slaves of freemen has been denounced by Christendom as piracy, but by this bill every citizen is tempted to engage in the unhallowed work. And the officers of justice are compelled to a participation in it, which must degrade and corrupt this important department of government.

Did we take a one-sided view of this subject, it might be some consolation to suppose that such a law, in the event of its passage, would be so obnoxious to public sentiment, that it would not be enforced. But as Christians, as well as patriots, we can not but dread any increase of the already too prevalent disregard to the majesty of the law.

In fine, believing that such a law will present, at once, to the people of this state, the alternative, of enslaving the free or freeing the slave, we can not but deprecate its enactment, as destined to bring into primary assemblies of the people, and into every congregation and religious body of the state, an agitation which must be perpetuated, in strife and bitterness, till consequences result most disastrous to the commonwealth.

Signed in behalf of the male members, etc.,  
THOS. E. BOND, JR.,  
G. C. M. ROBERTS, } Committee.  
ROBERT EMORY, }

March 2, 1842. \*

#### DOCUMENT 43.

*Extracts from the paper entitled "Withdrawal from the Methodist Episcopal Church of Jotham Horton, Orange Scott, and La Roy Sunderland."*

Providence, R. I., November 8, 1842.

WITH the date of this communication closes our connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church. We take this step after years of consideration, and with a solemn sense of our responsibility to God; we take it with a view to his glory and the salvation of souls.

Twenty years, and upward, of the best part of our lives has been spent in the service of this Church, during which time we have formed acquaintances which have endeared to our hearts multitudes of Christian friends. Many of these are true kindred spirits, and we leave them with reluctance. But the view we take of our responsibility is not local in its bearings, nor limited in its duration. While we live, and when we die, we wish to bear a testimony which shall run parallel with coming ages; nay, with the annals of eternity. Many considerations of friendship, as well as our temporal interests, bind us to the Church of our early choice. But for the sake of a high and holy cause, we can forego all these. We wish to live not for ourselves, nor for the present age alone, but for all coming time; nay, for God and eternity. We have borne our testimony a long time against what we considered wrong in the Methodist Episcopal Church. We have waited, prayed, and hoped, till there is no longer any ground for hope. Hence we have come to the deliberate conclusion that we must submit to things as they are, or peaceably retire. We have unhesitatingly chosen the latter.

It is, however, proper, in leaving the Church,

that we assign our reasons. These are, mainly, the following:

1. The Methodist Episcopal Church is not only a slaveholding, but a slavery-defending Church.

2. The government of the Methodist Episcopal Church contains principles not laid down in the Scriptures, nor recognized in the usages of the primitive Church—principles which are subversive of the rights, both of ministers and laymen.

(1.) That the Methodist Episcopal Church is a slaveholding Church, none will deny. It is not, of course, meant that slaves are a part of our Church funds, though it is believed the fruits of slaveholding, or of slave-buying and selling, make a large portion of these funds. But what we mean, is, that the Methodist Episcopal Church allows her members and ministers, unrebuked, to hold innocent human beings in a state of hopeless bondage; nay, more, that she upholds and defends her communicants in this abominable business! All her disciplinary regulations, which present a show of opposition to slavery, are known and acknowledged to be a dead letter in the south; and they are as dead in the north as in the south. Even the General Rule has been altered, either through carelessness or design, so as to favor the internal slave-trade; and yet the last General conference refused to correct the error, knowing it to be such!

(2.) The government of the Methodist Episcopal Church contains principles not laid down in the Scriptures, nor recognized in the usages of the primitive Church—principles which are subversive of the rights both of ministers and laymen.

While we admit that no form of Church government is laid down in the Scriptures, we contend that principles are laid down which are in direct contravention with some existing forms.

That the Roman Catholic form is of this class, all will admit. The claims of high Churchmen are believed to be equally unfounded. And though the objectionable features in our form of Church government are less wide of the mark, yet they are as truly unauthorized as any thing in either of the above-mentioned forms.

Both Scripture and primitive usage recognize Christians in the light of one great brotherhood, possessing essentially the same rights, subject only to one master. True, pastors and people have their peculiar and distinctive duties, but there is to be no "lording it over God's heritage."

We wish it may be distinctly understood that we do not withdraw from any thing essential to pure Wesleyan Methodism. We only dissolve our connection with Episcopacy and slavery. These we believe to be antisciptural, and well calculated to sustain each other.

There are many valuable things in the economy of Methodism; these we shall adhere to. And this we can do without having any connection with what is worse than objectionable. We know it will be said, God has greatly blessed the Church, and is evidently still owing her, and, therefore, we ought not to disturb her peace by any discussions of her polity. The same remark may be made in regard to slavery. And yet, who will pretend either that slavery is right, because God has so wonderfully blessed the Church, or that, for this reason, we should refrain from agitating her with discussions on the subject? We ask who? for we all know that anti-abolitionists have used this very argument.

Abolitionists, however, have considered it unsound. Let them, then, be careful how they take precisely the same ground in relation to another matter. True, God has blessed us; but this is not, perhaps, so much owing to our slavery and Episcopacy, as to the evangelical character of our doctrines and our zeal. And let us not forget that he has blessed other Churches, too.

Should it be said that God has frowned upon all who have left the Church, it might be replied, in the first place, that this is not the fact. Some of the secessions from the Church are prospering as well, in proportion to their means, as the Methodist Episcopal Church. And, secondly, if it were true, it would not prove that the act of their leaving the Church was displeasing to God; much less would it prove that no circumstances can exist which will make a secession justifiable.

Though we entertain none other but kind feelings toward those we leave, yet we expect to be ill-treated by our former friends. We know how it has been with others who have left. To lose ministers and members is a mortification to sectarian pride. Those who will defend the Church and her usages are fine fellows; but the moment they leave her communion, no reproachful epithets are too bad to heap upon them. Their motives are impugned, and their honesty questioned. And this, for effect, is sometimes done in advance! But we have counted the cost, and are prepared to suffer persecution. By whatever spirit some of our opponents may be actuated, we hope to be saved from all unkind expressions.

Though but three of us sign this document, scores, if not hundreds, to our certain knowledge, might have easily been obtained. We did not wish any other names now. There will be an opportunity for all who may desire it, to follow our example. We shall not be disappointed if but few do this. We have no anxiety on this ground. We act for ourselves. Knowing, however, that there are hundreds, if not thousands, who entertain the same sentiments we do, we have prepared an outline of discipline, or plan of operation, a summary of which will be given in the paper containing this withdrawal. The entire plan will soon be published. It will be seen, from the summary, that we have made provision to organize the Churches, if there is a call for it.

And now, dear brethren of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we bid you farewell. Many of you we know and love; and, while we do not impeach your motives or honesty, we hope, in turn, you will not treat us as barbarians. There is room enough for us all. Let us all have no unchristian contention.

JOTHAM HORTON,  
ORANGE SCOTT,  
LA ROY SUNDEBLAND.\*

#### DOCUMENT 44.

*Report of the Committee on sundry Memorials on Slavery, adopted by the Rock River Conference, 1843.*

THE committee, to whom were referred sundry memorials on the subject of slavery, have had the same under consideration, and after bestowing much attention to the subject, and feeling, as they hope, a duo sense of its magnitude

and importance, beg leave to submit the following as the result of their deliberations:

When Methodism was first introduced into the original colonies of this republic, it found slavery in existence here as a great and growing evil. There was at that time no religious society or Church in these colonies which took a decided stand against this evil, except the followers of Fox and Penn, commonly called Friends, or Quakers. With this exception the early Methodist preachers were the first who were found, in a public and decided manner, to preach against the evils of slavery. And this was done in the midst of slaveholders, with great point and plainness, and was almost a constant theme with many of the ablest and most efficient ministers of those days. Indeed we have a number of worthy fathers in the ministry yet living among us, who were remarkable for their zeal and success in this humane and righteous cause. Thousands of slaves have been emancipated through their instrumentality, and they had free access to both slave and master while the matter was left to their own management.

And it was not only in the pulpit and in the family circle that our fathers bore their testimony against the evils of slavery; but they kept up a perpetual record of it in their printed minutes, and subsequently made it a standing rule in our book of Discipline. Thus, "American slavery" has been "condemned" by our preachers, and in our printed publications, from the earliest history of "our united societies."

That slavery should still exist in any part of these United States, and especially in the Methodist Episcopal Church, is greatly to be lamented. And did the means of remedying so great an evil lie within the power of this conference, it would most gladly apply that remedy. But your committee can not see that it belongs to an annual conference, which derives all its powers from the General conference, and one, too, which lies at a distance from any state tolerating slavery, to take any further action on the subject than barely to express its views and wishes.

In view of the whole subject, and in compliance with the wishes of your memorialists, your committee would respectfully recommend the adoption of the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That the manly and Christian firmness with which our fathers in the Gospel have opposed the evils of slavery in our Church from its earliest history meets our hearty approbation.

2. *Resolved*, That we, as a conference, regard the system of domestic slavery entailed upon the southern portion of these United States a great moral evil, from which it becomes those who reside in that section of our country to relieve their institutions so soon as, in the order of Providence, it may be effected.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

Signed in behalf of the committee,

H. CREWS, *Chairman*.

A true copy from the file of the Rock River conference. JOHN T. MITCHELL, *Sec'y*.\*

#### DOCUMENT 45.

*Resolutions adopted at the Boston Antislavery Convention, held January 18, 1843.*

THE following are the resolutions which were adopted by the Convention:

1. *Resolved*, That the holding or treating human beings as property, or claiming the right to hold or treat them as property, is a flagrant violation of the law of God: it is sin in itself: a sin in the abstract, and in the concrete: a sin under all circumstances, and in every person claiming such right; and no apology whatever can be admitted to justify the perpetration.

2. *Resolved*, That as the unanimity and harmony of feeling which should ever characterize the people of God, can not exist so long as slavery continues in the Church, we feel it our imperative duty to use all such means as become Christians, in seeking its immediate and entire abolition from the Church of which we are members.

3. *Resolved*, That the Methodist Episcopal Church, being a unit in its doctrine and Discipline, in its legislative and judicial departments, and almost one in its executive operations, is, as a body, responsible for the existence of slavery in its pale, but more especially the ministry, with whom the legislative, judicial, and executive duties rest, and who have the power to purge the Church of this shocking abomination.

4. *Resolved*, That slavery being a sin, and this sin in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Church a unit as above, nothing short of a speedy and entire separation of slavery from the Church can satisfy the consciences of honest and faithful abolitionists; and, therefore, reformation or division is the only alternative.

5. *Resolved*, That we all unitedly and solemnly pledge to God and each other, our zealous and unceasing efforts, while there is hope, to purge the Methodist Episcopal Church and the land from slavery.

Whereas, all slaveholding, that is, all claim of the right of property in human beings, is essentially a sin against God; and whereas, every slaveholder is, per consequence, a sinner; therefore,

6. *Resolved*, That we do not and will not fellowship a person claiming the above right, or holding slaves, as a Christian; nor ought he to be admitted to the pulpit or the communion.

7. *Resolved*, That while we do all we can in the several relations we sustain to the Church, to extirpate the great sin of slavery from her pale, we do not, by remaining members, either countenance or fellowship the slaveholder.

11. *Resolved*, That the Methodist Episcopal Church being governed by a majority of the General conference, and as the north have a majority in the legislative, judicial, and executive branches of the Church, the sin of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church is emphatically a sin of the north, as it exists by their consent, and could be abolished from the Church by their votes at any time.

12. *Resolved*, That as our bishops and presiding elders have most authority as judicial and executive officers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they can do more in the intervals of the General conference than any other portion of the Church, for the overthrow of slavery in it, and therefore are more responsible in the premises, and are hereby earnestly requested to cooperate with us for its removal.

14. *Resolved*, That the passage of the resolution at our late General conference, by which the colored members of our Church in such states as reject their testimony in courts of law, are denied the right of bearing testimony against white persons in Church trials, is an alarming and arbi-

trary exercise of arbitrary ecclesiastical power, subversive of the inalienable right of every member of the Church of Christ, contrary to the spirit of the Gospel, and inflicted a blot on the reputation of the Methodist Church that time can never efface.

15. *Resolved*, That the passage of the colored testimony resolution, at our late General conference, demands the interference of every member of the Church, and that it is the imperative duty of all who do not wish to be held responsible for its continuance to protest against it in a decided and earnest memorial to the next General conference, and we hereby call on all the members of our Church to record their disapprobation of the above resolution, and require, in terms that can not be misunderstood, its immediate repeal.

Whereas, the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, p. 176, provides, in substance, that no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in the Church, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation, and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom therein; and whereas, it appears that one of the bishops of said Church did, in the month of May, 1840, set apart and ordain to the holy office of elder in said Church, a man who was a slaveholder, and lived at the time in a state where the laws did allow of emancipation, and did permit the emancipated person to enjoy freedom therein; therefore,

17. *Resolved*, That this convention respectfully request the New England conference of said Church, at its next session, to address the next General conference on this subject, and to instruct their delegates to that body to take such means as shall bring the matter fully before said General conference, for full examination and adjudication.

18. *Resolved*, That, whereas, in the sight of the most high God, it is not the color of the skin, but the state of the heart which is regarded, it is inconsistent with our Christian profession and character to despise or slight, or make any difference among men on account of their color, but especially in the house of God, and at the communion; and that all legislative enactments, based on this fact, are founded in injustice, contrary to every principle of humanity, and the government of God, who unequivocally declares that he is not a respecter of persons. (Scraps, I, pp. 42, 43.)

#### DOCUMENT 46.

*Memorial to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, adopted by the Preachers in Boston and its vicinity, January 22, 1844.*

FATHERS AND BRETHREN,—In accordance with the expressed views of the New England conference, as published in Zion's Herald and Journal of August 9, 1843, we, the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, residing in

, Boston district, New England conference, being convinced of the great evil and enormous wickedness of slavery, as connected with the Church of our choice, and feeling ourselves most solemnly bound by our Bibles, our Discipline, our religion, and our antislavery vows and purposes to do all in our power for the extirpation of this great abomination, and trembling when we reflect that God is just, do hereby respectfully and earnestly request your decided attention to the following objects:

1. That the resolution passed at the last General conference on colored testimony, be recon-

sidered, and its force and influence nullified, and the breach healed; that the Church may no longer lie under the imputation of injustice in principle, impurity in character, or evil in its reputation, by the existence of an act that we can not regard in any other light than as a source of evil, and only evil, and that continually.

2. That in view of the fact that the General Rules do fully condemn, and the tenth section does declare *slavery* to be a great evil, and in view of the action of our annual conference, by which our delegates were instructed, and by our own convictions of right, we do entreat you not to elect any man to the office of general superintendent, or any other office in the gift of the General conference, who holds slaves, or advocates the system of involuntary bondage.

3. We most respectfully and earnestly entreat you, by virtue of the constitution of Methodism, and in accordance with the prevailing sentiment of the greatest portion of the world, and for the honor of our character as professors and ministers of the holy religion of the Bible, to take such measures, or adopt such means as shall directly tend to effectually rid the Methodist Episcopal Church of the *great evil* slavery. (Scraps, VIII, p. 18.)

*Memorial of the Worcester Convention, held February 27, 1844, to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to meet at New York, May 1, 1844.*

The undersigned, preachers and members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, respectfully represent,

That in our opinion the General Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church explicitly and by clear construction forbid the practice of slaveholding by members of the Church.

1. By forbidding the "buying and selling of men, women, and children with the intention to enslave them;" the criminality of which can only consist in "the intention to enslave." And that this was the sense of the conference at that time, is proved by its enactment about the same time of a rule that "those who buy or sell slaves, or give them away unless on purpose to free them, shall be expelled immediately."

2. By requiring the members of the Church to do no harm; to avoid evil of every kind. The Church has pronounced slavery a "great evil," and the General Rules require us to avoid it.

3. By forbidding that we "do unto others as we would not that they should do unto us," which forbids the using our neighbor's service without wages, or oppressing him in any way.

Other requirements of the General Rules also condemn the practice of slaveholding, and the practical enforcement of those requirements would emancipate every slave held by members of the Church.

These General Rules the General conference have not power to alter, or to enact regulations which are inconsistent with them.

The undersigned further represent that the 10th section of part 2d of the Discipline is so construed in some portions of the Church as to be inconsistent with the fundamental rules of the Church, inasmuch as it virtually allows what the General Rules forbid.

(1.) By declaring that "no slaveholder shall be eligible to any official station in our Church hereafter, where the laws of the state in which he lives will admit of emancipation and permit the liberated slave to enjoy freedom," it virtually allows that slaveholding shall not prevent his enjoying the rights of a private member of the Church.

(2.) A traveling preacher only forfeits his ministerial character by refusing to emancipate his slaves, but not his private membership.

(3.) In states where the law will not permit the liberated slave to enjoy his freedom, slaveholding works no forfeiture of any privilege of the Church.

For these reasons we deem the provisions of the 10th section, part 2d, as thus construed, to be contrary to the constitutional principles of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and most earnestly pray you, as the revered conservators of the principles and institutions of that Church, to so alter the answers to the question in that section as to make them distinctly conform to the General Rules, by making all slaveholding inconsistent with membership in the Church. (Scraps, VIII, p. 43.)

#### DOCUMENT 47.

*Speech of Rev. L. L. Hamline, May 27, 1844, on the Case of Bishop Andrew, before the General Conference.*

MR. HAMLIN said, I do not rise, Mr. President, with the hope that I shall "communicate light" on the topics before us; but rather for the purpose of imploring light from others. It can not be unkind in me to suggest that this discussion has taken an unprofitably wide range; for many whispers within the bar, and the complaints of several speakers on the floor, show that this is the case. We have drawn into the debate many questions which have but a very slight connection with the propositions contained in the resolution. I would, if possible, call the attention of the conference from matters so remote to the real issue in the case. It is complained that we seem to have forsaken all argument, and a call is made for our "strong reasons." We ought, indeed, to argue on both sides. And if I should not do it, I will, at least, refrain from addressing a word to the galleries, or to the spectators.

There ought to be two questions before us. First, *Has the General conference constitutional authority to pass this resolution?* Second, *Is it proper or fitting that we should do it?* The first question should be first argued; but so far it has scarcely been touched. If we have not authority to pass the resolution, to discuss its expediency is surely out of place; for it can never be expedient to violate law, unless law violates justice. I shall leave the question of expediency to others, or only glance at it; but I ask your attention to the topic of conference authority.

The resolution proposes to suspend the exercise of a bishop's functions on a certain condition to be performed by him. If I mistake not, the resolution is a *mandamus* measure. Its passage will absolutely suspend the exercise of the superintendent's *functions*, till he complies with the prescribed condition. The measure of power required to do this is the same which would be requisite to suspend or depose a bishop for such reasons as the resolution mentions, or, in other words, for "*improper conduct*." Have we, then, such authority? I shall assume that we have; hoping, if I *prove* nothing, to provoke proof, *pro* or *con*, from the brethren who surround me.

I argue this authority from the General conference, first, *from the genius of our polity on points which the most nearly resemble this*. Strict amenability in Church officers, subordinate and superior, is provided for in our Discipline. From the

class-leader upward, this amenability regards not only major but minor morals—not only the *vices*, but also the *improprieties* of behavior. The class-leader, by mere eccentricity, becomes unpopular in his class. The pastor at discretion removes him from his office. The exhorter or unordained local preacher proves unacceptable, and a quarterly conference refuses to renew his license. The itinerant pastor is not useful in charge, and the bishop or the presiding elder deposes him from his charge or from the pastoral office, and makes him an assistant. The presiding elder impairs his usefulness on a district, not by gross *malfesance*, but by a slight *mifesa*; or oftener still, because "he is not popular," and the bishop removes him to a station or a circuit, and, perhaps, makes him an assistant. I speak not now of annual appointments, when the term of the itinerant expires by limitation, but of removals by the bishop or the presiding elder in the intervals of conference, which always imply a deposing from office, as well as a stationing act. In all these instances the manner of removing from office is peculiar. First. It is *summary*, without accusation, trial, or formal sentence. It is a ministerial, rather than a judicial act. Second. It is for no crime, and generally for no misdemeanor, but for being "unacceptable." Thirdly. Most of these removals from office are by a sole agent; namely, by a bishop or preacher, whose will is omnipotent in the premises. Fourthly. The removing officer is not legally obliged to assign any cause for deposing. If he do so, it is through courtesy, and not as of right. Fifthly. The deposed officer has no appeal. If indiscreetly or unnecessarily removed, he must submit; for there is no tribunal authorized to cure the error, or to rectify the wrong. But we believe that there are good and sufficient reasons for granting this high power of removal to those who exercise it. It promotes religion. It binds the Church in a strong and almost indissoluble unity. It quickens the communication of healing influences to the infected and the enfeebled parts of the body ecclesiastical. In a word, it is a system of surpassing energy. By it executive power is sent in its most efficient form, and without loss of time, from its highest sources or remotest fountains, through the preachers and class-leaders, to the humblest member of the Church. The system is worthy of all eulogy.

We will now inquire as to the bishop. In his case is this strong feature of Methodism lost sight of? Is he, who can at discretion, by himself or by his agents, remove from office so many, among whom are thousands of his coördinates or peers, subject in turn to no such summary control? We have seen that to lodge this power of removal in superior, and impose submission to it on inferior officers, is the fashion of Methodism. She loves the system. She carries it up through many grades of office till we reach the bishop. Does it suddenly stop there? If so, on what ground? I can conceive none. If any can, let the reasons be arrayed before us. I can perceive none, Mr. President, *in being*; but I can conceive them possible under given circumstances. In Church and in state there must always be an ultimate or supreme authority, and the exercise of it must be independent, so far as systematic responsibility is concerned. But is the Episcopacy in regard to this question supreme? Certainly not. The General conference, adjunct in certain exigencies with the annual conferences, is the ultimate depository of power in our Church.

And I beg to dwell here. For, in the second place, I shall argue our authority to depose a bishop summarily for improprieties morally innocent, which embarrass the exercise of his functions, *from the relations of the General conference to the Church, and to the Episcopacy.*

This conference, adjunct—but rarely—with the annual conferences, is supreme. Its supremacy is universal. It has legislative, judicial, and executive supremacy. Its legislative supremacy consists of “*full powers to make rules,*” as the Discipline words it. This is full power for *quasi legislation.* Under self-assumed restrictions, which are now of constitutional force and virtue—especially as they originated in a General conference, composed not of delegates, but of traveling preachers—it can make *rules of every sort* for the government of the Church. The restrictions are few and simple. They embrace our Articles of Religion, the ratio of representation, the perpetuity of Episcopacy, and the general superintendency, the General Rules, trial by committee and appeal, and the avails of the Book Concern. Beyond these slender restrictions, its legislation is legitimate and conclusive; and within them it is so, if the members of the annual conferences are consenting.

Now, Mr. President, in legislation the bishop has not only peers, but more than peers. In clerical orders every man on this floor is his equal, but in legislative functions, his superior. Can you contribute the uplifting of a hand for or against a conference act? You may not do it. The Discipline, which we shape at pleasure, defies your touch. You may not, in this regard, breathe upon it. You may not spread the plaster upon a patch which we, *ad libitum*, apply to its weak parts. If the conference, by a tie, fail to do what is desirable to be done, and—like the philosopher's starving brute, caught centrally between two heaps of hay—can not escape from the dilemma, I believe it is doubted by the college of bishops whether the president can come to our rescue by a casting vote.

This conference has *judicial* supremacy. It is a court of appeal beyond which no parties can travel for the cure of errors. It is the dernier resort, not only of appellants, but of original complainants. You, sir, must stand or fall by its sole decision. If it err, which is not a legal presumption, its unwholesome error is incurable, except by the *vis medicatrix*—the medicinal virtue—of its own judicial energies. Nor has a bishop part or lot in its court action. He is constituted the judge of law in an inferior tribunal, but not here. His lips are sealed in this august body, and except when himself is concerned, he may not rise as an advocate either for the Church or for an implicated party. It would be treason to do so. It would be a most offensive deed, like the bribing of a judge, or a *covinous* communing with a jurymen. So naked, sir, of judicial prerogatives is the bishop in this conference. Every member on the floor wears the ermine, which you may not assume. Each of us blends in himself the functions of both judge and jurymen, to which you are an utter stranger. And in the mean time you are liable, as I suppose, to be stripped by us of those other high prerogatives of which, by our countenance, you now hold investiture. You see, then, that as a bishop, you are both elevated and depressed. In regard to legislative and judicial prerogatives, when you went up you went down. Your station in the General conference is a peculiar eminence. Your high seat is not at all terrific in concealed, or out-beating power. It is like a gallery of disabili-

ties, where, as a spectator of tragedy, you can do little more than admire or reprobate the piece, and smile or frown upon the actors. But, sir, such as it is, you and we approve it, and you would be as unwilling as ourselves to see your prerogatives changed by increase or diminution. You are high up, and low down; and all—but yourselves most of all—are content that we—as we mean by grace to do—should keep you up, and keep you down.

But from the legislative and judicial functions of the conference, I proceed to its *executive or ministerial.* Here I may be approaching debatable ground. But as I wish to provoke truth, and gather instruction from others, I will venture to advance, leaving, if you please, a bridge of retreat, if hemmed in at last, to that discreet refuge. All will consent, I suppose, to the doctrine of conference supremacy in the two points stated above. They will grant that this is our ecclesiastical legislature; and the high court—*curia maxima*—of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

But has it also *executive* functions—and are these supreme, or all-controlling? So I affirm; but it is for argument, and not with the least design to utter a mere proverb, or to impose my dictum on the conference. I beg all, sir, to hear and remember this emphatic disavowal. I proceed, then, to argue—having affirmed it as a mere logical formula—that the General conference is clothed with supreme executive functions. I will strive both to sustain it, and to commend it to your favor.

First, then, the General conference is the *fountain* of all official executive authority. It is the “*Croton river*” of that system of executive ministrations which flow in healthful streams through our Zion. I know, sir, that between this fountain and the Church members, who are the remote points of minute distribution, there are interposed several reservoirs of this ministerial authority. The Episcopacy is one and the chief reservoir. The pastorate is another. The class-leaders are the small channels through whom passes to the door of each one's heart in the class-room a measure of the disciplinary influences of the Church. What is objected, sir, to this view of the subject? Will it be disclaimed that the conference is this fountain? Can you advise me where else than here executive authority takes its rise? Whence do you gather these life-preserving waters? From the constitution? That, sir, is a very brief instrument, and its provisions can be scanned in two minutes. Show where its authority creates the machinery of a Church administration. Does it provide one wheel or spring? It seems to me, sir, that like God in Eden, who planted but did not till the garden, resigning that delightful task to man, so our Constitution says to this General conference, Under such and such restrictions you are commissioned with “*full powers to make rules and regulations for*” cultivating the fields of Methodism. Full powers for what? For two things. First, “*to make rules.*” That is legislation, sir, as it stands related to other powers of the conference. But is this all it can do? No. It has full powers also “*to make regulations*” for the government of the Church. What is a regulation? To appoint a preacher to a field of labor is a regulation. To remove him to another field is a regulation. To elect and empower a bishop to do this for us is a regulation. To recall that bishop to his former station is a regulation. Now, “*what a man does by another he does himself*” is a maxim in law. The General conference may make these

regulations without a bishop, and leave him a less onerous superintendence, or the conference may make these regulations by a bishop, and multiply the toils of his superintendence.

That the conference has executive authority is indisputable; for the bishop derives his authority from the conference. Are not answers first, second, third, and eighth, to question third, in section fourth, statutory provisions? Do they not convey authority to the bishops? If those answers were blotted out by a resolution of this conference, would the bishops proceed to execute the duties therein prescribed? This General conference clothes them with these powers; and can the conference convey what it does not possess? Can it impart to bishops what was not inherent in itself up to the time of conveying it? The conference has these powers. Every thing conveyed as a prerogative to bishops, presiding elders, preachers, etc., by statutory provision, and not by the constitution, or in the Restrictive Rules, was in the General conference, or it was mockery thus to grant it, and the tenure of these officers is void, and their *seizin* tortious. They should be challenged, then, as to their authority. Now, sir, all that this conference can confer, it can withhold. And whatever it can confer and withhold, it can *resume* at will, unless a constitutional restriction forbids it. It can resume, then, all the powers granted to a bishop by its own act, except such prerogatives as are essential to episcopacy and superintendency. As to the Episcopacy, which we may not do away, the power to ordain is essential to its being, and whether, so far as it is concerned, the whole of section fourth, with that exception, might not be constitutionally expunged, is doubtful. Not that I would have it expunged. But I am now arguing the question of conference power, and not of ecclesiastical expediency. I love the Episcopacy just as it is; and reverence for the office emulates in my bosom a sister passion—affection for the venerable men who occupy it—affection for them all: *every one*.

Here, Mr. President, let me say a word concerning our Church constitution. It is a remarkable instrument. It differs cardinally from most or all civil constitutions. These generally proceed to demark the several departments of government—the legislative, judicial, and executive—and, by positive grant, assign each department its duties. Our constitution is different. It does not divide the powers of our government into legislative, judicial, and executive. It provides for a General conference, and for an Episcopacy, and general superintendency. It leaves all the powers of the three great departments of government, except what is essential to an Episcopacy, etc., in this General conference. It restricts us slightly in all our powers, but not in one department more than in another. Under this constitution the conference is as much a judiciary as a legislature; and it is as much an executive body as either. What is there in the constitution to distinguish the three departments of our governmental authority, or to bestow one and withhold another? The grant of power to us is *in mass*, and no more excludes the executive than it does either of the sister departments. And that our powers are administrative do we not declare, when we demand at each General conference the minutes of every annual conference, and by the "Committee on the Itinerancy" inspect and pass judgment on them? And when, too, the administration of our bishops is put under a severe inquisition, and a committee reports

approval or disapproval? Surely, if any thing could, this proves that the conference assumes to be supreme in administration, else why does that administration thus appeal to this conference in the last resort? Why, sir, the streams of these administrative acts took their rise here, and, like running waters to the ocean, they return hither to their source. How unlike those of the President to the American Congress, with which I have heard them compared, are the relations of the Episcopacy to this conference! The Constitution of the United States gives Congress *its* powers, and the President *his*. Each exists independent of the other. The term, the duties, the privileges of the President are all fixed by constitutional provision. The Presidency, as an office, and the incumbency of it, are plainly designated. Our Church constitution recognizes the Episcopacy as an abstraction, and leaves this body to work it into a concrete form in any hundred or more ways we may be able to invent. We may make one, five, or twenty bishops; and, if we please, one for each conference. We may refuse to elect another till all die or resign; and then, to maintain the Episcopacy, which we are bound to do, we must elect one, at least. As to his term, we may limit it at pleasure, or leave it undetermined. But in this case is it *undeterminable*? Certainly not. The power which elected may then displace. In all civil constitutions, as far as I know, not to fix an officer's term, is to suspend it on the will of the appointing power. Cabinet ministers and secretaries are examples. No officer, as such, can claim incumbency for life, unless such a term be authoritatively and expressly fixed upon.

I now reach a point of my argument to which I solicit particular attention. It has been urged privately, by many, that we have no authority to displace a bishop, except for crime and by a formal trial. And they who advocate it, tell us to look into section fourth, page 28, and we shall be convinced. Well, what now is section fourth to us, in a section of this sort? That whole section is statutory. Were it a part of our Church constitution, it might be invoked as authoritative. Mere rules as they are, and alterable by us in ten minutes, by two conference votes, they expressly recognize our authority to "expel a bishop for improper conduct." Why then urge any thing in the fourth section against this pending resolution? If there were no express rule for deposing a bishop, we should still be competent to depose. And for this plain reason. Whatever this conference can constitutionally do it can do without first resolving that it has power to do it—without passing a rule into the Discipline declaring its authority. The power of this conference is derived, not from its own enactment, but from the constitution. Is there any thing in the Restrictive Articles which prohibits the removal or suspension of a bishop? This will not be pretended, and of course nothing in our own statutes can deprive us of powers conferred on us by the higher authority of the constitution.

Let me explain. Suppose Congress should, under the pressure of any causes, calculated to blind and confuse it, deny its power to raise revenues for the support of government, would it be bound by its own act? The very next day it might proceed to exercise the self-prohibited power, and for this reason—the prohibition is by Congress, but the grant of what is prohibited is by the Constitution, which is binding on Congress, in despite of its own opposing action. So with this conference. Suppose the fourth

section provided that this body "has not power to depose a bishop for improper conduct, if it seem necessary." We should still have power to depose, because the constitution confers it, and that is paramount to all our resolutions and statutes. We can not, by our enactments, divest ourselves of constitutional powers, no more than man made in God's image, and about to inhabit God's eternity, can spurn the law of his being, and divest himself of free agency and immortality.

Now let me proceed after the manner of mathematicians. We have seen, if I mistake not, that a provision in the fourth section, page 28th, declaring our incompetency to depose, would still leave us free to do it, because the superior authority of the constitution confers the power. Much more then may we depose, if, instead of a statute forbidding it, the Discipline is silent on the subject. But much more still may we depose, if, instead of silence, there is a *Rule* for deposing as well as the constitutional warrant. I do not claim this for demonstration, albeit I have chosen such a mode of reasoning; but unless I greatly err the argument claims some regard. Now, sir, there is a rule which many of us believe applies to this case, in the answer to question 4th, page 28th: "To the General conference, who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary." Let it be noticed that in harmony with what I have said concerning our constitutional power, this rule does not convey authority, else the auxiliary "shall" would be used. It does not say the General conference shall have authority, which is the style used in creating constitutional prerogatives. The language of the rule is simply declaratory, recognizing a power already existing. Let us notice certain phrases in this declaratory rule: "Have power to expel," sets forth the extent to which we may proceed in our efforts to guard against the consequences of a bishop's improprieties. The expulsion contemplated is doubtless from office. For though *depose* is the word generally used in such connections, expel is not less significant of the thing. To put out of office is expulsion. If any dispute, and say the expulsion must be from orders, or from the Church, we answer, a power to expel from Church, is certainly equal to the power of removing from office. The child who has license to play all day, need not dread the rod for playing half a day; and the boy who is told he may ride ten, can not disobey by riding five miles. That argument is hard pushed which resorts to the phrase, "have power to expel," to prove that the conference has not power to depose. "Improper conduct," means less than *imprudent* conduct. Imprudence carries our thoughts to the neighborhood of crime. It means a want of wisdom to a degree which involves exposure and harm. Improper means simply not suitable, or unfitting. The *usus loquendi* in the Discipline forbids us to assume that in some generic sense it embraces crime. Whatever is unfitting a bishop's office, and would impair his usefulness in the exercise of its functions, is embraced, I conceive, in the phrase, "improper conduct." In the Discipline it is used in contradistinction from crime. And it is never treated as crime in the administration, except when a private member, after frequent admonitions, obstinately refuses to reform. In such a case obstinacy itself becomes a criminal state of mind, and may procure expulsion. Finally, the phrase, "if they see it necessary," sheds light on the whole para-

graph. It proves that improper does not mean criminal; for then it would be necessary, and the condition would be useless. The phrase accords to the conference discretionary power, and invites them to proceed on the ground of "expediency," of which some have loudly complained. They may expel him, if they see it to be proper or expedient—that is, if his improprieties injure his usefulness in the high office where our suffrages placed him.

My mind, sir—if not my words—has all along distinguished between orders and office. The summary removals which I have noticed are from office, not from the ministry. In regard to ordained preachers, these two rules will hold: *First*. They can not be expelled from the ministry summarily; but must have a trial in due form. *Second*. They can not be expelled for "improper conduct," but only for a crime clearly forbidden in the word of God. These rules, with few exceptions, will apply to private members, who may be removed from the leader's or steward's office at any time, without notice, trial, or cause assigned. But they can not usually be expelled from the Church without trial, or the offer of trial; nor for improper conduct, unless it becomes incorrigibly obstinate, and then it assumes the character of crime. The principles which apply to members and preachers, should govern us in regard to bishops. They ought not to be expelled from the ministry for "improper conduct," nor without due notice and trial. But if others, they too may be deposed from office summarily, and for improprieties which, even if they be innocent, hinder their usefulness, or render their ministrations a calamity. That the bishop's is an office, is, I suppose, conceded. True we ordain him, but we may cease to ordain, and by suspending the conference rule which requires a day's delay, may immediately blot from the Discipline these words—page 26—"and the laying on of the hands of three bishops, or at least of one bishop and two elders." Would not this harmonize our practice and our principles?

I shall not dwell longer, Mr. President, on the question of conference authority. We have seen that when clerical orders or membership in the Church is concerned, crime only, or obstinate impropriety, which is *as* crime, can expel. This is Methodism. We have seen, on the other hand, that as to the office, removals from it may be summary, and for any thing unfitting that office, or that renders its exercise unwholesome to the Church. I have urged that all ranks of officers are included up to the point where the officer has no superior; which never happens with us, because the General conference, under certain restrictions, is the depository of all power, legislative, judicial, and executive. I urged this *fashion* of Methodism as applicable, especially to a bishop, because his superior influence will render his improprieties proportionally more embarrassing and injurious to the Church.

I have urged that the conference has power, from the grant of the constitution—which is a catholic grant, embracing *all*, beyond a few enumerated restrictions—to try a bishop for crime, and to depose him summarily for "improper conduct." Is this hard on the bishop? Does he not summarily remove, at discretion, all the four years round, two hundred presiding elders, and two thousand of his peers; and shall he complain that a General conference, which is a delegated body—in a word, that all these two



thousand peers of his, whose authority converges through the channels of representation, and concentrates here, should do to him what he so uniformly does to them? Shall one elder, holding a high office at our hands, be so puissant, that, like the sun in the heavens—though he be a planet still, and in his office reflects no light which we have not shed upon him—he must bid and control all, but is in turn to be controlled by none? No, sir. This conference is the sun in our orderly and beautiful system. Look into the Discipline. First you have our "Articles of Religion," in which God appears. What is next in order? The General conference, which, like the orb of day, rises to shed light on the surrounding scene. It is first shaped or fashioned, and then, like Adam by his Maker, is endowed with dominion, and made imperial in its relations; and saving the slight reservations of the constitution, it is all-controlling in its influence. Let it never be lost sight of, that the General conference is "the sun of our system."

I said, Mr. President, that if I noticed the question of expediency, it would be only by a glance. I will remark, generally, that in determining what is proper, after having ascertained what is lawful, we should look two ways. As first in importance we should consider the interests of the Church. Second, we should consult the feelings of the officer. And we should inquire as to the Church, how is she likely to be affected by the improper conduct of her officer? Will she be locally and slightly embarrassed, or extensively and severely? If the injury threatened will be confined to a small district, and will probably be slight and ephemeral, we may bear it. But if it be likely to fall on large districts, and work great evils, producing strife, breaking up societies, and nearly dissolving conferences; and if calamities so heavy are likely to be long-continued, and scarcely ever end, the call for summary proceedings on the part of this conference is loud and imperative. If in such circumstances she decline to act, will she not betray her trust, and dishonor God? In regard to the officer, it should be inquired if the unfitness he has brought on himself for his sphere of action was by some imperative necessity, and if not, whether it was in presumable ignorance of the grief and misfortunes he was about to inflict on our Zion? Or must he have known what would follow, so that his act proceeded from, or at least was associated with, some degree of indifference, if not of wantonness, in regard to results? These things, sir, should be well weighed in settling the question of expediency.

A bishop's influence is not like a preacher's or class-leader's. It is diffused like the atmosphere, every-where. So high a Church officer—I will not say, sir, conference officer, though just now I take you to be such, at least for the time being—I say, so high a Church officer should be willing to endure not slight sacrifices for this vast connection. What could tempt you, sir, to trouble and wound the Church all through from center to circumference? The preacher and the class-leader, whose influence is guarded against so strongly, can do little harm—a bishop infinite. Their improper acts are motes in the air—yours are a pestilence abroad in the earth. Is it more important to guard against those than against these? Heaven forbid! Like the concealed attractions of the heavens, we expect a bishop's influence to be all-binding every-where—in the

heights and in the depths—in the center and on the verge of this great system ecclesiastical. If instead of *concentric* and harmonizing movements, such as are wholesome, and conservative, and beautifying, we observe in him irregularities, which, however harmless in others, will be disastrous or fatal in him, the energy of this body, constitutionally supreme, must instantly reduce him to order, or if that may not be, plant him in another and a distant sphere. When the Church is about to suffer a detriment which we by constitutional power can avert, it is as much *treason in us not to exercise the power we have, as to usurp, in other circumstances, that which we have not.*

Mr. Hamline, having declined to interrupt Dr. Smith while on the floor, now asked and obtained leave to explain.

First. Dr. Smith says, "he [Mr. Hamline] brought you to the conclusion that Bishop Andrew had acted improperly."

Answer. I did not name Bishop Andrew or any other bishop. I intended to argue, not to accuse; and if I carried you to that conclusion, as he says, whether it was by argument or not, it could not have been by confident assertion, as to Bishop Andrew's conduct.

Second. I argued that a bishop may be displaced at the *discretion* of the conference, when in their opinion it becomes "*necessary*" on account of improper conduct, and, I might have said, without improper conduct on his part, so far as *constitutional restrictions* are concerned.

Third. I never said, as brother Smith affirms, that the administrative powers of this conference are "absolute." I said they were "*supreme*." Absolute means "*not bound*." This conference is bound in all its powers, whether legislative, judicial, or executive, by constitutional restrictions. "Supreme" means that while acting within the constitutional limits, its decisions are final, and all-controlling.

Fourth. As to my use of the word legislative, the hypercriticisms of brother Smith would apply to the use of the term judicial with equal force; for, properly the conference has neither the functions of a legislature nor of a court. I used the term as it is used every five or ten minutes by all around me. And it is amusing that brother Smith should have fallen into the very fashion for which he reproves me. He said, if the conference does this "*it acts above law*." Now, where there is no legislation there can be no law. I commend to him, in turn, the report of 1828, which has long been familiar to me, and of which I most cordially approve; yet I presume that he, as well as myself, will continue to use the only convenient terms, *legislation* and *law*, to distinguish one class of conference powers from another.

Fifth. As to the assertion that the analogy between bishops and inferior officers will not hold, because this conference is not responsible for its action as removing officers are; I answer, this conference is responsible to the constitution, and if it wished to bind itself not to remove a bishop, it could call on the annual conferences to aid it in assuming a constitutional restriction. Not having done so, proves that it intends to hold this power, and execute it when necessary.

Sixth. As to the abolition address charged on me, the conference may be surprised to learn, that it was a colonization address; and was so acceptable that the Colonization Society in Zanesville published it in pamphlet form. Moreover, a friend of mine forwarded a copy, without my

knowledge, to Mr. Gurley, of Washington City, who noticed it with unmerited commendation in the *African Repository*, the official organ of the American Colonization Society, and gave extracts of it to the public. Surely the brother is too magnanimous to have attempted to counteract the force of my argument by misrepresenting, and rendering me personally odious. As to my exerting my slender influence for evil ends at home, I must submit to be judged by my own conference, who will know how to estimate the value and the motive of the insinuation. (*Debates of 1844, pp. 128 and 145.*)

DOCUMENT 48.

*Address of Bishop Andrew before the General Conference, May 28, 1844.*

BISHOP ANDREW said that when he arrived at Baltimore, he heard a rumor of the intention of the conference, and when he arrived at New York he learned that the edict was confirmed, that he must resign, or be deposed. He never thought the subject would become one of grave discussion. If he had offended the Discipline, he was willing to resign, if by doing so he could remove their difficulties. He had no fondness for the Episcopacy, particularly now, in the form in which it had been held up to that conference; and he pitied the man who could remain in it, or accept it at their hands. If he could secure the peace of the Church by resigning he would gladly do it. He had remarked that morning, in an editorial by Dr. Bond, that it was said it all rested upon him; he was to be made the scape-goat, and the destruction of the Church was to be laid upon him. God knew it was not so. If his resignation was necessary to secure the peace of the Church, he would at once make it, and return home, labor as he had done among the slaves, and strive to save those upon whom their pretended friends were inflicting suffering and ruin.

Mr. President,—I have been on trial now for a week, and feel desirous that it should come to a close. For a week I have been compelled to listen to discussions of which I have been the subject, and I must have been more than man, or less than man, not to have felt. Sir, I have felt, and felt deeply. I am not offended with any man. The *most* of those who have spoken against me, have treated me respectfully, and have been as mild as I had any right to expect. I cherish no unkind feelings toward any. I do not quarrel with my abolition brethren, though I believe their opinions to be erroneous and mischievous. Yet so long as they conduct themselves courteously toward me, I have no quarrel with them. It is due that some remarks should be made by me, before the conference come to a conclusion upon the question, which I hope will be speedily done; for I think a week is long enough for a man to be shot at, and it is time the discussion should terminate.

As there has been frequent reference to the circumstances of my election to the episcopal office, it is, perhaps, proper that I give a brief history of that matter. A friend of mine—brother Hodges—now with God, asked me to permit myself to be put in nomination for that office. I objected—the office had no charms for me. I was with a conference that I loved, and that loved me. What was I to gain to be separated from a happy home—from a wife and chil-

dren whom I loved more than I did my own life? But my friend urged me; he said my election would, he believed, tend to promote the peace of the Church, and that he believed it would be especially important to the prosperity of Methodism at the south. Finally I consented, with the hope of failure; but I was nominated and elected. I was never asked if I was a slaveholder; no man asked me what were my principles on the subject; no one dared to ask of me a pledge in this matter, or it would have been met as it deserved. Only one man—brother Winans—spoke to me on the subject; he said he could not vote for me because he believed I was nominated under the impression that I was not a slaveholder. I told him I had not sought the nomination, nor did I desire the office, and that my opinions on the propriety of making non-slaveholding a test of qualification for the office of bishop were entirely in unison with his own. Sir, I do not believe in this matter of secret will as a rule of action, either in the revelations of the Bible, or in the prescriptions in the book of Discipline. I believe in the revealed will of God, and in the written law of the Church, as contained in the book of Discipline. I took office upon the broad platform of that book, and I believe my case is covered by it. It was known that I was to reside at the south; I was elected in view of that very thing, as it was judged important to the best interests of the Church that one of the bishops should reside in that section of the work, and it was judged I could be more useful there than elsewhere. Well, what was I to do then? I was located in a country where free persons could not be obtained for hire, and I could not do the work of the family; my wife could not do it; what was I to do? I was compelled to hire slaves, and pay their masters for their hire; but I had to change them every year—they were bad servants, for they had no interest in me or mine—and I believe it would have been less sin before God to have bought a servant who would have taken an interest in me and I in him; but I did not do so. At length, however, I came into the possession of slaves; and I am a slaveholder—as I have already explained to the conference—and I can not help myself. It is known that I have waded through deep sorrows at the south during the last four years; I have buried the wife of my youth, and the mother of my children, who left me with a family of motherless children, who needed a friend and a mother. I sought another—and with this the conference has nothing to do—I found one who, I believed, would make me a good wife, and a good mother for my children. I had known her long; my children knew her and loved her. I sought to make my home a happy one, and I have done so. Sir, I have no apology to make. It has been said I did this thing voluntarily, and with my eyes open. I did so deliberately, and in the fear of God; and God has blessed our union. I might have avoided this difficulty by resorting to a trick—by making over these slaves to my wife before marriage, or by doing as a friend who has taken ground in favor of the resolution before you suggested: "Why," said he, "did you not let your wife make over these negroes to her children, securing to herself an annuity from them?" Sir, my conscience would not allow me to do this thing. If I had done so, and those negroes had passed

into the hands of those who would have treated them unkindly, I should have been unhappy. Strange as it may seem to brethren, I am a slaveholder for conscience' sake. I have no doubt that my wife would, without a moment's hesitation, consent to the manumission of those slaves, if I thought proper to do it. I know she would unhesitatingly consent to any arrangement I might deem it proper to make on the subject. But how am I to free them? Some of them are old, too old to work to support themselves, and are only an expense to me, and some of them are little children; where shall I send these, and who will provide for them? But perhaps I shall be permitted to keep these; but, then, if the others go, how shall I provide for these helpless ones? and, as to the others, to what free state shall I send them? and what would be their condition? Beside, many of them would not go; they love their mistress, and could not be induced, under any circumstances, to leave her. Sir, an aged and respectable minister said to me, several years ago, when I had stated just such a case to him, and asked him what he would do, "I would set them free," said he; "I'd wash my hands of them, and if they went to the devil, I'd be clear of them." Sir, into such views of religion or philanthropy my soul can not enter. I believe the providence of God has thrown these creatures into my hands, and holds me responsible for their proper treatment. I have secured them to my wife by deed of trust since our marriage. The arrangement was only in accordance with an understanding existing previous to marriage. These servants were hers; she had inherited them from her former husband's estate; they had been her only source of support during her widowhood, and would still be her only dependence if it should please God to remove me from her. I have nothing to leave her. I have given my life to the Church from the days of my youth—and I am now fifty—and although, as I have previously remarked, she would consent to any arrangement I might make, yet I can not consent to take advantage of her affection for me to induce her to do what would injure her without at all benefiting the slaves.

Sir, I did not for a moment believe that this body of grave and reverend ministers would make this a subject of serious discussion. I thought it likely that there might be some warm ultra brethren here, who would take some exception to my course, and, on that account, I did not make the deed of trust before marriage, lest some should suppose I designed to dodge the responsibility of the case. Those who know me must know that I could not be governed by the mere matter of dollars and cents. What can I do? I have no confession to make; I intend to make none. I stand upon the broad ground of the Discipline on which I took office, and, if I have done wrong, put me out. The editor of the *Christian Advocate* has prejudged this case. He makes me the scapegoat of all the difficulties which abolition excitement has gotten up at the north. I am the only one to blame, in his opinion, should mischief grow out of this case. But I repeat, if I have sinned against the Discipline, I refuse not to die. I have spent my life for the benefit of the slaves. When I was but a boy, I taught a Sunday school for slaves, in which I taught a number of them to read; and from that period till this day I have devoted my energies to the

promotion of their happiness and salvation; with all my influence in private, in public, with my tongue, with my pen, I have assiduously endeavored to promote their present and eternal happiness. And am I to be sacrificed by those who have done little or nothing for them? It is said I have rendered myself unacceptable to our people. I doubt this; I have just returned from Philadelphia, where they knew me to be a slaveholder, yet they flocked to hear me, and the presence of God was with us; we had a good, warm, old-fashioned meeting. I may be unacceptable in New York, yet, from the experience I have had, I doubt even that. To whom am I unacceptable? Not to the people of the south—neither masters nor slaves. Has my connection with slaves rendered me less acceptable to the colored people of the south—the very people for whom all this professed sympathy is felt? Does the fact that I am a slaveholder make me less acceptable among them? Let those who have labored long among them answer the question. Sir, I venture to say that in Carolina or Georgia I could to-day get more votes for the office of bishop from the colored people, than any supporter of this resolution, let him avow himself an emancipator as openly as he pleases. To the colored people of the south there, and to their owners—to the entire membership of the slaveholding conferences, I would not be unacceptable—but perhaps they are no part of "our people;" in short, sir, I believe that I should not be unacceptable to one half of the connection; but on this question I have nothing to say. Should the conference think proper to pass me, there is plenty of ground where I can labor acceptably and usefully. The slaveholding conferences will present a field sufficiently large for me, should I live to the age of Methuselah, and the bishops, in arranging the work, will certainly have discretion enough not to send me where I would not be received; nor would I obtrude myself upon any conference, or lay my hands upon the head of any brother who would feel himself contaminated by the touch. However, on this subject I have nothing to say. The conference can take its course; but I protest against the proposed action as a violation of the laws of the Discipline, and an invasion of the rights secured to me by that book. Yet let the conference take the steps they contemplate; I enter no plea for mercy, I make no appeal for sympathy; indeed, I love those who sympathize with me, but I do not want it now. I wish you to act coolly and deliberately, and in the fear of God; but I would rather that the conference would change the issue, and make the resolution to depose the bishop, and take the question at once, for I am tired of it. The country is becoming agitated upon the subject, and I hope the conference will act forthwith on the resolution. (*Debates of 1844*, p. 146; also, pp. 148-150.)

#### DOCUMENT 49.

*Speech of Rev. James B. Finley in the Case of Bishop Andrew, May 28, 1844.*

MR. FINLEY said,—Mr. President, I arise with some trepidation, and think I should not speak at all if I were not placed in the situation I am, as the mover of the substitute on your table. When I proposed it, it was with the pur-

est motives, I am sure, and believing it would be more acceptable than the original resolution. In framing that substitute, I thought I took ground on the constitution of our Church; and I am sure I have expressed nothing in the preamble but what are the acknowledged facts in the case. The resolution is only to express the sense of the General conference in reference to the facts as they exist, in connection with the situation in which these circumstances have placed the superintendent.

Now, sir, in regard to the ground taken, this General conference is restricted against doing any thing which will destroy our itinerant general superintendency. This principle must be conceded. That Bishop Andrew has become connected with the great evil of slavery, he himself has declared on this floor, and says he is a slaveholder. This fact will not be denied; and that this connection with slavery has drawn after it circumstances that will embarrass his exercising the office of an itinerant general superintendent, if not, in some places, entirely prevent it. I ask any man on this floor to deny these things. Now, sir, are not all the facts true, and true to the life? Hence, the question follows, Will this General conference permit one of its vital and constitutional principles to be broken down and trampled under foot, because one of her general officers has seen fit to involve himself in circumstances which will trammel that office in more than half of all the field of his labor? Now, sir, I take my stand here this day to oppose, to my utmost, the violation of so sacred a principle. Was Bishop Andrew involved in these circumstances when he was elected to that office? *No, sir*; no man here will say he was. And could he have been elected to that office if he had been? *No, sir*; no man here will assert that he could. He was chosen with the declaration of southern men that he was not then, and never had been, connected with the evil of slavery; and we had reason to believe he never would be, or he could not have been chosen to that office. Well now, sir, what is the state of the case? He has become a slaveholder. I ask you, sir, whose fault is this? It is his own voluntary act, in view of all the circumstances. This voluntary act has thrown this great body of ministers, and the whole Church, into this tremendous state of agitation, of which he could now relieve us, if he would, by his resignation.

But, sir, what does this resolution request of him? The mildest and most moderate thing the case is capable of, without giving up the whole principle; namely, "That it is the sense of this General conference that he desist from the exercise of his office till these impediments be removed." This resolution was modified to the most easy requirement it could be to meet the feeling of southern brethren, and to cover the principle, and from this ground I will not be moved. *No, sir*; on this ground will I stand till I die. There are two great principles to be determined in this resolution which have not been decided in the Methodist Episcopal Church. One is this: Has the General conference a right, or has it the power, to remove from office one, or all of the bishops, if they, under any circumstances, become disqualified to carry out the great principles of our itinerant general superintendency? The second is, Will the Methodist Church admit the great evil of slavery into the itinerant general superintendency? Now, sir, they never have done it; and if there

should be one elected at this conference, he will not be a *slaveholder*. But I can not, for my life, perceive the difference between continuing one of them in that office who has seen proper to connect himself with it, and voting directly to put one into it who holds slaves. It is the same principle. It will violate the constituted law. It will injure, if not totally destroy, this vital organ of our itinerancy. This office requires work, sir, and hard work; and I care not what it is that would obstruct or interdict the circulation of this vital blood of our itinerancy, that bandage ought to be cut. There are many other circumstances which may trammel its operations. Sickness, old age, or an alienation of mind, would completely disqualify men from the exercise of this office. I do not believe the doctrine, once a bishop always a bishop. I hold it as the doctrine of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that no man is to hold that office only so long as he is fully able to carry out its principles of general superintendency. I never shall forget, in 1836, on the General conference floor at Cincinnati, that beloved man of God, the much-lamented Bishop Roberts, who rose and tendered the resignation of the office of bishop; and what were his reasons? The first, sir, was, that his declining years and strength would not admit of his carrying out, to the full extent, this great principle of Methodism; the second was, that he was conscious that his mental powers were on the decline, and he wished to resign while he was sensible of this fact, lest he might arrive at some future point when he would not be so sensible of this, and thus injure the Church. Now, sir, here was a man that loved the Church and the great vital principle of itinerant general superintendency, much more than he loved the office of bishop. I pray to God this office may always be filled with such men! But, sir, I think this principle is fully conceded, that this conference has the power. Then, sir, in passing this resolution, let us not be charged with acting out of our constitutional powers.

But, sir, it is pleaded here, in the case of Bishop Andrew, that the conservativeness of the Discipline fully covers his case. Now, I wish to meet this argument. It has been reiterated, again and again, that the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church is conservative toward slavery. This assumption I most positively and emphatically deny. Methodism and the Methodist Discipline have always been, and are now, and I hope will be while the world stands, belligerent toward slavery, and have branded it in the forehead, so that all the world may see it as a *great evil*. Now, sir, how a grave body of ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church can hold that this great moral evil can be justified and sanctified by the Methodist Discipline, is a strange paradox to me. Any man who can say it is right for him to hold his fellow-being in bondage, and buy and sell him at pleasure, put him under an overseer, and *drive, whip, and half starve him*, and that this is connived at by the Methodist Church, I think must have a queer view of the Church and her Discipline. I now say in my place, before God, that whenever the Methodist Episcopal Church shall sanction this doctrine, as much as I love her, I will leave it and seek another community. Now, I say again, there is not one item in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church that has any conservative principle toward slavery as a great moral evil;

yet I will say, sir, it has some conservativeness toward her ministers and members, who, through necessity, are connected with it, and can not help themselves, and this conservativeness is clearly defined. Yes, sir, I repeat, clearly defined, so that none may be mistaken on this subject. And what is this conservativeness? It is this: When the master *can not set his slave free*, and that slave enjoy his freedom; when it is beyond the power of the master to free his slave, or that slave to enjoy his freedom, slavery is fixed on the absolute necessity of the case; and if there be any such case, *it could not, and should not, be called a sin*. But I hold that this conservativeness goes not one step further to extenuate any man from crime; as a slaveholder, it is the necessity of the case that saves him from crime. Now, sir, on this platform I stand before God, and on this I am not afraid to die and go to his judgment. By the southern men I am taunted with being an abolitionist. So I am, sir, in the Methodist sense of that word; but none can say that I am a radical-abolitionist. I throw back the assertion with perfect contempt. By those rabid abolitionists I am called a pro-slavery man, and I treat this with the same disregard. I am a Methodist. I stand on the ground that my fathers in Methodism took, the great Wesley, Coke, Asbury, M'Kendree, and the venerable men of the old western conferences, the Youngs, Lakin, Collins, Barke, Parker, Axley, Sale, and others, and from this ground I will not move. I stand here as the representative of one of the largest annual conferences. My brethren have confided to my colleagues and myself the great principles of our Methodist confederacy, and the interests of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Now, sir, if I would compromise these great principles, and return home to meet the people and preachers of my own conference—than whom, I believe, there are not a purer and more honorable or devoted set of ministers in the world—I would deserve to be branded with the name of Judas on my forehead. But, sir, it shall never be said of James B. Finley, nor cast up to my children or grandchildren, Your ancestor was a traitor to the high trust confided to him by his brethren in the ministry and membership.

Before I close this speech, I must answer some things which have been stated on this floor. The first is this: that in the infant state of Methodism, the slaves could be set free in every state of the Union; but whenever the Methodist Church began to take action against slaveholding, the states began to make laws to contravene their freedom. Now, sir, I ask, what was that that first moved the Church to this course? The Church always considered it a great evil, and had some hope that the preaching of the Gospel would eventually effect much toward its destruction. Then the preachers were free from slavery themselves; then they could, and did, preach against it, and the cause of the poor slave was taking deep root in the public mind. Then preachers began to connect themselves with this great evil, and the other preachers thought it was time to do something to prevent it, believing that the connecting of slavery with the ministry would rivet the chains of slavery the tighter; while, if the ministry was kept free from it, their example and teachings would be a great means of bringing it to an end. In taking this ground, some of the states passed acts to fine ministers for

preaching against it—I have a witness there before me, my old friend, brother Cartwright, who, with our worthy fathers, fought against this great evil. I recollect my worthy old friend, Rev. David Young, who, in the days of his youth, and for his eminent talents and fearless course in defense of the institutions of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was, by the Rev. Dr. Bond, in former days, called the western war-horse; he, sir, was fined for preaching against this great evil; and Methodist preachers used to preach against it, and many of these very slaveholders would take and feed us. This, sir, is the true state of the case.

Now, sir, to answer a few more things that have been urged, and I am done. It has been argued that they hold slaves out of charity to them. Sir, I am at a great loss to know what sort of charity this is, to hold a fellow-creature in bondage, and make him work hard all his life, and appropriate all his labor to the master's use, for charity to the poor slave; to buy and sell him as we do animals is a queer charity to me, just such as I pray to God may never be exercised toward me. Again: it is said we treat them as we do our children. Now, sir, I ask, Do those brethren teach their children that it is better to be slaves than freemen? Do they put their children into the field, and set overseers over them? Do they clothe and feed these slaves as they do their own children? Do they teach them to read the Bible, and qualify them to be useful citizens? I leave all these answers for others.

I never will agree that slavery shall be connected, in any way, with episcopacy, nor any where else, only by necessity. I must state again, that from this principle I never will be removed. If I fall alone, it shall be at my post, and I am sure I shall have the blessing of my constituents; and it will be said by them, with very few exceptions, He was worthy of the trust committed to him. I will be greeted, when this great question is decided, let it go which way it may, by those of the membership and ministry in my own country. Now, that my opponents may not have it to say that I was obstinate and unyielding, I will say that if any thing can be proposed that will harmonize this matter without compromising the principle, I will go for it; but I never will compromise the principle—brethren who know me, know I will not. I, too, am a southerner by birth. My parents were slaveholders; but, at an early day, they were so convinced of the evil of slavery, and of the baneful influence it must have on their children, that my father at once freed himself and his children of this curse. After having raised a crop of corn on the Scioto, then the North-Western territory, he committed to me, then only fifteen years old, all his slaves, for which he was offered six thousand dollars, and I moved them to that place, and there we dug troughs, pounded hominy, killed raccoons, opossums, deer, and bears, and then they were left to manage for themselves. So, sir, you see if others have been in swamps, I have been too; if others have fed on raccoons, I too have, and am not a whit behind any of you in this matter. Having thus expressed my position fearlessly but, I trust, with no bad feelings toward any brother, on the ground which I believe the Church has always occupied, I take my seat, and shall wait the issue with as much composure and prayer as I am capable of. (Debates of 1844, pp. 150-152.)

## DOCUMENT 50.

*Mr. Dunwoody's Speech before the General Conference, May 28, 1844, on Bishop Andrew's Case.*

MR. DUNWOODY, from South Carolina, rose and said that this was the eighth General conference he had attended, and he had never sat so long at any General conference as at this one. Although he attended the conference, he did not intend to make a speech at all, and the reason of it was this. About four days after the conference he was taken sick, and was confined to his room for a week, and was apprehensive that he would be unable to take any part in the proceedings. Another reason was, there was so much idle talking and debating among the members of the conference he thought it would be useless for himself to make any attempt to deliver his sentiments; and a third reason was that it was so hard to get an opportunity of delivering one's sentiments, that he had come to the conclusion of not attempting it. But as an opportunity was now given to him, he felt it his duty to speak upon a question of so much importance as the present confessedly was. In addition to what he had already said, there was one obligation, among others, which strongly urged him to speak to the question now before the conference. He knew the subject of slavery would come up in some shape or other; and as he was a southern man, he believed it was expected he would defend the rights of the south, as he understood them. Otherwise he should have staid away altogether from the conference; but, as matters had taken the turn they had, he did not feel at liberty to decline coming here.

The debate had taken a very wide range, and therefore he should be obliged to take considerable range, too, but he would say nothing that did not relate to the subject in hand. He then proceeded to offer his objections to the resolution for three grand reasons: First, it was unscriptural; second, it was contrary to the rules and constitution of the Church; and, thirdly, it was mischievous in a very high degree. The design of the resolution was to depose Bishop Andrew from the Episcopacy; went to separate him from his official power as bishop till his connection with slavery was removed. He (Mr. D.) contended that Bishop Andrew could not change this relation, however well he might be inclined to do it, and that the movers of this measure knew very well. But it was in perfect unison with what they had already said, that no slaveholder could be connected with the Methodist Episcopal Church, because they believed slavery to be a moral evil. Of course he should be compelled, from the nature of the case, to examine this in speaking in relation to the subject of slavery. Well, first of all, he would say that there was a mistaken idea with regard to the sentiments of the south on this subject. The southern men were generally charged with being pro-slavery men. It was not so, however. They were opposed to the principle itself, and would be as long as they lived. In his observations he had referred to the three parties composing that conference; but there was another party to which he would now allude. They called themselves by the name of conservatives; they were opposed to slavery, but they took a middle ground. They said, if it be an evil at all, it ought to be cured by preaching of the divine word of Jesus Christ. Here they agreed, for that was their doctrine, too. The speaker then went on to illustrate his subject by a reference to

the history of Joseph, and the sale made of him by his brothers for twenty pieces of silver, as related in the Old Testament, and said they afterward met with an awful rebuke for their unnatural conduct when he became governor of Egypt. He next spoke of the Jewish captivity in Egypt, and the awful retribution that was afterward inflicted on that nation for its cruelty, impiety, and injustice. He therefore repeated that slavery was a moral evil, and had its origin in the spirit of covetousness; and he was really afraid that, unless religion stepped in between us and it, it would likewise become an awful scourge to this nation.

Mr. Dunwoody continued to say that the people of New England were themselves deeply involved in that moral evil. Slavery had been introduced into New England as early as into any of the other states; they had been engaged in the traffic up to a late period, and bought and sold the African race as they would their cattle or merchandise. He believed slavery to be a great moral evil, because it could not be denied that there were people who treated slaves in some sort as they would the beasts of the field, and drove and sold them as they would cattle or merchandise; and therefore it must be a great moral evil, and it was a base imposition on the public to say that the south were favorable to it. Yet he did not believe it was a moral evil in every case. He would give the brethren who differed with him all they could in the spirit of truth and justice claim, and he hoped they would give him all he could morally claim; and therefore he believed that slavery was not, in all cases, a moral evil. Look at the fourth commandment: "Remember to keep holy the Sabbath-day; six days shalt thou labor," etc. The moral law recognized the connection between master and servant. The same relation was in the tenth commandment—"Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, nor his ox," etc. Here, then, the same ideas of holding oxen and servants were coupled in degree, and a man had as good a right to his servant as to his cattle, and therefore it was as great a sin to covet his man-servant or his maid-servant as his ox or his ass. And that was not all; the patriarch Abraham was a slaveholder. He proved this from several texts of Scripture, particularly that text which referred to Hagar. He said that Sarah, the wife of Abraham, proving unfruitful, she advised him to take Hagar and have children by her. Now, sir, said the speaker, this very circumstance showed that slavery was an evil; but he was not done with this part of his subject yet. Hagar afterward met with ill treatment from her mistress, and she fled from her; she was met in her flight by an angel, who asked her where she was going. She said she was flying from her mistress. He desired her to go back again, and stay with her mistress; which was another proof that Abraham was a slaveholder. Now that the law did not sanction the running away of slaves was a plain inference from these facts. If God thought slavery a moral evil, he would have told Abraham of it, and made it a part of the covenant that he should give up his slaves. Abraham, Jacob, etc., were all slaveholders, and they had all long since gone to heaven, and if slaveholding were a sin they could not get there. The speaker next referred to the history of the Jews, and showed that, by the law of Moses, the Jews were allowed to purchase slaves from the heathen nations around them, and that these

slaves were to be their servants forever after. He considered that God could not authorize an evil, and he had shown, from the testimony of the Bible, that God had authorized the practice of slavery. He next referred to the New Testament, where the apostle Paul declared the law to be that all should be obedient to the higher powers, and whoever resisted those powers resisted the power of God. In this country the people recognize the power of the Congress of the United States; they also recognized the power of the legislative bodies of the states individually; they also believed that they were not subject to any foreign powers; and some of these individual states say they will hold their slaves; and, as he had remarked before, the apostle required them to be obedient to the higher powers. It was unfortunate that the question of slavery ever got into the Church. On the one hand, it was insisted that it was a moral evil, and that slaveholders never could get to heaven; but, on the other hand, the apostle Paul said that he who would not be subject to the higher powers would be damned. Philemon was a slaveholder, and he was high in the confidence of the apostle Paul, and the speaker did not know but he was a preacher. Paul knew he was a slaveholder, and he never rebuked him. Philemon had gone to heaven also. Mr. Dunwoody next referred to the sixth chapter of 1st Timothy, which he said recognized the relationship between master and servant, and showed that a brother might be a slaveholder. He next showed that the Christian religion was never destined to, nor ever did, cancel the civil rights of mankind; and that, he insisted, settled the question at once. How, then, in the name of common sense, he asked, when it was admitted that religion was never destined to cancel the civil rights of mankind, could they cry out against the evil of slavery? The speaker next referred to several other texts, both in the Old and New Testament, to show that religion never interfered with the civil rights of mankind, and to show that slavery was recognized and tolerated in all ages of the world. He said it was contrary to the Discipline of the Church. Here the speaker read the rule as the only one that bore on the question, and insisted that the case did not come within the spirit or meaning of that rule at all.

The speaker then went into a history of all the circumstances which gave rise to the present difficulty, and showed conclusively that Bishop Andrew's connection with slavery was forced on him by circumstances over which he had no control, and that the attempt here being made was to force Bishop Andrew to resign. That was the design of the resolution; but it could not succeed in the absence of all law on the subject, and such doctrine was never allowed in any General conference before. There were only two orders in the Methodist Episcopal Church—those of deacons and bishops—and if this motion should prevail, he believed that ordination would no longer be a part of the Discipline of the Church, for he believed that no discreet or responsible man would be found hereafter to take upon him the duties of a bishop, and Episcopacy would necessarily be driven from their Church altogether. One brother from New England said they were upon the verge of a dreadful precipice—that a volcano was about to burst upon the Church, that would deprive it for ages of its usefulness; but, he asked, were they not the authors of this calamity? O but, said the

party, slavery is a moral evil, and it must be put down at all hazards. It was true, Bishop Andrew's friends were in the minority here. Well, then, he would ask, what would be the consequence when one of those men came to the south? Why, the people would say, there is the man that voted against Bishop Andrew, and wanted to pull him down. The consequence would be, that they would pass a resolution that such a man should not preach there. That conference should not take upon itself those responsibilities, or the consequence would be that the Church would go to the wall.

Mr. D. next referred to the civil and ecclesiastical polity of the Jews, which he said was a pure theocracy, and it was ultimately destroyed by their own dissensions; and if this course were persevered in, they would force the south to secede, because they did not believe that this conference had any right to interfere in the question of slavery. He could tell the consequence that might result from this resolution, on their doctrine and Discipline. He had a letter from one of the brethren in the south, from which it appeared the greatest alarm prevailed there, and he (Mr. D.) did not know but before that conference broke up, another conference would be called in the south to take measures to secede from the Church altogether. He continued to say they would be required to furnish their proceedings, which would be brought before the public, and they would say, You can not remain in that conference, and can not form a part of that body. There was another consideration in which this question was to be viewed. It appeared that that conference intended that they were not to hold slaves at all. He concluded by referring to the relation between man and wife, and asked, where was there a more interesting relation? The resolution now before the conference went to sap that relation, and not only that, but to rend their Church in twain, if such events should be brought about by a reckless majority, and the south were driven to desperation. There were men enough in the south who would direct their proceeding, and they would trust to God to settle the difficulty. (Debates of 1844, pp. 163-166.)

#### DOCUMENT 51.

*Mr. Durbin's Speech on Bishop Andrew's Case, before General Conference, May 29, 1844.*

DR. DURBIN rose, and alluded to the disadvantage of his position in making an after dinner speech; but, as it could not be avoided, he would make the best of it. If he could secure the attention of the conference, he would try to remove some erroneous impressions which he thought had been made in the course of this debate. The first remark that he had to offer was in regard to a statement of Judge Longstreet, that in the early Church the aggression of Popery had always been resisted by a pure and steadfast minority. What was the application of this remark? Did the brother mean to say that the action of the Methodist Episcopal Church in regard to slavery, in any way resembled the growth of Popery? Or did he mean to say, in this age of the world, and in this country, that the interests of society, whether civil or religious, are safer in the hands of the minority than of the majority? Sir, the voice of history does not say so. The institutions of our country do not say

so. The brother will not go before the world and say so.

The brother had also stated, very broadly, that the legislation of the Methodist Episcopal Church on the subject of slavery, had always done harm. So, then, the objection is not so much against our action in this case, as against the uniform action of Methodism on the general subject. Sir, I wish I could go before the world, and to the bar of God, with as clear a conscience and as firm a trust in regard to every other part of our legislation, as in regard to our action on slavery. But we are told, again and again, that we are called here to judge of the laws of sovereign states; that in the case of Harding—and in every similar case—we must be judges of law—a business with which we have nothing to do. Nay, more, sir, we are told that in the vote on Harding's case, this body not only acted above the law of the land, but above the law of Methodism; that we voted to sustain, not the Discipline of the Church, but simply the *usage* of the Baltimore conference. I have heard this repeatedly on this floor, and have seen it repeatedly in print; and I fear that the public mind has really been misled by these statements, so confidently reiterated. But, sir, I deny the whole statement. It is utterly groundless. It is unjust, both with regard to the Baltimore conference, and this General conference. The sole question we had to judge of in Harding's case was—Whether it was *practicable* for him to emancipate his slaves? We found, sir, that it was practicable. It is to-day practicable. On that ground, and on that ground only, in full conformity with the provisions of the Discipline, we voted against the motion to reverse the decision of the Baltimore conference. We could not do otherwise, sir, with the Discipline in our hands. I *did not* vote, nor, I believe, did my brethren in the majority, to sustain the usage of the Baltimore conference, but to sustain the laws of Methodism.

We of the north have been repeatedly taunted on this floor with our differences of opinion on the subject of slavery. Sir, whatever other differences of opinion there may be among us, on one point there is none. Our minds, and hearts, and feelings, are all united on this one point at least—that the *Episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church ought not to be trammelled with slavery*. On that point, sir, our minds are as the mind of one man, and the brethren of the south will find it so. Nor is this any sudden purpose. It is the ground we have always held, and we shall be found standing up for it, shoulder to shoulder, to the end of the battle. We have also been told, sir, that the early Methodists, in their protest against slavery, went further than Christ and his apostles had done. Nay, sir, we have had arguments to-day drawn from the Bible to sustain slavery. What do brethren mean, sir? Is it their *intention* to plead the word of God in defense of slavery? Do they really believe, with the brother from South Carolina, who spoke this morning, that the system of slavery is to find its authority in the Decalogue, written by God's own hand? Sir, they can not mean this, they will not affirm this. And yet we were gravely told that because the commandment speaks of the ox, and the ass, and the man-servant, and maid-servant, in the same connection, that, therefore, the right of property was assumed on the same ground for the latter as for the former. As well go a little further, and assume that the *wife* too was a chattel, according to the intent of the commandment. O! sir, I hope we shall never be

compelled to hear the Bible—the record of God's truth—the charter of human freedom and human rights—appealed to in support of American slavery.

We have had some strange statements here in regard to the legislation of the Church on the subject of slavery. Brethren have tried to make the impression, to use one of their own figures, that the north has been putting the screws on the south, and continually pressing them harder, till at last the compression can be endured no longer. Sir, the facts in the case are just the reverse of all this. The history of the Church shows this point indisputably, that the highest ground that has ever been held upon the subject, was taken at the very organization of the Church, and that concessions have been made by the Church continually, from that time to this, in view of the *necessities* of the south; that while the antislavery principle has never been abandoned, our rules have been made less and less stringent, and our language less and less severe—because experience has shown it to be *absolutely necessary* for the welfare of the Church in the south—and these concessions have been made, too, while the power of the Church has been continually passing from the slaveholding to the non-slaveholding states. I trust brethren will bear this in mind. Without laying stress upon Mr. Wesley's vehement denunciations of slavery, what was the declaration of the Church in 1750? “We pass our disapprobation on all our friends who keep slaves, and advise their freedom.” The language of 1784, when the Church was organized, was equally bold. All *private members* were required to emancipate their slaves in those states where the laws allowed of manumission. The action taken was too strong, sir, and in six months it was suspended, in accordance with the genius of Methodism, which does not all the good she would, but all she can. The Church then made a concession to the south on the score of *necessity*. Even the language on the question of slavery was mitigated. In 1796 it was, “What regulations shall be made for the extirpation of the crying evil of African slavery?” In 1804 it was, “What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?” In 1808 all that relates to slaveholding among private members was stricken out, and no rule on the subject has existed since. I might advert to other points to show the truth of my position, that the Church has gradually made concessions to the necessities of the slaveholding states, till our brethren from the south say they stand firmly on the ground of Discipline. But I forbear: it will not be denied by any who are conversant with the history of the Church. Is it necessary to make still another concession, and allow slavery to connect itself with our Episcopacy?

Now, sir, I do not mean to say that these concessions ought not to have been made. Our fathers wisely made them, on the ground of necessity. The Methodist Church could not have existed at all in the south without them. This should be a rebuke to our abolition brethren every-where who would urge this question to extremities. I take my stand on the *conservative* ground of the Discipline, as far from extreme opinions in the north as in the south. I have no sympathy with either. I would not, dare not urge our southern brethren to a position where they can not stand. The Discipline has placed the Church in the proper relation to slavery in the south. She does not propose to disturb the relations of our southern brethren on the ques-



tion of slavery in the south, but to leave them free to contend with the evil in the best manner they can under the laws of their several states. But while I stand up firmly for their rights and privileges, and shall be ever ready to lend what weight I can to protect them if assaulted, I must beg our brethren of the south not to return the question of slavery upon the north in connection with our general superintendency. This is the real question—Shall slavery be connected with our Episcopacy, which is common to all parts of our Church, the north as well as the south, and thus cause the Church to give her example in favor of the “great evil of slavery,” in a form which will be pleaded as decisive of her judgment on the general question, and in those parts of the country where no necessity exists for such a declaration, and where it will fearfully agitate our societies? There is no necessity in the south for any one of our bishops to hold slaves in order to do his work there. This is admitted on all hands; while it is as readily admitted, even by the south, that there are many conferences, in which his connection with slavery would render his services *unacceptable*.”

I come now, sir, with as much delicacy as possible, to examine the question of the power of the General conference over the bishops. It has been maintained here, sir, that the General conference has no power to remove a bishop, or to suspend the exercise of his functions, unless by impeachment and trial, in regular form, for some offense regularly charged. If this be true, sir, I have greatly misunderstood the nature of our Episcopacy. From whence is its power derived? Do we place it upon the ground of divine right? Surely not, sir. You do not plead any such doctrine. Whence, then, is it derived? Solely, sir, from the suffrages of the General conference. There, and there only, is the source of episcopal power in our Church. And the same power that conferred the authority can remove it, if they see it necessary. Nor is this a new doctrine, sir. The Minutes of 1785 declare that, at the organization of the Church, the “episcopal office was made elective, and the elected superintendent amenable to the body of ministers and preachers.” The Notes to the Discipline assert that the bishops are “*perfectly subject to the General conference—their power, their usefulness, themselves, are entirely at the mercy*” of that body. Again, sir, I bring you the authority of a witness, sanctioned by the conference of 1792, and by Bishop Asbury, and whose doctrine on this subject is indorsed by our late beloved Bishop Emory. I do not mention these venerated names for the mere purpose of awakening the feelings of brethren.

I would not call the sleeping dead from their honored graves, as some have done on this floor. No, sir; they are escaped from all our strifes and warfare. Let them rest, sir—let them rest. They never saw the Methodist Church threatened with so fearful a storm as that which now hangs over us; I know not what they would say or do were they with us now. But hear my witness. Rev. John Dickens, the most intimate friend of Bishop Asbury, in a pamphlet, published in 1792, as already stated, with the sanction of the General conference, thus answered a question put by Mr. Hammett, in reference to this very point. “Now whoever said the superiority of the bishops was by virtue of a separate ordination? If this gave them their superiority, how came they to be removable by the conference?” “We all know Mr. Asbury derived his official power from the

conference, and, therefore, his office is at their disposal.” “Mr. Asbury was thus chosen by the conference, both before and after he was ordained a bishop; and he is still considered as the person of their choice, by being responsible to the conference, who have power to remove him, and to fill his place with another, if they see it necessary. And as he is liable every year to be removed, he may be considered as their annual choice.” Bishop Emory states that this may be considered as expressing the views of “Bishop Asbury in relation to the true and original character of Methodist episcopacy;” and gives it the sanction of his own authority, by quoting and using it in the twelfth section of the “Defense of our Fathers.” (Debates of 1844, pp. 172–175.)

#### DOCUMENT 52.

*Speech of Dr. Capers on Bishop Andrew's Case, May 30, 1844, before General Conference.*

DR. CAPERS rose and said,—Mr. President: At no previous General conference have the conflicting opinions of the north and south in relation to slavery and abolition been so fully and strongly set before us and the community, as at present. I wish it may prove for the better; though I can hardly hope it will not for the worse. In what I have now on my mind to utter, I wish to call attention first to the unity of the Church, as it seems to me that it ought to affect this question, independently of all sectional views in any quarter.

Perhaps it has always been felt since the Church has been extended over the whole country, north and south, that brethren who have occupied positions far north and south, have been opposed to each other in their views of this subject. Possibly they have been too far apart, in local position, to understand well each other's principles; and the action has been as if a medical man should bestow all his care on a particular limb, to cure a disease of the general system. Now, sir, if I know my heart, I approach this subject with an ardent and sincere desire to contribute something—if ever so little—to the conservation of the whole Church. However wide a difference there may be—and I apprehend there is, indeed, a wide difference—between my views of slavery as it exists among the Methodists in South Carolina, and the views of brethren of the north and east, I thank God to know and to feel that this difference of our views has never awakened in me, for one moment, a disposition to inflict the slightest injury on any brother. If I have ever said aught against any one's good name, as a Christian or Christian minister, on account of this difference of opinion, or have cherished in my heart any other than Christian feelings toward any one for a cause which I deem so foreign from the true ground of faith and fellowship, I am not conscious of it. I have considered, sir, that our Church is one, and our ministry one, in spite of these opinions.

My honored brother [Dr. Durbin] deprecates involving the north in a connection with slavery; and assumes that such must be the result, if Bishop Andrew is continued in the general superintendency. But I hold, that if the north might be involved in the evil they so much deprecate, for the cause alleged, they are already involved by another cause. They are involved by the unity of the Church and the unity of our ministry. I thank God for this unity; a unity

which stands not in the Episcopacy, only, but pervades the entire of our ecclesiastical constitution. We have not one Episcopacy only, but one ministry, one doctrine, one Discipline—every usage and every principle, one for the north and the south. And in this view of the matter, I can not but express my surprise that it should be said—and it has been said by more than one brother on this floor—that if the present measure should not pass, it will extend the evil of slavery over the north. It has been declared—and I think brethren for the declaration—that it is not the purpose of any to oppress the south; but they insist much and gravely on their duty to protect the north. It is easy to err in the application of abstract principles to practice; and I must confess, that in the present instance, the application appears to my mind to be not only erroneous, but preposterous. What, sir, extend the evil of slavery over the north by a failure to carry the resolution on your table! What is slavery? What new slave would such a failure make? What slave, now a slave, would it make more a bondman? Or who that is not now a slaveholder might be made a slaveholder? Not one more slave, nor one more slaveholder can be made by the failure of the measure; and yet brethren are bound to carry it, not that they may oppress the south, but merely that they may prevent an extension of slavery over the north. It is, they say, a mere matter of self-preservation. As if for the cause that Bishop Andrew was made a slaveholder without his consent, by the will of the old lady who died in Augusta some years ago, all these brethren, and all they represent, were about to be involved, or were already involved, in the same predicament with the bishop, whether they will or no. The phrase, "*connected with slavery*," has been complained of as extremely indefinite; but I could not have thought that it was so indefinite as this hypothesis proceeds to make it. Bishop Andrew's "*connection with slavery*," brethren assure us, will carry the defilement to hundreds of thousands who are now clean, unless they prevent it by the passage of that resolution. I can not trace this line of connection; I can not fix its figure; I can not conceive of it as an actual verity. Mesmerism itself should not be more impalpable. But I am free to declare, sir, that I have no desire for the extension of slavery. I could wish no freeman to be made a slave. I could rather wish that slaves were freemen. I certainly could not wish my brethren who are served by freemen, to be taxed with such incumbrances as some of us are, who have slaves to serve us.

Sir, I consider our circumstances in this debate quite too serious for extreme speculations on either side; but if brethren will indulge that way, they will allow me the benefit of inferences fairly deducible from their own mode of reasoning. And I claim the inferences as fair from their argument on this point, that if they are involved, or likely to be involved, in the evil of slavery by their relation to Bishop Andrew, they are already involved—inextricably involved, unless they break up the Church—by the fact that they are akin to *me*. Yes, sir, they and I are brethren, whether they will or no. The same holy hands have been laid upon their heads and upon my head. The same vows which they have taken, I have taken. At the same altar where they minister, do I minister; and with the same words mutually on our tongues. We are the same ministry of the same Church. Not *like*, but *identical*. Are they elders? So am I.

Spell the word. There is not a letter in it which they dare deny me. Take their measure. I am just as high as they are, and they as low as I am. We are not one ministry for the north, and another ministry for the south; but one, and one only, for the whole Church. And I can not pass from this point without thanking brother Green for his remarks, so fitly made with respect to this matter; the force of which, I am persuaded, can not possibly be thrown off from this great question. Is the Episcopacy for the whole Church? So is the ministry. And if the fact that a bishop is connected with slavery in the south, requires him to be suspended, because he can not, while so connected, exercise his functions acceptably at the north, the same must be concluded of the ministry; which, as one for the whole Church, and having equal constitutional competency for the north or the south indifferently, must, in the same involvement as the bishop, become subject to like disability. Nor does the interference stop here, but it extends to the privileges of the membership of the Church, as well as the ministry. The wound inflicted by this thrust at the bishop goes through the entire Church. We are every-where one Church—one communion. And may you refuse the sacrament of the Lord's supper, or admission to a love-feast, to a member of the Church in Charleston, whose business may carry him to Boston, because in Boston you will have no connection with slavery? Admit, then, the principle assumed on the other side, and to what confusion will it not lead you? First, the bishop must surcease his functions. He may not be allowed to exercise them even in the slaveholding states! Next, the ministry in the south must be declared incompetent to go north. Next, they may not be allowed to minister *at all*, for fear of contaminating the immaculate north by their ministry as Methodists among the defilements of the south. And next—and by the easiest gradation—our people may be told that communicants at the south may not be communicants at the north, and can not be received as such.

It has been said that the course of aggression from the beginning has been from the south toward the north, and not from the north toward the south.

[Dr. Durbin interposed: "Dr. Capers misapprehends me. I said the course of concession—not aggression—had been from the north to the south, and not from the south to the north."]

Dr. C. I understood the idea to be, that in the conflict on the subject of slavery, the north has been giving up to the south, and the south encroaching on the north.

[Dr. D. "My words were, that the history of the legislation was a constant concession from the north to the south. That was all I said, and all I wished to say."]

Dr. C. I am glad to take the expression in the mildest form. And in what I have to answer, I must beg indulgence with respect to dates. I will thank any brother to supply the date for any fact that I may mention.

This being a question, then, of north and south, we must first settle what the terms mean. What is north and what is south in this controversy? I now understand my brother to have said, that the course of concession has been from the north to the south; and I think he also said, that these concessions have been made while the power in the Church was passing from the slaveholding to the non-slaveholding states. He carried his dates back to the beginning, and gave

us north and south, as far back as 1784. But what region was north, and what south, at that time? Our brother says the majority was south; and where was the south in which that majority dwelt? Was it in the states of Louisiana, Mississippi, Arkansas, Alabama, Georgia, or South Carolina? Where was the south, of which the brother speaks, at the date he gives? A few years later, we find two or three missionaries sent into South Carolina and Georgia, but the very name of Methodism had not reached there in 1784. Our first missionary was sent into Mississippi from South Carolina in 1802, and into Alabama in 1808. But we had Maryland and Virginia for the south. Maryland and Virginia! What, the very center of the system south? And if Maryland and Virginia were the south, where was the north? Was New York the north? What, a slave state north? As for New England, the bright morning of her birth had not yet dawned. There were no Methodists there. Is it not plain, then, that our brother found the majority of the Church to have been in the south before there was any south? and the north to have conceded to the south before there was either north or south? What concessions had one slaveholding state to make to another slaveholding state? Did ever Virginia ask concessions of Carolina, or Carolina of Virginia? It is contrary to the nature of the case that they should. And till New York became a free state, what concessions had she to make to Maryland or Virginia? No, sir, this question of north and south belonged not to those days; and the "legislation"—as my brother calls it—of those times, and times still later—whether wise or unwise—is to be accounted for on very different grounds from what he has supposed. In those times, slavery existed by general consent, and the atrocious slave-trade was carried on both by men of old England and New England. There was no jealousy in the state legislatures of any interference of a hurtful or insurrectionary tendency; and it was not deemed necessary to enact laws to limit the right or privilege of the master to manumit his slaves at will. In those circumstances our rules about slavery were commenced—rules, of the character or tendency of which it is not my purpose to speak; but which, whether good or bad, lax or severe were not begun, or, for many years, continued in a struggle between south and north, slave states and free, but out of a common benevolence, in states similarly circumstanced, and without contravention of the laws. I can not give date for the rise of our question of north and south, but I will say again, that it must date later than the time when the northern slaveholding states were gradually and profitably disposing of their slaves; and the southern slaveholding states, not yet apprehensive of the antagonistic interests that were to arise between northern free states and southern slave states, were comparatively indifferent about the course of things. The action of the Church was not a southern or a northern action, but such as was deemed admissible in the state of the laws where the Church existed.

It has been urged that Mr. Wesley was an abolitionist.

[Dr. Durbin: "I take the liberty to say that I never said that of Mr. Wesley."]

Dr. Capers. I presume you would not; and I do not think any one could, on mature reflection. Mr. Wesley wrote strong things against slavery. But he wrote equally strong things against republicanism and the Revolution. And yet, when

these United States had achieved their independence, who acted more kindly, or taught more loyal lessons toward our government than Mr. Wesley? And I must say here, that I am in possession of a piece of information about his anti-slavery principles, which, perhaps, other brethren do not possess. The gentleman mentioned yesterday by Dr. Durbin—I mean Mr. Hammett—was, for some time, my schoolmaster. My father was one of his first and firmest friends and patrons, and a leading member of his society, first in Charleston, and afterward in Georgetown, where, for a while, I was his pupil. Owing to this, I suppose, at the death of his only son, not many years ago, I was given his correspondence with Mr. Wesley, during his residence as a Wesleyan missionary in the West Indies, and afterward in Charleston, till Mr. Wesley's death. The handwriting of Mr. Wesley is unquestionable; and I state on the authority of this correspondence, that Mr. Wesley gave Mr. Hammett his decided countenance and blessing while he was in Charleston, no less than when he was at St. Kitts.

Here in South Carolina, then, Mr. Hammett formed a religious society in the south proper, and in the south exclusively, with Mr. Wesley's sanction, and for the avowed purpose of being more Wesleyan than what was called Mr. Asbury's Connection was thought to be; and what rule did he adopt on slavery? Why, no rule at all. My information is completely satisfactory to my own mind, on this point; and I say, on the authority of that correspondence, and the testimony of my honored father, who lived till after I was myself a minister, that when Mr. Hammett, with Mr. Wesley's sanction, raised societies in South Carolina, neither did Mr. Hammett enjoin on those societies any rule respecting slavery, neither did Mr. Wesley direct or advise any such rule. And why not? Can any one be at a loss to account for it? The reason plainly was the same which prevented Mr. Wesley, and after him the Wesleyan English conference, from ever enjoining any rule respecting slavery for the missions in the West Indies, except that the missionaries should wholly refrain from intermeddling with the subject. The reason is found in the loyalty of Methodism and religion; a principle which no man knew better how to appreciate than Mr. Wesley. He knew not how to make rules against the law of the land; and no example can be adduced in the history of British Methodism of disciplinary rules, on the subject of slavery, for any country, in advance of the civil law. This is the ground on which the south now stands; and will the north take opposite ground? If they do, they may neither plead the authority of Mr. Wesley, the British Connection, or Mr. Asbury for it. For myself, I must utterly abjure all right or pretension on the part of the Church to interfere with the state. Neither can I put myself, neither can I suffer myself to be put, in contact with the law of the land.

I was glad to hear my brother say for the north, that they have no intention to contravene the laws in our southern states. I thank him for saying so, and I adjure them not to attempt to do that thing. I was glad to hear him say, also, that in the case of the appeal of Harding, there was not a brother who voted to sustain the action of the Baltimore conference, who did not do so under a full persuasion that he could have emancipated the slaves lawfully if he would; though

I confess I can not but fear that popular opinion was too much honored in that matter. But the question of north and south, as it presents itself in the case before us, appears to me to involve the Church in a peculiar way. In a case like that of Harding, he and his triers, for all I know, may have belonged to the state of Maryland, whose laws were concerned, and may all have been reached by the officers of the law if they were deemed to be offenders. But in the case of Bishop Andrew, a citizen of the state of Georgia, whose laws are displeasing, say, to the people of New Hampshire or the north, is arrested by a General conference, composed—for two-thirds of it—of northern men, on an allegation that he, the citizen of Georgia, conforms himself to the laws and institutions of Georgia against the prejudices of the northern people; and for this it is proposed to suspend him. It is as though you had reached forth a long arm from New Hampshire to Georgia, to bring a citizen of the latter state to be punished by the prejudices of the former, for his loyalty to the state to which he belongs. Such a proceeding can not be right; and yet—I repeat—it appears to me that the present is very like such a proceeding. If our ecclesiastical jurisdiction extends to citizens of all the states, it must respect the laws of all alike, and oppose itself to none. What should it avail, to admit the obligation of inferior officers and judicatures of the Church—such as deacons and elders, and quarterly and annual conferences—to respect the laws of their several states, while your highest officers and supreme judicature—your bishops and General conference—should be withheld from their control, or even be allowed to censure and oppose them according to your prejudices? Patriotism and religion both require that we should bow to the supremacy of the laws; and to the supremacy of the laws of all the states alike. Those of the north, acting in this General conference for the whole Church, in all the states, have no more right to run counter to the constitution and laws of the state of Georgia, than we of the south should have to oppose the laws of any of the northern states. And can it have come to such a pass with us, that one is of the south because he respects the laws and constitutions of southern states, and another is of the north because he respects them not? South or north, the authority of the laws is the same, and the obligations of the Christian citizen to observe the laws must be acknowledged the same.

It has been urged that a bishop is only an officer of the General conference; and that his election, and not his consecration, gives him his authority as bishop. And to prove this position, my respected brother [Dr. Durbin] referred for testimony to Dr. Coke, Mr. A-bury, and Mr. Dickens. But I could not but think there was one small particular wanting in the testimony, the lack of which spoiled it altogether for the use intended. The references of my brother were full enough, and to the point, if he had only meant to prove that a bishop is amenable to the General conference, and that the General conference has full power to put him out of office. But to reduce a bishop to a mere General conference officer, it was necessary to prove that that body had a right to displace him at will, with or without some crime alleged. And for this, his authorities were lacking. No authority of Mr. Ashbury, Dr. Coke, Mr. Dickens, or any body else—before this case of Bishop Andrew

caused it to be asserted on this floor—can be adduced for any such doctrine. If a bishop is no more than an officer of the General conference, wherefore is he consecrated? Shall we be told also that elders and deacons are only officers of the annual conferences? What would be thought of a bishop by election, who, without consecration, should assume the functions of the Episcopacy as if he had been ordained? Who could consent to such a usurpation? A bishop an officer of the General conference only! And is it in such a capacity that he ordains and stations the preachers at the annual conferences? An officer of the General conference only! Then were it both untrue and blasphemous to invest him with the office, with those holy words of the consecration service: "Receive the Holy Ghost for the office and work of a bishop in the Church of God, now committed to thee by the imposition of our hands, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." But we are assured that a bishop must be considered as no more than an officer of the General conference, or else we shall incur the imputation of Puseyism. And in a desperate effort to fulfill our purposes on Bishop Andrew, shall we strip the Church of every thing sacred, and reduce it to the level of a mere human association? Is there no position for the Church above that of a Freemason's lodge, unless we hoist it on the stilts of the High-Church conceit, to the pitch of Puseyism?

Much has been said, in this debate, about the constitution, as authorizing the measure which brethren propose to take with respect to Bishop Andrew; and I must beg to call attention to what appears to me the true ground with respect to that question. I am opposed to this measure in every aspect of it; and for many reasons; but its unconstitutionality forms, to my mind, its chief objection.

But what is the constitution? and how shall we interpret it?

It is either the supreme disciplinary law of the whole Church; or it is that law of the Church by which the governing power is limited. In the first sense, it is the embodiment of those principles which are deemed fundamental to the great object for which the Church, as a Christian community, was constituted. And in the second sense, it is that application of these principles to the governing power—the General conference in the present instance—which confines its action within the limits necessary to promote, and not hinder, the attainment of that same great object. And the interpretation of the constitution, in either respect, should always be such as conforms to the grand object of the Church's organization. This object is declared to be "*the spreading of Scriptural holiness over these lands;*" and whatever militates against this object, must, therefore, be contrary to the constitution. As it respects the Church at large, the constitution is contained in the Articles of Religion, and the General Rules; as it applies to the General conference, the Restrictive Rules are technically the constitution. Now, whatever else may be said about this constitution, it will not be denied that,

It must be Christian—agreeing with the principles of the Old and New Testament.

It must be Protestant—maintaining the holy Scriptures as the only rule of faith and practice.

And it must be consistent with the great object for which we have all along steadfastly held

it to be our belief that God has raised us up. It must consist with our calling of God, "to spread Scripture holiness over these lands."

But in all these respects, I must call in question the constitutionality of the measure before us. Bishop Andrew is to be required to emancipate certain negroes; and to remove them from Georgia to some free state that he may be enabled to do so. This is not affirmed in so many words in the resolution on your table, but it is the deed which that resolution seeks to effect; the only contingency known in the resolution being the emancipation of the negroes, which can be effected in no other way but by their removal. No question is asked, or care taken, as to the age and infirmities of any of these negroes, whom he is thus to take into a strange land and climate for emancipation; nor what may be the wants of childhood among them; nor what ties of kindred are to be sundered; but the deed must be done, and he must make haste to do it, for nothing else can restore him to his functions as a bishop. Now, this is unconstitutional, for it is unchristian. Whatever odium may attach to slavery, many a slave would curse you for freedom thus procured; and Bishop Andrew as a Christian man, not to say a Christian bishop, might not dare to sin against the law of love, in the way you would require.

And it is unconstitutional, because it is not Protestant. Our fifth Article says: "The holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation: so that whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby, is not to be required of any man, that it should be believed as an article of faith, or be thought requisite or necessary to salvation." And the twenty-third Article says: "The President, the Congress, the general assemblies, the governors, and the councils of state, as the delegates of the people, are the rulers of the United States of America, according to the division of power made to them by the Constitution of the United States, and by the constitutions of their respective states." Now, there is no injunction of the holy Scriptures more positive than that which respects submission to the civil power; this power is recognized in our twenty-third Article as existing in the general assemblies, etc., according to the constitutions of the respective states; and yet the resolution before us sets aside the injunction of the Scriptures, and the authority of the constitution and laws of Georgia, and makes your *ipse dixit*, uttered by the force of northern prejudices, the supreme rule for the bishop's conduct—a rule which he must observe with or without his conscience, and for or against humanity and religion, or be laid aside from the holy duties of his sacred office, because you arbitrarily demand it from your chair of ecclesiastical supremacy. I say this is not Protestant; and that it is unconstitutional, because it is contrary to Protestantism.

And it is unconstitutional, yet, again, because it is inconsistent with the great object for which the Church has been constituted, as it must impede and hinder the course of our ministry in many of the states, and debar our access altogether to large portions of the colored population.

I beseech brethren to allow due weight to the considerations which have been so kindly and ably urged by others on this branch of the subject. I contemplate it, I confess, with a bleeding heart. Never, never have I suffered as in view of the evil which this measure threatens

against the south. The agitation has already begun there; and I tell you that though our hearts were to be torn out of our bodies it could avail nothing, when once you have awakened the feeling that we can not be trusted among the slaves. Once you have done this thing, you have effectually destroyed us. I could wish to die sooner than live to see such a day. As sure as you live, brethren, there are tens of thousands, nay, hundreds of thousands, whose destiny may be periled by your decision on this case. When we tell you that we preach to a hundred thousand slaves in our missionary field, we only announce the beginning of our work—the beginning openings of the door of access to the most numerous masses of slaves in the south. When we add, that there are two hundred thousand now within our reach who have no Gospel unless we give it to them, it is still but the same announcement of the beginnings of the opening of that wide and effectual door, which was so long closed, and so lately has begun to be opened, for the preaching of the Gospel, by our ministry, to a numerous and destitute portion of the people. O, close not this door! Shut us not out from this great work, to which we have been so signally called of God. Consider our position. I pray you, I beseech you by every sacred consideration, pause in this matter. Do not talk about concessions to the south. We ask for no concessions—no compromises. Do with us as you please, but spare the souls for whom Jesus died. If you deem our toils too light, and that, after all, there is more of rhetoric than cross-bearing in our labors, come down and take a part with us. Let this be the compromise, if we have any. I could almost promise my vote to make the elder a bishop who should give such a proof as this of his devotion to—I will not say the emancipation of the negro race, but what is better—what is more constitutional and more Christian—the salvation of the souls of the negroes on our great southern plantations. Concessions! We ask for none. So far from it, we are ready to make any in our power to you. We come to you not for ourselves, but for perishing souls; and we entreat you, for Christ's sake, not to take away from them the bread of life which we are just now beginning to carry them. We beg for this—I must repeat it—with bleeding hearts. Yes, I feel intensely on this subject. The stone of stumbling and rock of offense, of former times, when George Daugherty, a southern man, and a southern minister, and one of the wisest and best that ever graced our ministry, was dragged to the pump in Charleston, and his life rescued by a sword in a woman's hand—the offense of the anti slavery measures of that day has but lately begun to subside. I can not, I say, forget past times, and the evil of them, when in those parts of my own state of South Carolina, where slaves are most numerous, there was little more charity for Methodist preachers than if they had been Mormons, and their access to the negroes was looked upon as dangerous to the public peace. Bring not back upon us the evil of those bitter days. I can not forget how I felt when, thirty-three years ago, Riddlespurger, who kept a shop and sold rum and calico on the Dorchester road some twelve miles from Charleston, asked us to preach at his house, and told us of hundreds of negroes in the neighborhood, who had never heard preaching, who would come to hear. And though he was a rumseller, and I suspected his object—

and hateful as it seemed, to be associated with one whose business was a nuisance to the neighborhood—the man of rum—to Riddlespurger's I went, and preached to the negroes at the risk of the duck-pond, where it was threatened to bate my zeal, till, finding that the preaching sold no more grog, or possibly being scared, the poor man begged us to desist from coming to preach; when my venerable colleague on this floor, [Mr. Dunwoody,] left the city in the afternoon to go a distance in another direction, to meet an assembly of negroes late at night, by the light of the moon, on the side of a swamp, to preach and administer the sacraments in the wild woods, as if it had been a thing the daylight might not look upon, or Christian people countenance at their dwellings. Yes, sir, and I think he was at it all night there in the woods, in the season and region of pestilence, and baptized and administered the holy eucharist to some three hundred persons.

Am I not correct? [Turning to Mr. Dunwoody,] Did you not baptize three hundred?

[Mr. Dunwoody: "I don't remember how many, but there were a great many."]

I said, sir, that we ask for no concessions. We ask nothing for ourselves. We fear nothing for ourselves. But we ask, and we demand, that you embarrass not the Gospel by the measure now proposed. Throw us back, if you will, to those evil times. But we demand that when you shall have caused us to be esteemed a sort of land pirates, and we have to preach again at such places as Riddlespurger's and Rantoule swamp, you see to it that we find there the souls who are now confided to our care as pastors of the flock of Christ. Yes, throw us back again to those evil times; but see that you make them evil to none but ourselves. Throw us back, but make it possible for us to fulfill our calling; and by the grace of God we will endure and overcome, and still ask no concessions of you.

But if you can not do this; if you can not vex us without scattering the sheep, and making them a prey to the wolf of hell, then do we sternly forbid the deed. You may not, and you dare not do it. I say again, if by this measure the evil to be done were only to involve the ministry, without harm or peril to the souls we serve, we might bow to the stroke without despair, if not in submissive silence. We know the work as a cross-bearing service; and as such we love to accomplish it. It pleased God to take the life of the first missionary sent to the negroes, but his successor was instantly at hand. And in the name of the men who are now in the work, or ready to enter it, I pledge for a brave and unflinching perseverance. This is not braggardism. No, it is an honest expression of a most honest feeling. Life or death, we will never desert that Christian work to which we know that God has called us. We ask to be spared no trial; but that the way of trials may be kept open for us. We ask to be spared no labor; but that we may be permitted to labor on, and still more abundantly. Add, if you please, to the amount of our toils. Pile labor on labor more and more. Demand of us still more brick; or even the full tale of brick without straw or stubble; but cut us not off from the clay also. Cut us not off from access to the slaves of the south, when—to say nothing of "concessions to the south"—you shall have finished the measure of your demands for the north. (Debates of 1844, pp. 177-183.)

## DOCUMENT 53.

*Resolutions presented by Dr. Copers, to General Conference, June 3, 1844, asking for a division of the Church.*

DR. COPERS then introduced the following resolutions, which were finally referred to a committee of nine, with instructions to report as soon as possible:

"Be it resolved by the delegates of all the annual conferences in General conference assembled, That we recommend to the annual conferences to suspend the constitutional restrictions which limit the powers of the General conference so far, and so far only, as to allow of the following alterations in the government of the Church, namely:

"1. That the Methodist Episcopal Church, in these United States and territories, and the republic of Texas, shall constitute two General conferences, to meet quadrennially, the one at some place *south*, and the other *north* of the line which now divides between the states commonly designated as free states and those in which slavery exists.

"2. That each one of the two General conferences thus constituted shall have full powers, under the limitations and restrictions which are now of force and binding on the General conference, to make rules and regulations for the Church, within their territorial limits, respectively, and to elect bishops for the same.

"3. That the two General conferences aforesaid shall severally have jurisdiction as follows: The southern General conference shall comprehend the states of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, and the states and territories lying southerly thereto, and also the republic of Texas, to be known and designated by the title of the 'Southern General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States.' And the northern General conference to comprehend all those states lying north of the states of Virginia, Kentucky, and Missouri, as above, to be known and designated by the title of the 'Northern General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.'

"4. *And be it further resolved*, That as soon as three-fourths of all the members of all the annual conferences shall have voted on these resolutions, and shall approve the same, the said southern and northern General conferences shall be deemed as having been constituted by such approval; and it shall be competent for the southern annual conferences to elect delegates to said southern General conference, to meet in the city of Nashville, Tennessee, on the first of May, 1848, or sooner, if a majority of two-thirds of the members of the annual conferences composing that General conference shall desire the same.

"5. *And be it further resolved, as aforesaid*, That the Book Concerns at New York and Cincinnati shall be held and conducted as the property and for the benefit of all the annual conferences as heretofore; the editors and agents to be elected once in four years, at the time of the session of the northern General conference, and the votes of the southern General conference to be cast by delegates of that conference attending the northern for that purpose.

"6. *And be it further resolved*, That our Church organization for foreign missions shall be maintained and conducted jointly between the two General conferences as one Church, in such manner as shall be agreed upon from time to time

between the two great branches of the Church as represented in the said two conferences. (Debates of 1844, p. 192.)

## DOCUMENT 54.

*Minutes of the Trials of Bishops Hedding and Soule at the General Conference of the Methodist in Episcopal Church 1828.*

THE Committee on Episcopacy, to whom the letter of the Rev. E. Hedding to the General conference was referred, submit the following:

An article having appeared in the Mutual Rights, over the signature of Timothy, purporting to be an address to the junior Bishop, E. Hedding, in relation to an address delivered by the Bishop to the members of the Pittsburg annual conference, in August, 1826, which the Bishop considered unjust, a misrepresentation throughout, and a base slander upon his character, as he declared in a note to the editor of said "Mutual Rights;" which note was published in that periodical; and several anonymous certificates having also been published in said "Mutual Rights," justifying the representations of Timothy, and, of course, contradicting the contents of the Bishop's note.

These various circumstances, the Bishop conceived, had already operated to his injury, and might so operate in future, and he, therefore, thought himself called upon to lay the matter before the General conference, and to invite investigation. This he did, in a written communication, which, after being read before the conference, was referred to the Committee on the Episcopacy. That Committee, having taken the same into consideration, resolved to procure a meeting between the Bishop and the delegates of the Pittsburg annual conference, in the presence of the Committee, and in presence of the writer of the article signed "Timothy," in order, as far as possible, to ascertain the character of the address delivered by the Bishop to the Pittsburg conference. The plan pursued to attain this object was, for the members of the said delegation, severally, first to state their recollections of that address, and then to answer the questions proposed to them on the subject.

After all those delegates had thus communicated to the Committee their recollections, a paper was read containing as accurate outline of the address by the Bishop as he had been able to make out from his own recollection. The recollections of the delegation from Pittsburg annual conference, and of Bishop Hedding, were not only substantially, but, in a remarkable degree, circumstantially concurrent. The Bishop then pointed out the injustice, misrepresentation, and slander of his character, which he considered as pervading the address signed "Timothy;" after which, the author of that article, having been permitted to address the Committee, acknowledged that, in not properly distinguishing in two instances, he had done injustice, giving the general character of the Bishop's address, that some of the inferences he had drawn were unjust, and that, as his premises were incorrect, all the inferences drawn from them might be erroneous.

Your Committee beg leave, therefore, to declare, as the result of their investigations in this matter, that they consider the views presented in the Bishop's note to the editor of the "Mutual Rights," of the article signed "Timothy,"

to have been strictly correct. The Committee would further declare that, in their opinion, the address of Bishop Hedding, as recollecting by himself and the delegates of Pittsburg annual conference, not only was not deserving of censure, but was such as the circumstances of the case rendered it his official duty to deliver.

Signed, S. G. ROSZELL, Chairman.  
Pittsburg, May 15, 1828.

Wednesday afternoon, May 21, 1828.

L. M'Combs, seconded by T. Merritt, offered the following resolutions, namely:

Whereas, in the sermon of the Rev. Bishop Soule, preached before the South Carolina conference, January 14, 1827, there is, in the opinion of some, an apparent departure from several points of doctrine held by the Methodist Episcopal Church; that is to say,

First. It may be fairly inferred, from the above-mentioned sermon, that Christians are not under moral obligations to keep the Sabbath holy, since the law which enjoins the observance of the Sabbath is done away.

Secondly. The law given to mankind in a state of innocence has, in virtue of atonement, relinquished its claims in such a sense as not to condemn even him who refuses compliance with the conditions of the new covenant.

Thirdly. That the atonement made by Jesus Christ was a satisfaction in such a sense as to render both repentance and pardon, with respect to the sins atoned for, unnecessary.

Fourthly. That the atonement has no direct and immediate application to the transgressions of the law to which man is now personally responsible, called, in the sermon, the Gospel, or the law of liberty. Therefore,

Resolved, That this General conference now go into an investigation of the subject, and determine whether such doctrines are contained in such sermon.

L. M'Combs, T. Merritt, S. G. Roszell moved, and was seconded, that the preamble and resolution be indefinitely postponed; but the motion was afterward withdrawn.

J. Emory moved, and was seconded, that it lay on the table, to give opportunity for making inquiry and answering objections. This motion was also withdrawn.

W. Fisk renewed the motion for laying on the table, and was seconded by B. M. Drake, which motion was also withdrawn.

S. K. Hodges then moved, and seconded, to refer the whole subject under consideration to the Committee on Episcopacy, which motion prevailed.

Resolved, To sit with closed doors.

S. G. Roszell, for the Committee on the Episcopacy, to whom was referred the preamble and resolution, submitted yesterday, in relation to a sermon of Bishop Soule's, reported, and the conference proceeded to consider.

R. Tydings moved, and B. M. Drake seconded, that the report be adopted.

W. Fisk called for a division of the resolution, and that the items be voted on separately; and this course was admitted to be in order.

It was then moved and seconded that the report be indefinitely postponed, which motion was decided in the negative.

The question being taken on the adoption of the first item in the resolution, contained in the report, it was decided in the affirmative, 94 in favor, and 30 against.

The question being taken on the second and third items, they were both adopted, after so amending the second as to make it read in the language of the resolutions offered by L. M. Combs.

The time of adjournment being near, it was resolved, on motion, to extend the session till half past twelve.

The question was then taken on the fourth item, and adopted.

The time of adjournment being again near, it was resolved to extend the session ten minutes.

The question was then taken on the last resolution, and adopted.

It was then moved and seconded that the report on the whole be adopted, and the question was decided in the affirmative; which said report is as follows:

The Committee on the Episcopacy, to whom was referred the preamble and resolution questioning the soundness of doctrine in a sermon preached by Rev. Bishop Soule before the South Carolina conference, and requiring an investigation into the same, beg leave to report that, having had the matter thus submitted to them under careful examination, the Committee have not seen reason to concur with any of the items contained in said preamble, and, therefore, submit the following resolutions:

*Resolved, by the delegates of the annual conference, in General conferences assembled, That nothing in the sermon preached by Rev. Bishop Soule before the South Carolina conference, January 14, 1827, and published at the request of said conference, warrants the inference,*

*First.* That Christians are released from moral obligation to keep the Sabbath holy.

*Secondly.* That the law given to mankind in a state of innocency has, in virtue of atonement, relinquished its claims in such a sense as not to condemn even him who refuses compliance with the conditions of the new covenant; or,

*Thirdly.* That the atonement made by Jesus Christ is a satisfaction in such a sense as to render both repentance and pardon, with respect to the sins atoned for unnecessary; nor,

*Fourthly.* That the atonement has no direct and immediate application to the transgressions of the law to which man is responsible; and it is further

*Resolved, That, in the judgment of this conference, there is nothing in said sermon, fairly construed, inconsistent with our Articles of Religion, as illustrated in the writings of Messrs. Wesley and Fletcher.*

All of which is respectfully submitted.

S. G. ROSZELL, *Chairman.*

*Pittsburg, May 22, 1828.*

The above is a correct copy from the journals of the General conference of 1828.

JOSEPH M. TRIMBLE,

*Secretary of General Conference.*

*Boston, May 14, 1852.*

#### DOCUMENT 55.

*Letter of Dr. Coke to Rev. Samuel King, Franklin Circuit, Salisbury District, Virginia Conference, dated New Chapel, City Road, London, June 1, 1805.*

VERY DEAR BROTHER,—Before you have received this letter, you will probably have heard

of the alteration which has taken place in my state of life by marriage. I therefore feel it my duty to write to you in the fullest and most ingenuous manner, in respect of my relation to you, and the Methodist connection in the United States of America.

About ten years ago, when it was the unanimous judgment of the General conference that the Episcopacy needed to be strengthened, I proposed to reside with you for life, in consequence of which the most solemn engagements were entered into on both sides. The fulfillment of these engagements was delayed with the consent of the conference, by various circumstances then unforeseen; but I never have broken them in the smallest instance, and am now as willing to fulfill them as ever I was at any moment since I made them. My most beloved wife is as equally willing. She is indeed a twin soul to myself. Never, I think, was there a more perfect congeniality between two human beings than between us.

But, on the other hand, I should be the most ungrateful of husbands if I trifled with her health or feelings. It, therefore, does not appear at all probable that I shall make you another transitory visit. I can not think of leaving my most dear wife for so long a time as a transitory visit would require, nor can I think of making her cross the Atlantic Ocean twice for such a purpose. If we come to you at all, we come for life; but if we come for life, we come under the most express, permanent, and unalterable conditions, except in the case of the death of Bishop Asbury, in which case I should consider it as my duty to sail for America as soon as possible. But before I mention these conditions, I must make some observations respecting my venerable and highly-esteemed friend, Bishop Asbury.

As far as I know my own heart, I can most truly say, that I have not a wish in my soul to intrude, in the least degree, on the labors of brother Asbury. As long as he can regularly visit the seven annual conferences, you do not want me; but if he was so debilitated that he could not attend the seven conferences, I should be willing to come over to you for life, on the express condition that the seven conferences should be divided between us, three and four, and four and three, each of us changing our division annually; and that this plan, at all events, should continue permanent and unalterable during both our lives. I trust that our gracious Lord will continue so to strengthen brother Asbury, that the necessity or expedience of this plan may not happen; but, if it do, the annual conferences, or the General conference, must be consulted on the business; and I have no doubt but they will determine, with the utmost sincerity and irrevocable integrity. I promise also, on my part, to abide most sacredly by my engagements, and to be yours entirely for life, if you judge it expedient, on the conditions before mentioned. Nothing, in that case, shall detain me in Europe for a moment after I have settled my affairs, but such an illness on my wife's or on my own part, as will absolutely incapacitate her or me from going on ship-board; for I can by no means leave her behind me.

But there is no present appearance that we shall be detained on the above account. My wife is one of the best of women; she breathes the genuine spirit of a Christian pilgrim, and would go with me any where, yea, through



fire and water, in the will of God. My health has not been so good as it is at present, I think, ever since I first visited America, or even then, praised be God! The constitution of my beloved wife is a very delicate one, but, with great care and attention, it is my opinion that it is likely to bear the fatigues of traveling for many, many years. She has been indeed brought up in a most tender and delicate manner, and, therefore, needs convenience through life, which others, not brought up in the same tender way, have no need of. But the Lord has blessed her, and me through her, with a sufficiency to supply both her and my wants in every respect, without being burdensome to any society.

We were married on the first of last April, and in six weeks we traveled about four hundred miles; and, in a few days, we are going on another tour of about six hundred, in which we shall cross the Irish Channel.

I must now observe that I do not intend, by any of the observations I have made, to derogate, in the smallest degree, from the worth and integrity of my old, venerable, and worthy friend, Bishop Whatcoat. I have, ever since I knew him, held him in very high esteem; but his age and infirmities render it impossible for him now to take even half the work *entirely* under his own care as a bishop. But I am truly thankful to find, by the accounts I have lately received from America, that he is able to meet Bishop Asbury at many of the conferences.

There is no remarkable revival in the British or Irish circuits at present, but there has been a gradual increase in Britain. Our missions, both at home and abroad, prosper very much. I have sent to brother Cooper and brother Wilson a printed account of their prosperity, which I lately drew up. I bless God that the committee which the conference has granted to aid me in the management of the finances of the missions, to answer letters, etc., have shown such attention to the business, and have afforded me such aid that I am now assured that the missions may be carried on with spirit without me, notwithstanding the fears of my British brethren in conference concerning them.

Favor me with an answer to this letter, directed to me at the New Chapel, City-Road, London, and give me some account of the work of God in your district or circuit. Accounts of the great revival in America are exceedingly pleasing and profitable to our congregations in Great Britain and Ireland, and to the readers of our magazines. I wish you could see all my heart; if you did, you would find it as much, as cordially attached to the American Methodists as ever it was in any part of my life.

I now leave the whole to the gracious disposal of our God, and recommend you, as I do daily, in humble and earnest prayer, to his gracious protection. Remember me and my dear wife in your prayers, and believe me to be, what I most sincerely am,

Your very affectionate brother and faithful friend,

T. COKE.

*Reply of Western Conference to Dr. Coke, drawn up by William M'Kendree, Presiding Elder, at Ebenezer, Kentucky, September 17, 1806.*

MUCH RESPECTED AND VERY DEAR BROTHER,—The receipt of yours, June 1, 1805, has waked up a multiplicity of affecting sensations and very important considerations in our mind.

First. The Christian attachment which we feel for you, imprinted on our hearts by the sacrifice you have made, the dangers you have encountered to serve us, the risk of health and life you have run, the labor and service you have performed, the travel and sorrow endured, and the precious Gospel truths you have preached unto us. But the contents of your letter are to us indicative of seeing your face no more. The purity of our religious attachments calls on us for great plainness on this very important occasion. You say, "I proposed to reside with you for life, in consequence of which the most solemn engagements were entered into on both sides." These engagements, you further say, "I have never broken in the smallest instance, and am now as willing to fulfill them as ever I was at any moment since I made them." And we as conscientiously believe the engagements between us have never been violated in the least degree on our part. "The fulfillment of the engagements," as you state, "was delayed with the consent of the conference," and it was at your own request, in the first instance, and at the request of the British conference afterward, that this consent was, from time to time, obtained. But now you say, "If we come to you at all, we come for life; but if we come for life, we come under the most express, permanent, and unalterable conditions." "I should be willing to come over to you for life on the express condition that the seven conferences should be divided between us, [that is, Bishop Asbury and yourself,] three and four, and four and three, each of us changing our division annually; and that this plan, at all events, should continue permanent and unalterable during both our lives." If these were the conditions of our "most solemn engagements," it would have been superfluous for you to have proposed them again. But if your letter contain proposals for a new and "most solemn engagement"—which we think it does—in that case we conceive the former engagements are set aside, at least, virtually, and we at full liberty to accede to your terms, or reject them, as we please. We sincerely assure you that we are deliberately opposed to your proposed division of the seven conferences, nor have we the most distant thought of fixing you and brother Asbury in the most "express, permanent, and unalterable" situation "for life." No! dear Doctor, much as we love you and brother Asbury, and highly as we esteem your services, we would sooner, much sooner, depose you both, and commit the Church to the care of Him who hitherto hath proved so well, and brought her safe through so many storms. Hence, if we are not to see you till these terms are agreed to, we doubt whether we shall ever have the pleasure of seeing you in time. We are willing to comply with our engagements, and to be governed by the General conference; but not knowingly to depart from the principles established therein, and, therefore, can but disapprove of your addressing us in our individual capacity, to nullify the engagements entered into by you and the General conference; and, therefore, judge it most proper to answer you officially, and not individually. However, although God, in his providence, hath been pleased to take our venerable and much-beloved friend and brother, Whatcoat, to reap the fruit of his pious labors, and thereby made your presence necessary, we are not disposed to press you into our service.

We rejoice that the Father of every good and perfect gift has, in his providence, blessed you with a companion so completely to your mind, and, through her, compensated you for your former liberalities to his Church, and, at the same time, put it in your power to continue in his service, without being burdensome to any. You may rest assured that it is our sincere desire that you may live long and happy together, and at last shine as stars of the first magnitude forever and ever. We are of your opinion with respect to trifling with your consort's health or feelings; and, therefore, as your change by marriage has, in your judgment, rendered it improper for you to visit us, except we comply with the conditions proposed in your letter; and as our judgment forbids that compliance, we doubt of seeing you at our next General conference. It is not our intention, by any of the foregoing observations, to interrupt the unity of the Church, or break the bonds of peace and love which have so long subsisted between us. No, we feel our attachments to you, and are determined to respect and treat you as a gentleman, a Christian minister and bishop. Our venerable brother Asbury is preserved, and once more Providence has conducted him over the mountains to our Western conference, and blessed us with his valuable services. He appears to be supported and led on by Providence in the discharge of his important work, and we comfortably hope God will bless his labors till his Church shall be sufficiently provided for.

We are happy to inform you that the Lord is carrying on his work in this western country. We enjoy peace and union, with increase of numbers both in the ministry and membership.

We are, dear brother, yours, most respectfully. (Scraps, I, pp. 748-750.)

#### DOCUMENT 56.

*Report of the Committee of Nine on the Declaration of the Fifty-one Southern Delegates to the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, adopted June 8, 1844.*

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

Whereas, a declaration has been presented to this General conference, with the signatures of fifty-one delegates of the body, from thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states, representing that, for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization can not be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General conference, as now constituted; and,

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

Resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences, in General conference assembled,

1. That, should the annual conferences in the slaveholding states find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection, the following rule shall be observed with regard to the northern boundary of such connection: All the socie-

ties, stations, and conferences, adhering to the Church in the south, by a vote of the majority of the members of said societies, stations, and conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the southern Church; and the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in no wise attempt to organize Churches or societies within the limits of the Church, South, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein; it being understood that the ministry of the south reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to stations, societies, and conferences, adhering, by vote of a majority, to the Methodist Episcopal Church; provided also, that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and conferences, bordering on the line of division; and not to interior charges, which shall, in all cases, be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated.

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

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

4. That whenever the annual conferences, by a vote of three-fourths of all their members voting on the third resolution, shall have concurred in the recommendation to alter the sixth Restrictive Article, the Agents at New York and Cincinnati shall, and they are hereby authorized and directed to, deliver over to any authorized agent or appointee of the Church, South, should one be organized, all notes and book accounts against the ministers, Church members, or citizens within its boundaries, with authority to collect the same for the sole use of the southern Church, and that said Agents also convey to the aforesaid agent or appointee of the south all the real estate, and assign to him all the property, including presses, stock, and all right and interest connected with the printing establishments at Charleston, Richmond, and Nashville, which now belong to the Methodist Episcopal Church.

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

6. That the above transfer shall be in the form of annual payments of \$25,000 per annum, and specifically in stock of the Book Concern, and in southern notes and accounts due the

establishment, and accruing after the first transfer mentioned above; and till the payments are made, the southern Church shall share in all the net profits of the Book Concern, in the proportion that the amount due them, or in arrears, bears to all the property of the Concern.

7. That Nathan Bangs, George Peck, and James B. Finley be, and they are hereby, appointed commissioners, to act in concert with the same number of commissioners appointed by the southern organization—should one be formed—to estimate the amount which will fall due to the south by the preceding rule, and to have full powers to carry into effect the whole arrangements proposed with regard to the division of property, should the separation take place; and if, by any means, a vacancy occurs in this board of commissioners, the Book Committee at New York shall fill said vacancy.

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

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

10. That the Church so formed in the south shall have a common right to use all the copyrights in possession of the Book Concerns at New York and Cincinnati, at the time of the settlement by the commissioners.

11. That the Book Agents at New York be directed to make such compensation to the conferences south, for their dividend from the Chartered Fund, as the commissioners above provided for shall agree upon.

12. That the bishops be respectfully requested to lay that part of this report requiring the action of the annual conferences before them as soon as possible, beginning with the New York conference. (Journal of 1844, p. 135.)

#### DOCUMENT 57.

*Protest of the Minority of the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, against the action of that body in the case of Bishop Andrew, presented June 6, 1844.*

In behalf of thirteen annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and portions of the ministry and membership of several other conferences, embracing nearly five thousand ministers, traveling and local, and a membership of nearly five hundred thousand, constitutionally represented in this General conference, we the undersigned, a minority of the delegates of the several annual conferences in General conference assembled, after mature reflection, impelled by convictions we can not resist, and in conformity with the rights and usages of minorities, in the instance of deliberative assemblies and judicial tribunals, in similar circumstances of division and disagreement, do most solemnly, and in due form, protest, against the recent act of a majority of this General confer-

ence, in an attempt, as understood by the minority, to degrade and punish the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, by declaring it to be the sense or judgment of the General conference that he desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions, without the exhibition of any alleged offense against the laws or Discipline of the Church, without form of trial, or legal conviction of any kind, and in the absence of any charge of want of qualification or faithfulness in the performance of the duties pertaining to his office.

We protest against the act of the majority in the case of Bishop Andrew, as extrajudicial to all intents and purposes, being both without law, and contrary to law. We protest against the act, because we recognize in this General conference no right, power, or authority, ministerial, judicial, or administrative, to suspend or depose a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or otherwise subject him to any official disability whatever, without the formal presentation of a charge or charges, alleging that the bishop to be dealt with has been guilty of the violation of some law, or at least some disciplinary obligation of the Church, and also upon conviction of such charge, after due form of trial. We protest against the act in question as a violation of the fundamental law, usually known as the compromise law of the Church, on the subject of slavery—the only law which can be brought to bear upon the case of Bishop Andrew, and the assertion and maintenance of which, till it is constitutionally revoked, is guaranteed by the honor and good faith of this body, as the representative assembly of the thirty-three annual conferences known as contracting parties in the premises.

And we protest against the act further, as an attempt to establish a dangerous precedent, subversive of the union and stability of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and especially as placing in jeopardy the general superintendency of the Church, by subjecting any bishop of the Church at any time to the will and caprice of a majority of the General conference, not only without law, but in defiance of the restraints and provisions of law. The undersigned, a minority of the General conference, in protesting, as they do, against the late act of the majority, in the virtual suspension of Bishop Andrew, regard it as due to themselves and those they represent, as well as the character and interests of the Church at large, to declare, by solemn and formal avowal, that after a careful examination of the entire subject, in all its relations and bearings, they protest as above, for the reasons and upon the grounds following, namely: 1. The proceeding against Bishop Andrew in this General conference has been upon the assumption that he is connected with slavery—that he is the legal holder and owner of slave property. On the subject of slavery in the Methodist Episcopal Church, both as it regards the ministry and membership, we have special law, upon which the adjudication of all questions of slavery must, by intention of law, proceed. The case of Bishop Andrew, therefore, presents a simple question of law and fact, and the undersigned can not consent that the force of circumstances, and other merely extrinsic considerations, shall be allowed to lead to any issue, except that indicated by the law and the facts in the case. In the late act of the majority, law, express law, is appealed from, and

expediency in view of circumstances—relative propriety—assumed necessity, is substituted, in its place, as a rule of judgment. It is assumed and the assumption acted upon, that expediency may have jurisdiction even in the presence of law—the law, too, being special, and covering the case in terms. In the absence of law, it might be competent for the General conference to act upon other grounds; this is not disputed, nor yet that it would have been competent for the conference to proceed upon the forms of law—but that the terms and conditions of a special enactment, having all the force of a common public charter, can be rightfully waived in practice, at the promptings of a fugitive unsettled expediency, is a position the undersigned regard, not merely as erroneous, but as fraught with danger to the best interests of the Church.

The law of the Church on slavery has always existed since 1785, but especially since 1804, as a *virtual, though informal, contract of mutual concession and forbearance* between the north and the south, then, as now, known and existing as distinct parties, in relation to the vexed questions of slavery and abolition; those conferences found in states where slavery prevailed constituting the southern party, and those in the non-slaveholding states, the northern, exceptions to the rule being found in both. The rights of the legal owners of slaves, in all the slaveholding states, are guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and by the local constitutions of the states respectively, as the supreme law of the land, to which every minister and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church within the limits of the United States government professes subjection, and pledges himself to submit, as an article of Christian faith, in the common creed of the Church. Domestic slavery, therefore, wherever it exists in this country, is a civil regulation, existing under the highest sanctions of constitutional and municipal law, known to the tribunals of the country; and it has always been assumed at the south, and relied upon as correct, that the north, or non-slaveholding states, had no right, civil or moral, to interfere with relations and interests thus secured to the people of the south by all the graver forms of law and social order, and that it can not be done without an abuse of the constitutional rights of citizenship. The people of the north, however, have claimed to think differently, and have uniformly acted toward the south in accordance with such opposition of opinion. Precisely in accordance, too, with this state of things, as it regards the general population of the north and south, respectively, the Methodist Episcopal Church has been divided in opinion and feeling on the subject of slavery and abolition, since its organization in 1784: two separate and distinct parties have always existed. The southern conferences, in agreeing to the main principles of the compromise law in 1804 and 1816, conceded, by express stipulation, their right to resist northern interference in any form, upon the condition, pledged by the north, that while the *whole Church*, by common consent, united in proper effort for the mitigation and final removal of the evil of slavery, the north was not to interfere, by excluding from membership or ministerial office in the Church, persons owning and holding slaves in states where emancipation is not practicable, and where the liberated slave is not permitted to enjoy freedom. Such was the com-

compact of 1804 and 1816, finally agreed to by the parties after a long and fearful struggle, and such is the compact now—the proof being derived from history and the testimony of living witnesses. And is it possible to suppose that the original purpose and intended application of the law was not designed to embrace every member, minister, order, and officer of the Methodist Episcopal Church? Is the idea of excepted cases allowable by fair construction of the law? Do not the reasons and intentment of the law place it beyond doubt, that every conceivable case of alleged misconduct that can arise, connected with slavery or abolition, is to be subjected, by consent and contract of parties, to the jurisdiction of this great conservative arrangement?

Is there any thing in the law or its reasons creating an exception in the instance of bishops? Would the south have entered into the arrangement, or in any form consented to the law, had it been intimated by the north that bishops must be an exception to the rule? Are the virtuous dead of the north to be slandered by the supposition that they intended to except bishops, and thus accomplished their purposes, in negotiation with the south, by a resort to deceptive and dishonorable means? If bishops are not named, no more are presiding elders, agents, editors—or indeed any other officers of the Church, who are nevertheless included, although the same rule of construction would except them also. The enactment was for an entire people, east, west, north, and south. It was for the Church, and every member of it—for the common weal of the body—and is therefore universal and unrestricted in its application; and no possible case can be settled upon any other principles, without a direct violation of this law both in fact and form. The law being what we have assumed, any violation of it, whatever may be its form or mode, is as certainly a breach of good faith as an infringement of law. It must be seen, from the manner in which the compromise was effected, in the shape of a law, agreed to by equal contracting parties, “the several annual conferences,” after long and formal negotiation, that it was not a mere legislative enactment, a simple decree of a General conference, but partakes of the nature of a grave compact, and is invested with all the sacredness and sanctions of a solemn treaty, binding respectively the well-known parties to its terms and stipulations. If this be so—and with the evidence accessible who can doubt it?—if this be so, will it prove a light matter for this General conference to violate or disregard the obligation of this *legal compromise*, in the shape of public recognized law? Allow that the present parties in this controversy can not be brought to view the subject of the law in question in the same light, can such a matter end in a mere difference of opinion as it respects the immediate parties? The law exists in the Discipline of the Church—the law is known, and its reasons are known, as equally binding upon both parties; and what is the likelihood of the imputation of bad faith under the circumstances? What the hazard, that such imputation, as the decision of public opinion, it may be from a thousand tribunals, will be brought to bear, with all the light and force of conviction, upon any act of this body, in violation of the plain provisions of long-established law, originating in treaty, and based upon the principles of *conventional compromise*?

In proportion to our love of truth, of law and order, are we not called upon to pause and weigh well the hazard, before, as a General conference, we incur it beyond change or remedy? The undersigned have long looked to the great *conservative law* of the Discipline on the subject of slavery and abolition, as the only charter of connectional union between the north and the south; and whenever this bond of connection is rendered null and void, no matter in what form, or by what means, they are compelled to regard the Church, to every practical purpose, as already divided without the intervention of any other agency. By how far, therefore, they look upon the union of the Methodist Episcopal Church as essential to its prosperity, and the glory and success of American Methodism, by so far they are bound to *protest* against the late act of the General conference in the irregular suspension of Bishop Andrew, as not only without law, but in direct contravention of legal stipulations known to be essential to the unity of the Church. And they are thus explicit in a statement of facts, that the responsibility of division may attach where in justice it belongs. The minority making this protest are perfectly satisfied with the law of the Church affecting slavery and abolition. They ask no change. They need—they seek no indulgence in behalf of the south. Had Bishop Andrew been suspended according to law, after due form of trial, they would have submitted without remonstrance, as the friends of law and order.

*They except and protest, further,* against the lawless procedure, as they think, in the case of Bishop Andrew, because, apart from the injustice done him and the south by the act, other and graver difficulties, necessarily incidental to this movement, come in for a share of attention. The whole subject is, in the very nature of things, resolved into a single original question: Will the General conference adhere to, and in good faith assert and maintain, the compromise law of the Church on the vexed question dividing us—or will it be found expedient generally, as in the case of Bishop Andrew, to lay it aside, and tread it under foot? No question on the subject of slavery and abolition can be settled till the General conference shall settle this beyond the possibility of evasion. In the present crisis, it is the opinion of the undersigned, that every bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and every member of this General conference, is especially called upon by all the responsibilities of truth and honor to declare himself upon the subject; and they deem it proper, respectfully and urgently, to make such call a part of this protest. When so much depends upon it, can the General conference, as the organ of the supreme authority of the Church, remain silent without incurring the charge of trifling both with its interests and reputation? Law always pledges the public faith of the body ostensibly governed by it to the faithful assertion and performance of its stipulations; and the compromise law of the Discipline, partaking, as it does, of the nature of the law of treaty, and embracing, as has been seen, all possible cases, pledges the good faith of every minister and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church against saying or doing any thing tending to annul the force or thwart the purposes of this enactment. The only allowable remedy of those who object to the law, is to seek a constitutional change of the law; and in failure, to submit, or else retire from

the Church. All attempts to resist, evade, or defeat the objects and intended application of the law, till duly revoked, must be regarded as unjust and revolutionary, because an invasion of well-defined, conventional right. And the undersigned except to the course of the majority in the informal prosecution of Bishop Andrew and the anomalous quasi suspension it inflicts, as not only giving to the compromise a construction rendering it entirely ineffective, but as being directly subversive of the great bond of union which has held the north and south together for the last forty years. Turning to the confederating annual conferences of 1804, and the vexed and protracted negotiations which preceded the General conference of that year, and finally resulted in the existing law of the Discipline, regulating the whole subject, and glancing at nearly half a million of Methodists, now in the south, who have come into the Church with all their hopes and fears, interests and associations, their property, character, and influence, reposing in safety upon the publicly-pledged faith of the Methodist Episcopal Church, only to be told that this is all a dream, that a part of what was pledged was never intended to be allowed; and that the whole is at all times subject to the discretion of a dominant majority, claiming, in matter of right, to be without and above law, competent not merely to make all rules and regulations for the proper government of the Church, but to govern the Church without rule or regulation, and punish and degrade without even the alleged infringement of law, or the form of trial, if it be thought expedient, presents a state of things filling the undersigned with alarm and dismay. Such views and facts, without adducing others, will perhaps be sufficient to show the first and principal ground occupied by the minority in the protest. They can not resist the conviction that the majority have failed to redeem the pledge of public law given to the Church and the world by the Methodist Episcopal Church.

2. The undersigned are aware that it is affirmed by some of the majority, but meanwhile denied by others, and thus a mooted, unsettled question among themselves, that the resolution censuring and virtually suspending Bishop Andrew, as understood by the minority, is mere matter of advice or recommendation; but so far from advising or recommending any thing, the language of the resolution, by fair and necessary construction, is imperative and mandatory in form, and, unqualified by any thing in the resolution itself, or in the preamble explaining it, conveys the idea plainly and most explicitly, that it is the judgment and will of the conference that Bishop Andrew shall cease to exercise the office of bishop till he shall cease to be the owner of slaves. "Resolved, That it is the sense of this conference that he desist." That is, having rendered himself unacceptable to the majority, it is their judgment that he retire from the bench of bishops, and their field of action.

No idea of request, advice, or recommendation is conveyed by the language of the preamble or resolution, and the recent avowal of an intention to advise is, in the judgment of the undersigned, disowned by the very terms in which, it is said, the *advice* was given. The whole argument of the majority, during a debate of twelve days, turned upon the right of the conference to displace Bishop Andrew without resort to formal trial. No one questioned the legal right of the conference to advise; and if this only was in-

tended, why the protracted debate upon the subject? But further, a resolution respectfully and affectionately requesting the Bishop to resign had been laid aside, to entertain the substitute under notice; a motion, too, to declare the resolution advisory was promptly rejected by the majority; and in view of all these facts, and the *entire* proceedings of the majority in the case, the undersigned have been compelled to consider the resolution as a mandatory judgment, to the effect that Bishop Andrew desist from the exercise of his episcopal functions. If the majority have been misunderstood, the language of their own resolution, and the position they occupied in debate, have led to the misconception; and truth and honor, not less than a most unfortunate use of language, require that they explain themselves.

3. We except to the act of the majority, because it is assumed that conscience and principle are involved, and require the act complained of, as expedient and necessary under the circumstances. Bishop Andrew being protected by the law of the Church, having cognizance of all offenses connected with slavery, such connection in his case, in the judgment of all jurisprudence, can only be wrong in the proportion that the law is bad and defective. It is not conceived by the minority how conscience and principle can be brought to bear upon Bishop Andrew, and not upon the *law* and the *Church* having such law. They are obliged to believe that the law and the source from which it emanates must become the object of exception and censure before Bishop Andrew, who has not offended against either, unless the Church is against the law, can be subjected to trial, at the bar and the conscience and principles of men who profess subjection and approval, in the instance both of the law and the Church.

The undersigned can never consent, while we have a plain law, obviously covering an assumed offense, that the offense shall be taken, under plea of principle, out of the hands of the law, and be subjected to the conflicting opinions and passions which originally led to a resort to law, as the only safe standard of judgment. They do not understand how conscience and principle can attach grave blame to action not disapproved by the law—express law, too, made and provided in the case—without extending condemnation to the law itself, and the body from which it proceeds. The Church can hardly be supposed to have settled policy and invariable custom, in contravention of law; the avowal of such custom and policy, therefore, excluding from the Episcopacy any and every man, in any way connected with slavery, is mere *assumption*. No contract, agreement, decree, or purpose of this kind is of record, or ever existed. No such action, in terms or by implication, was ever made by the north, or conceded by the south. No conventional understanding ever existed to this effect, so far as the south is concerned, or has been informed. That it has long, perhaps always been the purpose of the north, not to elect a slaveholder to the office of bishop, is admitted. But as no law gave countenance to any thing of the kind, the south regarded it as a mere matter of social injustice, and was not disposed to complain. The north has always found its security in numbers, and the untrammelled right of suffrage, and to this the south has not objected. The assumption, however, is entirely different, and is not admitted by the south, but is plainly negated by the law and language of

the Discipline, as explained by authority of the General conference.

No such concession, beyond peaceable submission to the right of suffrage, exercised by the majority, will ever be submitted to by the south, as it would amount to denial of equal abstract right, and a disfranchisement of the southern ministry, and could not be submitted to without injury and degradation. If, then, the north is not satisfied with the negative right conceded to the south by law in this matter, the minority would be glad to know what *principle* or *policy* is likely to introduce beyond the existing provisions of law. As the contingency which has occasioned the difficulty in the case of Bishop Andrew, and to which every southern minister is liable at any time, does not, and can not fall under the *condemnation* of existing law, and he can not be punished, nor yet subjected to any official disability, without an abuse of both right and power, on the part of this General conference, the minority are compelled to think that the majority ought to be satisfied with the consciousness and declaration that they are in no way responsible for the contingency, and thus, at least, allow Bishop Andrew the benefit of their own legislation till they see proper to change it. This attempt by the majority to protect a lawless prosecution from merited rebuke, by an appeal to conscience and principle, condemning Bishop Andrew, while the law and the Church, shielding him from the assault, are not objected to, is looked upon by the minority as a species of moral, we will not say legal casuistry, utterly subversive of all the principles of order and good government.

4. The act of the majority was ostensibly resorted to, because, as alleged, the Church in the middle and northern conferences will not submit to any, the slightest connection with slavery. But if connection with slavery is ruinous to the Church in the north, that ruin is already wrought. Who does not know that the very Discipline, laws, and legislation of the Church necessarily connect us all with slavery? All our provisional legislation on the subject has proceeded on the assumption that slavery is an element of society—a principle of action—a household reality in the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States. It is part and parcel of the economy of American Methodism, in every subjective sense. It has given birth to law and right, conventional arrangements, numerous missions, and official trusts. Every bishop, every minister, every member of the Church is of necessity connected with slavery. Each is brother and co-member, both with slave and master, by the very laws and organization of the Church.

If, then, connection with slavery is so disastrous, the only remedy is to purify the Church by reorganization, or get out of it as soon as possible. And would not this aversion to slavery—would not conscience and principle, so much pleaded in this controversy—appear much more consistent in every view of the subject, in striking at the root of the evil, in the organic structure of the Church, than in seeking its personification in Bishop Andrew, protected although he be by the law, and proceeding to punish him, by way of calling off attention from the known toleration of the same thing, in other aspects and relations?

Impelled by conscience and principle to the illegal arrest of a bishop, because he has incidentally, by bequest, inheritance, and marriage, come into possession of slave property, in no

instance intending to possess himself of such property, how long will conscience and principle leave other ministers, or even lay members, undisturbed, who may happen to be in the same category with Bishop Andrew? Will assurances be given that the lawlessness of expediency, controlled, as in such case it must be, by prejudice and passion, will extend no further—that there shall be no further curtailment of right as it regards the southern ministry? Yet what is the security of the south in the case? Is the public faith of this body, as instanced in the recent violations of the compromise law, to be relied upon as the guarantee for the redemption of the pledge? What would such pledge or assurance be but to remind the south that any departure at all from the great conservative pledge of law, to which we appeal, was much more effectually guarded against originally, than it is possible to guard against any subsequent infringement, and to make the south feel further that disappointment in the first instance must compel distrust with regard to the future? The Church having specific law on the subject, all questions involving slavery must inevitably, by intention of law, come within the purview of such special provision, and can not be judged of by any other law or standard, without a most daring departure from all the rules and sobrieties of judicial procedure, and the undersigned accordingly except to the action of the majority in relation to Bishop Andrew, as not only without sanction of law, but in conflict with rights created by law.

5. As the Methodist Episcopal Church is now organized, and according to its organization since 1784, the Episcopacy is a coordinate branch, the executive department proper of the government. A bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church is not a mere creature—is in no prominent sense an officer of the General conference. The General conference, as such, can not constitute a bishop. It is true the annual conferences select the bishops of the Church, by the suffrage of their delegates, in General conference assembled; but the General conference, in its capacity of a representative body, or any other in which it exists, does not possess the power of ordination, without which a bishop can not be constituted.

The bishops are beyond a doubt an integral constituent part of the General conference, made such by law and the constitution; and because elected by the General conference, it does not follow that they are subject to the will of that body, except in conformity with legal right, and the provisions of law, in the premises. In this sense, and so viewed, they are subject to the General conference, and this is sufficient limitation of their power, unless the government itself is to be considered irregular and unbalanced in the coordinate relations of its parts. In a sense by no means unimportant, the General conference is as much the creature of the Episcopacy as the bishops are the creatures of the General conference. Constitutionally, the bishops alone have the right to fix the time of holding the annual conferences, and should they refuse or neglect to do so, no annual conference could meet, according to law, and, by consequence, no delegates could be chosen, and no General conference could be chosen, or even exist. And because this is so, what would be thought of the impertinent pretension, should the Episcopacy claim that the General conference is the mere creature of their will? As *executive officers* as well as *pastoral overseers*, the bishops belong to

the Church as such, and not to the General conference, as one of its counsels or organs of action merely.

The General conference is in no sense the Church, not even representatively. It is merely the representative organ of the Church, with limited powers to do its business, in the discharge of a delegated trust.

Because bishops are in part constituted by the General conference, the power of removal does not follow. Episcopacy even in the Methodist Church is not a mere appointment to labor. It is an official consecrated station, under the protection of law, and can only be dangerous as the law is bad, or the Church corrupt. The power to appoint does not necessarily involve the power to remove; and when the appointing power is derivative, as in the case of the General conference, the power of removal does not accrue at all, unless by consent of the coordinate branches of the government, expressed by law, made and provided in the case. When the legislature of a state, to appeal to analogy for illustration, appoints a judge or senator in Congress, does the judge or senator thereby become the officer or creature of the legislature, or is he the officer or senatorial representative of the state, of which the legislature is the mere organ? And does the power of removal follow that of appointment? The answer is negative, in both cases, and applies equally to the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, who, instead of being the officers and creatures of the General conference, are *de facto* the officers and servants of the Church, chosen by the General conference, as its organ of action, and no right of removal accrues, except as they fail to accomplish the *aims* of the Church in their appointment, and then only in accordance with the provisions of law. But when a bishop is suspended, or informed that it is the wish or will of the General conference that he cease to perform the functions of bishop, for doing what the law of the same body allows him to do, and of course without incurring the hazard of punishment, or even blame, then the whole procedure becomes an outrage upon justice, as well as law.

The assumption of power by the General conference beyond the warrant of law, to which we object, and against which we protest, will lead, if carried into practice, to a direct violation of one of the Restrictive Rules of the constitution. Suppose it had been the "sense" of this General conference, when the late communication from the bishops was respectfully submitted to the conference, that such communication was an interference with their rights and duties—an attempt to tamper with the purity and independence, and therefore an outrage upon the claims and dignity of the conference not to be borne with. And proceeding a step further, suppose it had been the "sense" of the conference that they *all* desist from performing the functions of bishops till the "impediment" of such offense had been removed; assume this—and, so far as mere law is concerned, no law being violated in either case, it was just as likely as the movement against Bishop Andrew—and had it taken place, what had become of the general superintendency? If a bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church may, without law, and at the instance of mere party expediency, be suspended from the exercise of the appropriate functions of his office, for one act, he may for another. Admit this doctrine, and by what tenure do the bishops hold office? One thing is certain, what-

ever other tenure there may be, they do not hold office *according to law*.

The provisions of law and the faithful performance of duty, upon this theory of official tenure, afford no security. Admit this claim of absolutism, as regards right and powers on the part of the General conference, and the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church are slaves, and the men constituting this body their masters and holders. They are in office only at the discretion of a majority of the General conference, without the restraints or protection of law. Both the law and themselves are liable and likely at any time to be overborne and trampled upon together, as exemplified in the case of Bishop Andrew. If the doctrine against which we protest be admitted, the episcopal office is, at best, but a quadrennial term of service, and the undersigned are compelled to think that a man who would *remain* a bishop, or allow himself to be *made one*, under such circumstances, "desires a good work," and is prepared for *self-sacrifice*, quite beyond the comprehension of ordinary piety.

As it regards Bishop Andrew, if it shall be made to appear that the action in his case was intended only to *advise* and *request* him to desist from his office, it does not in any way affect the real or relative character of the movement. When a body claiming the right to compel, asks the resignation of an officer, the request is to all official and moral purposes *compulsory*, as it loads the officer with disability, and gives notice of assumed unworthiness, if not criminality. The request has all the force of a mandate, inasmuch as the officer is by such request compelled either to resign or remain in office contrary to the known will of the majority. A simple request, therefore, under the circumstances supposed, carries with it all the force of a decree, and is so understood, it is believed, by all the world.

To request Bishop Andrew to resign, therefore, in view of all the facts and relations of the case, was, in the judgment of the minority, to punish and degrade him; and they maintain that the whole movement was without authority of law, is hence of necessity null and void, and therefore not binding upon Bishop Andrew, or the minority protesting against it.

6. We protest against the act of the majority, instructing Bishop Andrew to desist from the exercise of his office, not merely on account of the injustice and evil connecting with the act itself, but because the act must be understood as the exponent of principles and purposes, as it regards the union of the north and south in the Methodist Episcopal Church, well-nigh destroying all hope of its perpetuity. The true position of the parties in relation to a long-existing conventional arrangement, on the subject of slavery and abolition, has been fully under notice; and when men of years and wisdom, experience, and learning—men of no common weight of character, and with a well-earned aristocracy of Church influence thrown about them, assume and declare, in action as well as debate, that what a plain law of the Church—the only law applicable in the case—sustained and enforced, too, by an exemplary decree of this body, at a private session—*decides shall not* be a disqualification for office, in any grade in the ministry—when such men, the law and decision of the General conference notwithstanding, are heard declaring that what law provides for and protects, nevertheless *always has been and always*

*shall be* a disqualification, what further evidence is wanting to show that the *compromise basis of union*, from which the south has never swerved, has been abandoned both by the northern and middle conferences, with a few exceptions in the latter, and that principles and purposes are entertained by the majority, driving the south to extreme action, in defense both of their rights and reputation? And how far the long train of eventful sequences, attendant upon the threatened result of division, may be traceable to the northern and middle conferences, by the issue thus provoked, is a question to be settled not by us, but by our contemporaries and posterity.

It is matter of history, with regard to the past, and will not be questioned, that now, as formerly, the south is upon the basis of the Discipline, on the subject of slavery. The minority believe it equally certain, that this is not true with regard to the north proper especially. In view, then, of the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which party has been, in equity, entitled to the sympathy and protection of the middle and *umpire* conferences? those who through good and evil report have kept good faith and adhered to law, or those whose opinions and purposes have led them to seek a state of things in advance of law, and thus dishonor its forms and sanctions?

7. In proportion as the minority appreciate and cling to the unity of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they are bound, further, to except to the position of the majority, in this controversy. Allow that Bishop Andrew, without, however, any infringement of law, is, on account of his connection with slavery, unacceptable in the northern conferences. It is equally known to the majority that any bishop of the Church, either violating, or submitting to a violation of the compromise charter of union between the north and the south, without proper and public remonstrance, can not be acceptable in the south, and need not appear there. By pressing the issue in question, therefore, the majority virtually dissolve the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, because, in every constitutional aspect, it is sundered by so crippling a coordinate branch of it as to destroy the itinerant general superintendency altogether. Whenever it is clearly ascertained that the compromise law of the Church, regulating slavery and abolition, is abandoned, every bishop, each of the venerable and excellent men who now adorn the Church and its counsels, *ceases* to be a general superintendent—the law of union, the principle of gravitation, binding us together, is dissolved, and the general superintendency of the Methodist Episcopal Church is no more!

8. The south have not been led thus to protest merely because of the treatment received by Bishop Andrew, or the kindred action of this body in other matters. The abandonment of the compromise—the official refusal by the majority, as we have understood them, to abide the arbitrament of law—is their principal ground of complaint and remonstrance. If the minority have not entirely misunderstood the majority, the abolition and antislavery principles of the north will no longer allow them to submit to the law of the Discipline on the general subject of slavery and abolition; and if this be so, if the compromise law be either repealed or allowed to remain a dead letter, *the south can not submit, and the absolute necessity of division is already dated*. And should the exigent circumstances in



which the minority find themselves placed, by the facts and developments alluded to in this remonstrance, render it finally necessary that the southern conferences should have a *separate, independent* existence, it is hoped that the character and services of the minority, together with the numbers and claims of the ministry and membership of the portion of the Church represented by them, not less than similar reasons and considerations on the part of the northern and middle conferences, will suggest the high moral fitness of meeting this great emergency with strong and steady purpose to do justice to all concerned. And it is believed that, approaching the subject in this way, it will be found practicable to devise and adopt such measures and arrangements, present and prospective, as will secure an amicable division of the Church upon the broad principles of right and equity, and destined to result in the common good of the great body of ministers and members found on either side *the line of separation*. (Journal of 1844, pp. 186-198.)

## DOCUMENT 58.

*Discipline of the Presbyterian Church of the United States of America, on Dissents and Protests.*

I. A **DISSENT** is a declaration on the part of one or more members of a minority, in a judicatory, expressing a different opinion from that of the majority in a particular case. A dissent, unaccompanied with reasons, is always entered on the records of the judicatory.

II. A protest is a more solemn and formal declaration, made by members of a minority, as before mentioned, bearing their testimony against what they deem a mischievous or erroneous judgment; and it is generally accompanied with a detail of the reasons on which it is founded.

III. If a protest or dissent be couched in decent and respectful language, and contain no offensive reflections or insinuations against the majority of the judicatory, those who offer it have a right to have it recorded on the Minutes.

IV. A dissent or protest may be accompanied with a complaint to a superior judicatory, or not, at the pleasure of those who offer it. If not thus accompanied, it is simply left to speak for itself, when the records containing it come to be reviewed by the superior judicatory.

V. It may sometimes happen that a protest, though not infringing the rules of decorum, either in its language or matter, may impute to the judicatory whose judgment it opposes, some principles or reasonings which it never adopted. In this case the majority of the judicatory may with propriety appoint a committee to draw up an answer to the protest, which, after being adopted as the act of the judicatory, ought to be inserted on the records.

VI. When, in such a case, the answer of the majority is brought in, those who entered their protest may be of the opinion that fidelity to their cause calls upon them to make a reply to the answer. This, however, ought by no means to be admitted; as the majority might, of course, rejoin, and litigation might be perpetuated, to the great inconvenience and disgrace of the judicatory.

VII. When, however, those who have protested, consider the answer of the majority as

imputing to them opinions or conduct which they disavow; the proper course is, to ask leave to take back their protest, and modify it in such manner as to render it more agreeable to their views. This alteration may lead to a corresponding alteration in the answer of the majority; with which the whole affair ought to terminate.

VIII. None can join in a protest against a decision of any judicatory, excepting those who had a right to vote in said decision

## DOCUMENT 59.

*Reply to the Protest, on the report of the Committee appointed to prepare a Statement of the Facts connected with the proceedings in the case of Bishop Andrew, presented to General Conference, June 10, 1844, and ordered to be spread on the Journals.*

The committee appointed to prepare a statement of the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew, and to examine the Protest of the minority, regret that the circumstances under which they have been compelled to act have prevented their preparing so complete a report as the importance of the subject demands. The Protest was not placed under their command till Friday afternoon, and immediately afterward two of the original committee had to withdraw, one of them being ill, and the other having been elected bishop; nor were their places supplied till Saturday evening. It is under these disadvantages, and amid the pressure of important conference business, that they have been required to prepare a document in relation to some of the most important questions that have ever engaged the attention of the Church. It is believed, however, that the following statement of law and facts will be a sufficient notice of the Protest which has been referred to them.

As the proceedings of the General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew were not judicial, its decision has gone forth to the public unaccompanied by the reasons and facts upon which this action was founded. This deficiency is but partially supplied by the published reports of the debate on the subject. The speakers who advocated the resolution were restrained by a praiseworthy delicacy from all avoidable allusions which might give pain to the respected individual concerned, or awaken unpleasant emotions in any quarter. It is but natural that, under these circumstances, some misunderstanding should prevail as to the merits of the case. The following statement, it is believed, contains nothing, at least so far as facts are concerned, which will not be cheerfully confirmed by all parties, and will throw light upon the true position of the authors of the Protest.

From the first institution of the Episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, no slaveholder has been elected to that dignity, though, in several instances, candidates, otherwise eminently fitted for the station, have failed of success solely on account of this impediment. Since the period referred to, nine bishops have been elected, who were natives of the United States. Of these only three have been northern men, while six were natives of slaveholding states. Not one, however, was a slaveholder; a remarkable fact, which shows very clearly, that while much more than their just claim has been

conceded to the slaveholding portions of the Church, a decided and uniform repugnance has, from the first, been felt and manifested to the occupancy of that high office by a slaveholder.

It is known and acknowledged by all southern brethren, that Bishop Andrew was nominated by the delegates from the South Carolina and Georgia conferences, as a southern candidate for whom northern men might vote, without doing violence to their principles, as he was no slaveholder. Bishop Andrew himself perfectly understood the ground of his election, and often said that he was indebted to his poverty for his promotion. Since the year 1832, the antislavery sentiment in the Church, as well as in the whole civilized world, has constantly and rapidly gained ground; and within the last year or two it has been roused to a special and most earnest opposition to the introduction of a slaveholder into the episcopal office—an event which many were led to fear, by certain intimations published in the Southern Christian Advocate, the Richmond Christian Advocate, and perhaps some other Methodist periodicals. This opposition produced the profoundest anxiety through most of the non-slaveholding conferences. The subject was discussed every-where, and the dreaded event universally deprecated as the most fearful calamity that ever threatened the Church. Many conferences instructed their delegates to use all possible means to avert such an evil. Other conferences, and many thousand laymen, sent up petitions and memorials to the same effect to the present General conference. Such was the state of sentiment and of apprehension in the northern portion of the Church, when the delegates to the General conference learned, on reaching this city, that Bishop Andrew had become a slaveholder. The profound grief, the utter dismay, which was produced by this astounding intelligence, can be fully appreciated only by those who have participated in the distressing scenes which have since been enacted in the General conference.

When the first emotions of surprise and sorrow had so far subsided as to allow of sober thought and inquiry, it was ascertained that Bishop Andrew had been a slaveholder for several years. Soon after his election to the Episcopacy, a lady of Augusta bequeathed him a female slave, on condition that she should be sent to Liberia at nineteen years of age, if her consent to emigrate could be obtained; otherwise she was to be made as free as the laws of Georgia would permit. She refused to emigrate, has since married, and is now enjoying all the privileges provided for in the will of her former mistress. She is, and must be, a slave—she and her children—and liable to all that may befall slaves. Another slave Bishop Andrew has inherited from the mother of his former wife, and by his recent marriage he has become the owner of—it was said on the floor of the General conference—fourteen or fifteen more. These belonged to Mrs. Andrew, in her own right, before her marriage. That act, according to the laws of Georgia, made them the property of Bishop Andrew, to keep or dispose of as he pleased. He conveyed them to a trustee, for the joint use of himself and wife, of whom the survivor is to be the sole owner. This conveyance was made for the security of Mrs. Andrew, and with no view either to satisfy or to mislead the opinions of the northern Church. So much, at least, Bishop Andrew was understood to say to the conference. His known integrity forbids the

suspicion that he would attempt to disguise the real character of the transaction; and the fact that the earnings of the slaves, as well as the reversionary title to them, are his, demonstrates that this arrangement was not made with any view to satisfy the well-known sentiments of the Church against a slaveholding bishop.

It is manifest from this statement, which is believed to be strictly correct, that Bishop Andrew's connection with slavery is not, as the Protest intimates, merely an "assumption," but that he is the owner of slaves, in the full and proper sense of that term. His title was acquired by bequest, by inheritance, and by marriage, which are by far the most common grounds of ownership in slaves. All the usual and necessary conditions of slavery have their fulfillment in the relation of these persons to Bishop Andrew. Their labor and their earnings are subject to his control, and inure to his benefit and that of his family. They are now liable, or they may be hereafter, to be sold; they and their offspring are doomed, as the case now stands, to a bondage that is perpetual, and they are liable and likely to descend to his heirs. Beyond all reasonable doubt, the condition of Bishop Andrew's slaves will be attended, while he lives, with all the alleviations—and these are many and great—which a very benevolent and Christian master can provide. Still it must be slavery. In the view of the law of the land, and of the law of the Discipline; in all its more weighty and permanent consequences to the bondman, it is and must be slavery. It was said repeatedly, on the floor of the conference, that the deed of trust had put it quite beyond Bishop Andrew's power to free his slaves, even if there were no other obstacle. So then, should the stringent laws of Georgia against emancipation be relaxed or repealed by her next Legislature, the rule of the Discipline, which would then become imperative on Bishop Andrew, could not, and would not, be satisfied, and the Church must still have a slaveholding bishop, in spite, not only of its known will, but of its standing laws.

It was the almost unanimous opinion of the delegates from the non-slaveholding conferences that Bishop Andrew could not continue to exercise his episcopal functions under existing circumstances, without producing results extensively disastrous to the Church in the north; and from this opinion the brethren of the south did not dissent. For a while the hope was entertained that the difficulty would be quietly removed, by his resigning his office, which it was known he had previously desired to do. But this hope was dissipated by the intelligence that the delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding states had been convened, and that they had unanimously advised him not to resign. Various efforts were then made in private, to devise some method to relieve the case, but they all proved abortive, and nothing remained but that it must come before the General conference. The bishops themselves, in their united Address to the conference, had urged it to ascertain whether there has been any departure from the essential principles "of the general itinerant superintendency," and had declared of that superintendency that "the plan of its operation is general, embracing the whole work in connectional order, and *not diocesan or sectional*. Consequently any division of the work into districts, or otherwise, so as to create a particular charge, with any other view, or in any order, than

as a prudential measure, to secure to all the conferences the annual visits of the superintendents, would be an innovation on the system;" that "*our superintendency must be itinerant, and not local;*" that "it was wisely provided in the system of Methodism, from its very foundation, that it should be the duty of the superintendents '*to travel through the connection at large.*'" The question then presented itself, how the case of Bishop Andrew could be so disposed of as to preserve this itinerant general superintendency? If the General conference had even been disposed to evade it, the consideration of it was forced upon them by the Episcopal Address itself.

A diversity of sentiment existed as to the proper method of treating the case.

Some, at least, believed, perhaps few doubted, that sufficient ground existed for impeachment on a charge of "improper conduct" under the express provisions of the Discipline. The opinion was certainly entertained in several quarters that it was "improper" for the shepherd and bishop of eleven hundred thousand souls, either deliberately or heedlessly, to place himself in direct and irreconcilable conflict with the known and cherished moral sentiments of a large majority of his vast flock. Such, however, was the prevalence of moderate counsels, that no proposal was made either to impeach or punish, and such the controlling influence of forbearance and kindness, that it is believed not one word was uttered during the entire debate of nearly a fortnight, derogatory to the character, or justly offensive to the feelings of Bishop Andrew. The transaction which had brought such distress upon the Church, and threatened such extensive ruin, was dealt with merely as a fact, as a practical difficulty, for the removal or palliation of which it was the duty of the General conference to provide. It was in this spirit, and for such ends, that the following preamble and resolution were passed:

"*Whereas*, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and *whereas*, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery, by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not, in some places, entirely prevent it; therefore,

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

"J. B. FINLEY,  
"J. M. TRIMBLE."

The action of the General conference was neither judicial nor punitive. It neither achieves nor intends a deposition, nor so much as a legal suspension. Bishop Andrew is still a bishop; and should he, against the expressed sense of the General conference, proceed in the discharge of his functions, his official acts would be valid.

Such are the facts in the case of Bishop Andrew. We now proceed to notice the law. Nearly all the objections raised, in the Protest, against the action of the General conference may be reduced to two; namely, that that body has violated the *constitutional* and the *statutory* law of the Church. That it has violated the constitutional law the Protest attempts to prove, by representing its late action as a breach of what it calls "the compromise law of the Church on the subject of slavery," meaning, as

is supposed, the section on slavery, particularly that paragraph which relates to traveling preachers. The entire language on this subject is evidently formed so as to make the impression on any reader, not intimately acquainted with the history and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that there has been some period—whether 1804 or 1816 does not clearly appear from the Protest—when the question of slavery was settled in the Methodist Episcopal Church, as it was in the General Government at the adoption of the Federal Constitution; that "the confederating annual conferences," "after a vexed and protracted negotiation," met in convention, and the section on slavery "was finally agreed to by the parties, after a long and fearful struggle," as a "compact," "a treaty," which can not be altered by the General conference till certain constitutional restrictions are removed. So that now any interference on the part of that body with the question of slavery in the southern conferences, is as unconstitutional as it is admitted would be the interference of the General Government with the question in the southern states.

After the boldness with which this doctrine is advanced, and the confidence with which it is relied upon as "the first and principal ground occupied by the minority in this Protest," it will be difficult for the uninitiated to believe that it is as unfounded in fact as it is ingenious in its "legal casuistry." It is, indeed, true that the question of slavery had been long and anxiously agitated in the Church, and the various General conferences had endeavored to adjust the matter so as to promote the greatest good of all parties; but this very fact goes to disprove the position assumed in the Protest; for, as the attention of the Church had been thus strongly called to the subject, if it had been the intention to guard the question of slavery by constitutional provisions, it would have been done when the Church actually did meet to frame a constitution. But nothing of the kind appears. For when, in 1808, it was resolved that the General conference, instead of consisting, as before, of all the traveling elders, should be a delegated body, and when it was determined that that body—unlike the General Government, which has no powers but such as are expressly conferred—should have all powers but such as are expressly taken away, when this vast authority was about to be given to the General conference, among "the limitations and restrictions" imposed, *there is not one word on the subject of slavery; nor was any attempt made to introduce any such restriction.* The only provision any where established by that General conference, of constitutional force, was the General Rule, forbidding the buying and selling of human beings with an intention to enslave them. So that, in direct opposition to the assertion of the Protest, we maintain that the section on slavery is "a mere legislative enactment, a simple decree of a General conference," as much under its control as any other portion of the Discipline not covered by the Restrictive Rules. If additional proof of the truth of this position were needed, it might be adduced in the fact that that section which the Protest represents to have been settled in 1804, was not only altered at the General conference or convention of 1808, but also at the delegated General conferences of 1812, 1816, 1820, and 1824. And although the Protest speaks of it as "*usually known*" by the name of "the compromise act," the greater part of this General conference have

never heard either that appellation or that character ascribed to it till the present occasion.

But although this General conference can not admit that any portion of the section on slavery is constitutional in its character, and therefore could not, under any circumstances, allow the imputation of the Protest that they have violated the constitution of the Church, yet they do admit that it is *law*, law, too, which the General conference—though possessing full powers in the premises—has never altered, except at the above periods, and then, in each instance, for the further indulgence of the south. The question then comes up, whether this General conference, as the Protest maintains, has in effect suddenly reversed the legislation of the Church, not indeed by altering the law, but by practically disregarding it. The portion of the law particularly in question is the following paragraph:

"When any traveling preacher becomes an owner of a slave or slaves, by any means, he shall forfeit his ministerial character in our Church, unless he execute, if it be practicable, a legal emancipation of such slaves, conformably to the laws of the state in which he lives."

This, it is alleged, fully covers the case of Bishop Andrew, and therefore he ought to have been left in the quiet and unquestioned enjoyment of his rights. Were it even true that proceedings, either judicial or "extrajudicial," have been had in his case, we should not hesitate to join issue here, and maintain that this law does not protect him. The Protest asks, "Is there any thing in the law or its reasons creating an exception in the instance of bishops?" We answer, There is in both. So far as judicial proceedings are concerned, the Discipline divides the Church into four classes—private members, local preachers, traveling preachers, and bishops—and establishes distinct tribunals, and different degrees of responsibility for each. The section on slavery applies only to officers of the Church, and therefore private members are not named at all, but special provision is made in the case of local and traveling preachers. How happens it that bishops are not named at all? Are they necessarily included in the title "traveling preachers?" In common parlance they may sometimes be thus designated, but in the Discipline it is not so understood, even in regard to matters much less important than this, in evidence of which we need only advert to the fact that the General conference of 1836 did not consider that the allowance of bishops was provided for under the title of "traveling preachers," and they therefore inserted them accordingly. To explain why no mention is made of "bishops," it is not necessary, as the Protest supposes, "to slander the virtuous dead of the north," as if they excluded them intentionally, "by a resort to deceptive and dishonorable means." It is a much more natural and reasonable explanation, that at that day, when the Church could hardly tolerate slavery in any class of the ministry, "the virtuous dead," both of the north and of the south, did not dream that it would ever find its way into the Episcopacy.

But though the *language* of the law does not include bishops, yet if the "reason" and spirit of it did, we might be disposed to allow them the benefit of it. But this is not the case. The whole tenor of the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church is adverse to slavery. Even the Protest has admitted—irreconcilable as the admission is with another portion of the same

instrument—that, at the time of the alleged "compact," "the whole Church, by common consent, united in proper effort for the mitigation and final removal of the evil of slavery." But let the Discipline speak for itself. The mildest form in which the question at the head of the section on slavery has ever been expressed, is the present, namely, "What shall be done for the extirpation of the evil of slavery?" And the very conference of 1804, which enacted the so-called "compromise law," as well as that of 1800, when the paragraph relating to traveling preachers was really adopted, were each convened under a request from the preceding General conference, that the whole Church would aid that body in obtaining "full light in order to take further steps toward the eradicating this enormous evil from that part of the Church of God to which they are united." It is obvious, therefore, that connection with slavery is tolerated no further than seems necessary. In the case of ordinary traveling preachers, there appeared to be a necessity for some indulgence. They might become owners of slaves, in the providence of God; the laws of the states might not allow emancipation; and they had no power to choose their own place of residence. But no such "reason" could apply to a bishop, for he has always been allowed to live where he pleases. Again: traveling preachers incumbered with slaves, labor among people similarly situated, and who would not, therefore, be likely to object to them on that account. But a bishop, by the *constitution* of the Church, is required to labor in every part of the connection; and in by far the larger portion of it the services of a slaveholding bishop would not be acceptable. So here again the "reason" of the case does not apply to a bishop. There is not, therefore, as the Protest so roundly asserts, any "express" or "specific law" in the case; and therefore, as the Protest itself admits, "in the absence of law it might be competent for the General conference to act on other grounds." With the failure to prove any "specific law," authorizing a bishop to hold slave property, the third and fourth arguments of the Protest, which are founded on this assumption, fail also.

But, perhaps, it is not so much the law of the Discipline which the Protest claims to cover Bishop Andrew, as the law of the land; for it declares—"The rights of the legal owners of slaves, in all the slaveholding states, are guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States, and by the local constitutions of the states respectively, as the supreme law of the land, to which every minister and member of the Methodist Episcopal Church, within the limits of the United States Government, professes subjection, and pledges himself to submit, as an article of the Christian faith, in the common creed of the Church." If by this is meant that the law of the land *allows* citizens to hold slaves, it is admitted. But so also it allows them to keep theaters and grog-shops, so that this is no ground of argument. But if it mean that the law of the land *requires* citizens to keep slaves—the only interpretation which can make the argument available—it is denied. And till it can be shown that the Methodist Episcopal Church, by its action, legislative, judicial, or executive, requires any citizen to do what the law of the land requires him not to do, it is unjust to attempt to get up popular clamor against it, as if it came in conflict with the civil authority.

This course of reasoning has been pursued thus far, not so much because it was deemed

necessary for the vindication of the conference as to avoid sanctioning, by silence, the erroneous exposition which the Protest presents of the constitution and the law of the Church; for it has been already seen that Bishop Andrew has been subjected to no trial, and no penalty has been inflicted. At present, it is plain that the conference has done nothing to depose, or even suspend Bishop Andrew. His name will appear in official publications with those of the other bishops, and with them he will derive his support from the funds of the Church. In order to make out that the General conference had no right to take such action as they have in Bishop Andrew's case, the authors of the Protest have been driven to the necessity of claiming for the Methodist Episcopacy powers and prerogatives never advanced before, except by those who wished to make it odious, and which have always been repudiated by its chosen champions. The Protest maintains that "the Episcopacy is a coordinate branch of the government," for which no argument is adduced save this: that it is, in general, the province of bishops to ordain bishops—a sufficient answer to which may be found in the principle of Methodist polity, stated in the Address of the bishops to the present General conference, that orders—the principle applies to bishops, though not expressly named, as well as to elders and deacons—are "conferred" by the election, and only "confirmed" by the ordination; and that when the election has been made, the bishop "has no discretionary authority, but is under obligation to ordain the person elected, whatever may be his own judgment of his qualifications." And if all the bishops should refuse to ordain the person elected by the General conference, that body would unquestionably have the right to appoint any three elders to ordain him, as is provided "in case there be no bishop remaining in our Church." The Protest declares, that "the bishops are, beyond doubt, an integral, constituent part of the General conference, made such by law and the constitution." If the words "General conference" be not a mere clerical error, the assertion is sufficiently refuted by the answer in the Discipline to the question, "Who shall compose the General conference?" and by the practice of the bishops themselves, who disclaim a right to give even a casting vote, or even to speak in General conference, except by permission. The Protest maintains that, "in a sense by no means unimportant, the General conference is as much the creature of the Episcopacy as the bishops are the creatures of the General conference;" the proof adduced for which is, that "constitutionally the bishops alone have the right to fix the time of holding the annual conferences; and, should they refuse, or neglect to do so, no annual conference could meet according to law; and, by consequence, no delegates could be chosen, and no General conference could be chosen, or even exist." That is to say, because, for the convenience of the bishops in performing their tour, they are allowed to say *at what time in the year* an annual conference shall meet; therefore, they have the power to prevent such body from meeting at all, though, from its very name, it must meet once a year; that, by preventing the meeting of annual conferences, they might prevent the organization of any General conference; and thus, escaping all accountability for their delinquencies, might continue to lord it over God's heritage, till them-

selves and the Church should die a natural death. We can easily perceive, were this reasoning legitimate, that the bishops might *destroy* not only the General conference, but the Church; but are at a loss to discover how it proves that they can *create* either. We must protest against having any argument of ours adduced as analogous to this.

The Protest maintains that "the General conference has no right, power, or authority, ministerial, judicial, or administrative," in any way to subject a bishop "to any official disability whatever, without the formal presentation of a charge, or charges, alleging that the bishop to be dealt with has been guilty of the violation of some law, or, at least, some disciplinary obligation of the Church, and also upon conviction of such charge, after due form of trial." To those who are not familiar with the Methodist economy, this might seem plausible; but it is, in reality, an attempt to except, from the action of a general system, those who, least of all, ought to be excepted. The cardinal feature of our polity is the itinerancy.

To sustain this system, it is essential that the classes should receive the leaders that are appointed by the preacher; that the societies should receive the preachers that are stationed over them by the bishops; that the annual conferences should receive the bishops that are sent to them by the General conference. Unless, therefore, the utmost care be taken by those who have authority in the premises, that these parties shall severally be acceptable to those among whom they labor, there is great danger that those who are injured by such neglect may seek redress by revolutionary measures. For this reason the officers of the Methodist Church are subjected regularly to an examination unknown, it is believed, among other denominations. Not only is provision made for formal trials, in cases of crimes and misdemeanors, but there is a special arrangement for the correction of other obstructions to official usefulness. At every annual conference the character of every traveling preacher is examined; at every General conference that of every bishop. And the object is to ascertain not merely whether there is ground for the formal presentation of charges, with a view to a regular trial, but whether there is "any objection"—any thing that might interfere with the acceptance of the officer in question among his charge. And it is doctrine novel and dangerous in the Methodist Church, that such difficulties can not be corrected, unless the person objected to be formally arraigned under some specific law, to be found in the concise code of the Discipline—doctrine not the less dangerous because it is applied where "objections," unimportant in others, might be productive of the most disastrous consequences. Will the Methodist Church sanction the doctrine that, while all its other officers, of whatever name or degree, are subjected to a sleepless supervision; are counseled, admonished, or changed, "as necessity may require, and as the Discipline directs," a bishop, who decides all questions of law in annual conferences; who, of his mere motion and will, controls the work and the destiny of four thousand ministers; who appoints and changes at pleasure the spiritual guides of four millions of souls; that the depositary of these vast powers, whose slightest indiscretions or omissions are likely to disturb the harmony, and even impair the efficiency of

our mighty system of operations, enjoys a virtual impunity for all delinquencies or misdoings not strictly criminal?

It is believed that an attempt to establish such an episcopal supremacy would fill not only a part, but the whole of the Church, "with alarm and dismay." But this doctrine is not more at variance with the genius of Methodism than it is with the express language of the Discipline, and the exposition of it by all our standard writers. The constitution of the Church provides that "the General conference shall have full powers to make rules and regulations for our Church," under six "limitations and restrictions," among which the only one relating to the Episcopacy is this: "They shall not change or alter any part, or rule of our government, so as to do away Episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." As there is nothing in the Restrictive Rules to limit the full powers of the General conference in the premises, so is there nothing in the special provision respecting the responsibility of a bishop. In reply to the question, "To whom is a bishop amenable for his conduct?" the Discipline declares, "To the General conference," who have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see it necessary." And this, be it remembered, is all that is said respecting the jurisdiction over a bishop, with the exception of a rule for his trial, in the interval of a General conference, if he be guilty of immorality. In full accordance with the plain meaning of these provisions is the language of all the standard writers on Methodist polity.

Bishop Emory—a man of whom it is no injustice to the living or the dead to say, that he was a chief ornament and light of our Episcopacy; that he brought to the investigation of all ecclesiastical subjects a cool, sagacious, powerful, practical intellect—fully sustains the positions we have assumed in behalf of the powers of the General conference over the bishops of our Church. He gives an unqualified assent to the following passages from the notes to the Discipline, prepared by Bishops Asbury and Coke, at the request of the General conference: "They [our bishops] are entirely dependent on the General conference;" "their power, their usefulness, themselves, are entirely at the mercy of the General conference."

Dr. Emory also quotes some passages from a pamphlet, by the Rev. John Dickens, which, he says, was published by the unanimous request of the Philadelphia conference, and may be considered as expressing the views both of that conference and of Bishop Asbury, his intimate friend. Mr. Dickens affirms, that the bishops derive their power from the election of the General conference, and not from their ordination; and that the conference has, on that ground, power to remove Bishop Asbury, and appoint another, "if they see it necessary." He affirms that Bishop Asbury "derived his official power from the conference, and, therefore, his office is at their disposal;" Mr. Asbury was "responsible to the General conference, who had power to remove him, if they saw it necessary;" "he is liable every year to be removed."

The above quotations show very clearly the sentiments of Asbury, and Coke, and Dickens, on this question—men chiefly instrumental in laying the foundations of our polity.

Equally clear and satisfactory is the testimony of another venerable bishop, who still

lives, in the full exercise of his mental powers, and benign influence, to guide and bless the Church: "The superintendents now have no power in the Church above that of elders, except what is connected with presiding in the conference, fixing the appointments of the preachers, and ordaining;" "they are the servants of the elders, and go out and execute their commands;" "the General conference may expel a bishop not only for immoral, but for 'improper conduct,' which means a small offense below a crime; for which not even a child or a slave can be expelled but after repeated admonitions." "The traveling preachers gave the bishop his power, they continue it in his hands, and they can reduce, limit, or transfer it to other hands whenever they see cause." Such is the language of Bishop Hedding, who only concurs in the moderate, truly Methodist views of Bishops Asbury, Coke, and Emory.

It is believed that this statement of the facts, and the law in the case, will afford a satisfactory answer to all the positions and reasonings of the Protest; and, after having thus presented it, the majority are perfectly willing to abide "the decision of our cotemporaries, and of posterity." They can not, however, close these remarks without expressing their regret that the minority, not content with protesting against the action of the General conference, as "lawless," as without law, and contrary to law," as such "a violation of the compromise law," that "the public faith of this body can no longer be relied upon as the guarantee for the redemption of the pledge;" "that there shall be no further curtailment of right as regards the southern ministry;" that, not content with thus harshly assailing the proceedings of the General conference, they have even refused the bishops, whom they have invested with such exalted prerogatives, the quiet possession of their thoughts and feelings, but have thrown out the significant intimation "that any bishop of the Church, either violating, or submitting to the violation of the compromise charter of union between the north and south, without proper and public remonstrance, can not be acceptable in the south, and need not appear there." We shall be slow to believe that even their constituents will justify them in thus virtually deposing not one bishop only, but several, by a process which is even worse than "extrajudicial."

When all the law and the facts in the case shall have been spread before an impartial community, the majority have no doubt that they will fix "the responsibility of division," should such an unhappy event take place, "where in justice it belongs." They will ask, Who first introduced slavery into the Episcopacy? and the answer will be, *Not the General conference*. Who opposed the attempt to withdraw it from the Episcopacy? *Not the General conference*. Who resisted the measure of peace that was proposed—the mildest that the case allowed? *Not the majority*. Who first sounded the knell of division, and declared that it would be impossible longer to remain under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church? *Not the majority*.

The proposition for a peaceful separation—if any must take place—with which the Protest closes, though strangely at variance with much that precedes, has already been met by the General conference. And the readiness with which that body—by a vote which would, doubtless,

have been unanimous but for the belief which some entertained of the unconstitutionality of the measure—granted all that the southern brethren themselves could ask, in such an event, must forever stand as a practical refutation of any assertion that the minority have been subjected to the tyranny of a majority.

Finally, we can not but hope that the minority, after reviewing the entire action of the conference, will find that, both in their declaration and their Protest, they have taken too strong a view of the case; and that, by presenting it in its true light before their people, they may be able to check any feelings of discord that may have arisen, so that the Methodist Episcopal Church may still continue as one body, engaged in its proper work of "spreading Scriptural holiness over these lands."

J. P. DURBIN, *Chairman.*  
 GEORGE PECK,  
 CHARLES ELLIOTT.\*

DOCUMENT 60.

*Extracts from the Proceedings of Southern Meetings, held before and after the General Conference of 1844.*

*Concord, North Carolina.*—The following preamble and resolutions were passed by the male members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, June 15th, and published in the Southern Christian Advocate, July 5th:

*Whereas*, we have heard, with deep regret, that the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has passed a resolution to request our beloved Bishop Andrew to desist from the exercise of his duties as one of the superintendents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, because of his connection with slavery; and, believing that said proceedings are contrary to our Discipline, and detrimental to the interests of the southern portion of the Church, and call for a decided expression of our opinion in the premises; therefore,

*Resolved*, That the course pursued by the majority of the General conference, in relation to slavery, and particularly in the case of Bishop Andrew, meets our decided disapprobation, and ought not to be submitted to by the southern portion of the Church.

*Resolved*, That the General conference has no authority to pass such a resolution, according to our Discipline, either as a matter of duty or expediency, and that its tendency is disorganizing.

*Resolved*, That, while we deprecate a separation of the Church as much as any of our northern brethren, yet, we believe that it would be preferable to having our opinions and feelings misrepresented and outraged, as they have been, by the majority of the General conference.

*Resolved*, That we have the utmost confidence in the piety, ability, integrity, and usefulness of Bishop Andrew; and the course pursued by him during the discussion, and upon the passage of said resolution, meets our decided and unqualified approbation; and that he be requested to continue the exercise of his office among us.

*Resolved*, That the course pursued by the southern delegates in relation to said resolution, is in accordance with our feelings and

wishes; and that they deserve the confidence and thanks of the south for the ability and perseverance which they displayed in opposition to said resolution.

*Resolved*, That we approve the course of the southern delegates, in requesting to be divided into a southern General conference.

*Resolved*, That the delegates from northern and north-western conferences, who voted with the south, are entitled to our thanks for their firmness and independence in resisting the passage of said resolution.

*Resolved*, That the course pursued by Dr. Bond, editor of the Christian Advocate and Journal, in his sentiments in said paper of the 29th of May, has forfeited our confidence in him as the friend of the south.

*Milledgeville, Georgia.*—Among others, the annexed resolutions were passed, preceded by a long and elaborate argument, published in the Southern Christian Advocate of July 5th:

1. *Resolved*, That we recommend to the Georgia annual conference, at its next session, to adopt such measures as its wisdom can devise, for the immediate severance of our ecclesiastical union, in every respect, with that portion of the Methodist Episcopal Church which sustains the action of the late General conference, in virtually suspending a bishop from his high office, merely because he is a slaveholder; and we further recommend the organization of a separate Methodist Episcopal Church, composed of members and ministers residing in the slaveholding states, and of such as can unite with them on their principles.

2. *Resolved*, That we cordially approve of the conduct of the delegates to the General conference from the slaveholding states, in resisting firmly and dispassionately all the encroachments of a lawless and tyrannical majority upon the rights of slaveholders, sustaining ministerial or official rank in the Church.

3. *Resolved*, That we highly esteem those delegates from the non-slaveholding states, who supported, by their advocacy and their votes, the constitution of the Church, and the rights of slaveholders, firmly adhering to principles, even when they knew that "they of their own household" would be their future enemies.

4. *Resolved*, That we tender to Bishop Andrew our cordial sympathy in this most afflictive trial to his mind and feelings, applaud him for maintaining his position so decidedly against the formidable array of opposition, which he had to encounter, and express to him our desire that he yield no deference to the declared "sense" of the conference, but continue in the discharge of his episcopal duties in the southern conferences, where his labor may be bestowed upon those who appreciate his ability, love his character, and *delight to honor both.*

*Columbus, Georgia.*—On June 26th, the annexed resolutions were passed:

1. *Resolved*, That no ecclesiastical body, while legislating for the Church, has any right to interfere with the civil relations of society.

2. *Resolved*, That the General conference never did have any proper right to enact any rules as a test-law, either for membership or for ministerial rights, solely in view of slaveholding.

3. *Resolved*, That we have, for many years, submitted to all intermeddling with southern slavery only because we found division of the Church might lead to greater evils than the

official interference of the north with the south.

4. *Resolved*, That we believe the time has fully come when our rights, both civil and religious, demand that we have a southern Church, exercising an independent jurisdiction over all the slaveholding conferences.

5. *Resolved*, That we fully approve the course pursued by the southern delegations in their Protest, and their moving the conference to pass the resolutions now before the Church as the basis of a friendly separation.

6. *Resolved*, That the action of the conference has not attached censure or reproach to the conduct or character of Bishop Andrew, and that his manly, dignified, and decided course in the protection of his own rights and the rights of the Church he represented, has raised him higher in our regard and respect, and more closely endeared him to us, and that he has our warmest and kindest sympathies on this trying occasion.

7. *Resolved*, That our beloved and venerable Bishop Soule is entitled to our thanks and gratitude for his frank, manly, and able defense of Bishop Andrew and the constitution of the Church, and to him we tender a hearty welcome whenever his convenience will permit him to come among us.

8. *Resolved*, That the members from the non-slaveholding states, who would not violate the constitution for expediency, and had the moral courage to peril their popularity at home in defense of the constitution and laws of the Church, may be safely intrusted with the administration of those laws, and deserve the thanks of the south.

9. *Resolved*, That we are much pleased with the plan proposed of calling a convention of ministers to meet next May, in Louisville, Kentucky, to adopt a constitution, and arrange for the organization of a southern Church.

10. *Resolved*, That we earnestly hope, when the southern Church is organized, that there will be a strict adherence to every doctrine and peculiarity of Methodism essential to its objects.

11. *Resolved*, That we will now and forever insist upon a separate organization, unless action upon slavery is prohibited by constitutional law.

12. *Resolved*, That we do earnestly beg our ministers, members, and friends, to be moderate in all their meetings, and prevent as much as possible all unnecessary excitement.

13. *Resolved*, That the editors of the city be requested to publish the proceedings of this meeting, and that a copy be sent to the Southern Christian Advocate for publication.

*Princess Anne Circuit, Virginia.*—The members of several Methodist congregations, at a meeting held June 22d, decide as follows:

1. *Resolved*, That this meeting express its unqualified disapprobation of the reckless and unfeeling course pursued by the majority in the General conference, and charges them with needlessly casting firebrands and discord in our long-cherished Methodist union.

2. *Resolved*, That slavery is opposed to no law of Methodist Discipline, nor to the law of God; neither is it a "moral evil," but it is an institution fastened upon us by northern "traders in blood," which has been abolished at the north—as far as concerns the negroes—by interest, under the garb of philanthropy.

3. *Resolved*, That abolitionism is an insatiate

Moloch, upon whose unholy altars its high-priests would sacrifice all that is dear to the south—a "foul spirit of the pit," whose mildew breath has arisen to blast the Church of God; and we hereby pledge ourselves to unfurl the banner of uncompromising opposition to its further progress.

4. *Resolved*, That we love the Methodist Episcopal Church, and her wise ecclesiastical polity—cherish the general connection and deprecate disunion; yet, in view of the disgrace and insult heaped upon us, by the majority in conference, we deem it of vital importance to the best interests of southern Methodism, that an immediate division of the Church should be effected.

5. *Resolved*, That we approve of the plan submitted by the committee of nine, except the basis proposed for a division of the Church property; and inasmuch as in this matter the south can not be influenced by the paltry consideration of dollars and cents, we cheerfully yield our right to all the property that the majority may claim; and we, therefore, urge upon the Virginia annual conference the propriety of ratifying the said plan at its next session.

6. *Resolved*, That Bishop Andrew merits and receives the thanks of this meeting, for his manly and dignified conduct during his illegal arraignment, and by refusing to prostrate himself before the "Juggernaut of perdition," as was required of him by the General conference, he has added another laurel to the wreath of fame that encircles his brow, and rendered his name and his memory imperishable while virtue shall have a southern votary.

7. *Resolved*, That our beloved Bishop Soule has, by his course in the case of Bishop Andrew, erected for himself a monument more durable than brass, in the hearts of southern Methodists; and we hereby tender unto him the hospitalities of our homes and firesides, with the assurance that whenever his foot presses the soil of Virginia, for him there shall be "a Virginia welcome."

8. *Resolved*, That William A. Smith, D. D., Thomas Crowder, John Early, and Leroy M. Lee, are entitled to our hearty thanks for their stern, unbending adherence to Methodist Discipline, and southern rights, and they, together with every individual who in reality sustained the south, will accept of our kind acknowledgments and regards.

9. *Resolved*, That the few delegates from northern conferences who voted in the minority, thus fearlessly breasting the current of abolitionism in behalf of their southern brethren, deserve the commendations and lasting gratitude of this meeting.

10. *Resolved*, That every delegate from southern conferences who voted with the majority in the Harding case, or who otherwise lent his influence to the perpetration of the foul outrages upon southern rights, committed by the General conference, meets with our unqualified censure, and deserves the scorn and rebuke of the whole south.

11. *Resolved*, That the crisis has arrived when the cause of southern Methodism requires a suppression of all opinions that conflict with the genius of our civil institutions, and we therefore deem it INEXPEDIENT for any individual who voted with the majority, or who countenanced their notions, to officiate in any capacity in the southern Church.

12. *Resolved*, That it is our conviction that the New York Christian Advocate has at its



head an abolitionist—one who counseled the resignation of Bishop Andrew, and thus proved himself recreant to the south, and unworthy of her support—we therefore pledge ourselves to use all honorable means to destroy the circulation of said paper in this region.

13. *Resolved*, That we promise our united and individual efforts to extend the circulation of the Richmond Christian Advocate, whose editor, the Rev. Leroy M. Lee, we recognize as the firm and consistent supporter of our cause—the accomplished gentleman—the man of talents, and the Christian.

14. *Resolved*, That the proceedings of this meeting be published in the papers of the borough—the Richmond, Southern, and South-Western Christian Advocates, and that brother Lee be requested to forward a copy of the Richmond Christian Advocate to Bishops Andrew and Soule. (W., August 16, 1844, Vol. XI, p. 70.)

#### DOCUMENT 61.

*Address to the Ministers and Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the Slaveholding States and Territories, by the Delegates of the Southern Conferences, issued June 11, 1844.*

THE undersigned, delegates in the late General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, from thirteen annual conferences in slaveholding states and territories, would most respectfully represent, that the various action of the majority of the General conference, at its recent session, and the subject of *slavery and abolition*, has been such as to render it necessary, in the judgment of those addressing you, to call attention to the *proscription and disability* under which the southern portion of the Church must of necessity labor, in view of the action alluded to, unless some measures are adopted to free the minority of the south from the oppressive jurisdiction of the majority in the north, in this respect.

The proceedings of the majority, in several cases, involving the question of slavery, have been such as indicate, most conclusively, that the legislative, judicial, and administrative action of the General conference, as now organized, will always be extremely hurtful, if not finally ruinous, to the interests of the southern portion of the Church; and must necessarily produce a state of conviction and feeling in the slaveholding states, entirely inconsistent with either the peace or prosperity of the Church.

The opinions and purposes of the Church in the north on the subject of slavery, are in direct conflict with those of the south, and unless the south will submit to the dictation and interference of the north, greatly beyond what the existing law of the Church on slavery and abolition authorizes, there is no hope of any thing like union or harmony. The debate and action of the General conference in the case of the Rev. Mr. Harding, of the Baltimore conference; the debate and action in the case of Bishop Andrew; and the opinions and purposes avowed and indicated in a *manifesto* of the majority, in reply to a *protest* from the minority against the proceedings complained of—together with hundreds of petitions from the east, north, and west, demanding that slavery, in all its possible forms, be separated from the Church—these, and similar demonstrations, have convinced the undersigned

that they can not remain silent or inactive, without hazard and injustice to the different portions of the Church they represent.

They have, therefore, thought proper to invoke the attention of the Church in the south to a state of things they are compelled to regard as worthy the immediate notice and action of the Church throughout all the slaveholding states and territories. The subject of slavery and abolition, notwithstanding the plain law of the Discipline on the subject, was agitated and debated in the late General conference, for *five successive weeks*; and even at the very close of the session, the aspect of things was less satisfactory and more threatening to the south than at any former period; and under such circumstances of mutual distrust and disagreement, the General conference adjourned.

Some time before the adjournment, however, upon a *declaration* made by the southern delegations, setting forth the impossibility of enduring such a state of things much longer, the General conference, by a very large and decided majority, agreed to a *plan of formal and specific separation*, by which the southern conferences are to have a distinct and independent organization of their own, in no way subject to northern jurisdiction. It affords us pleasure to state that there were those found among the majority who met this proposition with every manifestation of justice and liberality. And should a similar spirit be exhibited by the annual conferences in the north, when submitted to them, as provided for in the plan itself, there will remain no legal impediment to its peaceful consummation.

This plan is approved by the undersigned as the best, and, indeed, all that can be done at present, in remedy of the great evil under which we labor. Provision is made for a peaceable and constitutional division of Church property of every kind. The plan does not decide that division shall take place; but simply, and it is thought securely, provides that it may, if it be found necessary. Of this necessity you are to be the judges, after a careful survey and comparison of all the reasons for and against it.

As the undersigned have had opportunity and advantages which those at a distance could not possess, to form a correct judgment in the premises, and it may be expected of them that they express their views fully on the subject, they do not hesitate to say, that they regard a separation at no distant day as inevitable; and, farther, that the plan of separation agreed upon is as eligible as the southern conferences have any right to expect, at any time. We most respectfully, therefore, and with no common solicitude, beseech our brethren of the ministry and membership in the slaveholding states to examine this matter carefully, and, weighing it well in all its bearings, try to reach the conclusion most proper under the circumstances. Shall that which, in all moral likelihood must take place soon, be attempted now, or are there reasons why it should be postponed?

We deprecate all excitement; we ask you to be calm and collected, and to approach and dispose of the subject with all the candor and forbearance the occasion demands. The separation proposed is *not* schism, it is *not* secession. It is a state or family, separating into two different states or families, by mutual consent. As the "Methodist Episcopal Church" will be found north of the dividing line, so the "Methodist Episcopal Church" will be found south of the same line.

The undersigned have clung to the cherished unity of the Church with a firmness of purpose and force of feeling which nothing but invincible necessity could subdue. If, however, nominal unity must coexist with unceasing strife and alienated feeling, what is likely to be gained by its perpetuation? Every minister and member of the Church in slaveholding states must perceive at once that the constant, not to say interminable, agitation of the slavery and abolition question in the councils of the Church, and elsewhere, must terminate in incalculable injury to all the southern conferences. Our access to slave and master, is, to a great extent, cut off. The legislation of the Church in conflict with that of the state—Church policy attempting to control public opinion and social order—must generate an amount of hostility to the Church, impossible to be overcome, and slowly but certainly to diminish both the means and the hope of usefulness and extension on the part of the Church.

Disposed, however, to defer to the judgment of the Church, we leave this subject with you. Our first and most direct object has been to bring it fully before you, and giving you an opportunity to judge and determine for yourselves, await your decision. The minority from the south, in the late General conference, were most anxious to adjourn the decision in the case of Bishop Andrew, with all its attendant results, to the annual conferences and to the Church at large, to consider and decide upon during the next four years—as no charge was presented against the Bishop, and especially as this measure was urgently recommended by the whole bench of bishops, although Bishop Hedding subsequently withdrew his name. The proposition, however, to refer the whole subject to the Church, was promptly rejected by the majority, and immediate action demanded and had. But as all the facts connected with the equivocal suspension of Bishop Andrew will come before you in other forms, it is unnecessary to detail them in this brief address, the main object of which is to place before you, in a summary way, the principal facts and reasons connected with the proposed separation of the southern conferences into a distinct organization.

Adopted at a meeting of the southern delegations, held in New York, at the close of the General conference, June 11, 1844, and ordered to be published.

Signed on behalf of the Kentucky, Missouri, Holston, Tennessee, North Carolina, Memphis, Arkansas, Virginia, Mississippi, Texas, Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina annual conferences.

*Kentucky.*—H. B. Bascom, William Gunn, H. H. Kavanaugh, E. Stevenson, B. T. Crouch, G. W. Brush.

*Missouri.*—W. W. Redman, W. Patton, J. C. Berryman, J. M. Jameson.

*Holston.*—E. F. Sevier, S. Patton, T. Stringfield.

*Tennessee.*—R. Paine, J. B. M'Ferrin, A. L. P. Green, T. Maddin.

*North Carolina.*—B. T. Blake, J. Jamieson, P. Doub.

*Memphis.*—G. W. D. Harris, S. S. Moody, W. M'Mahon, Thomas Joyner.

*Arkansas.*—J. C. Parker, W. P. Ratcliffe, A. Hunter.

*Virginia.*—J. Early, T. Crowder, W. A. Smith, L. M. Lee.

*Mississippi.*—W. Winans, B. M. Drake, J. Lane, G. M. Rogers.

*Texas.*—Littleton Fowler.

*Alabama.*—J. Boring, J. Hamilton, W. Murrain, G. Garrett.

*Georgia.*—G. F. Pierce, W. J. Parks, L. Pierce, J. W. Glenn, J. E. Evans, A. B. Longstreet.

*South Carolina.*—W. Capers, W. M. Wightman, C. Betts, S. Dunwody, H. A. C. Walker. (History Methodist Episcopal Church, South, pp. 105-108.)

#### DOCUMENT 62.

*Bishop Andrew's Address to the Public, dated Oxford, Georgia, August, 1844.*

VERY unexpectedly and very unwillingly I have become a man of strife, and my name and domestic circumstances have acquired a notoriety which, to a person of ordinary sensibility, must, of necessity, be extremely mortifying. It is so to me; and none but God can tell how much of painful and mortified feeling I have endured for the last three months—a state of things which I could not well have borne but for the consciousness that I have endeavored to act in the whole matter which has involved this distress, according to my most honest and clear convictions of duty in the circumstances which surrounded me. I may have been mistaken in my judgment, but I was honest at the time; and the demonstrations of public sentiment in the southern portion of the Church since the General conference, have tended to strengthen my convictions of the propriety of my course. If I have erred, I humbly ask mercy of God, through the atonement of my precious and ever-glorious Mediator, and pray that he would in his wisdom and goodness overrule all for the ultimate advancement of his own cause and kingdom upon earth. I had determined not to write another line on this matter; but as my character and conduct have been presented to the world in a rather unenviable connection, and as from the attitude in which I am constantly held up in the Christian Advocate and Journal, my course, and the reasons for it, may very possibly be misunderstood, I have thought it might be well to give a brief sketch of my history, in connection with the doings of the late General conference; and as those who were my prosecutors, in the anomalous proceedings of that body toward me, have laid great stress upon the alleged fact that I had betrayed my trust by becoming connected with slavery, although I was elected as a non-slaveholder, I shall bestow a little attention on this grave charge.

I have already stated, in my brief address before the conference, the circumstances connected with my election to the Episcopate; and I now beg leave to repeat that I was never asked by any one, to the best of my recollection, a single question on the subject. I know that no man ventured to ask of me any pledge, either as to my views or my purposes for the future; and, if I had been required to make any pledge of this sort, as the price of my elevation to the Episcopacy, I should have treated the offer with indignant contempt; believing, as I did then, and do now, that the making this thing a test of qualification for office in the Church was wrong in itself, and must ultimately work mischief for the connection. True, I was not a slaveholder; but I was not so only on the ground of expediency; I had been repeatedly applied to in the course of my itinerant career, by negroes who

wished to belong to me, to purchase them; and in some instances should have gratified them, but for the fact that I was a wanderer, without any permanent home, and might have been under the necessity of selling them again, or of separating husband and wife, neither of which I was willing to do. Consequently, I had kept myself free from the ownership of slaves. To be sure, I knew that no slaveholder had ever been elected to the office of bishop, simply, as I supposed, because a majority of the voters were antislavery men, who preferred a man of their own stamp for the Episcopacy; but in the book of Discipline I saw nothing which could, by any sort of fair reasoning, be construed so as to disfranchise any man of suitable qualifications for any of the important and responsible offices in the Church. I knew, too, that many of the wisest and best men in the Church had regretted the existence of this feeling in the General conference, and have given their own votes for slaveholding candidates, on the broad ground that the slaveholding membership were equitably entitled to a bishop from among themselves, and one of their own preference. I reasonably inferred that a Church which numbered hundreds of thousands of slaveholders in her communion; whose pulpits, hundreds of them, were every Sabbath filled by men "connected with slavery;" and in whose highest judicatory slaveholders were recognized in full fellowship and authority, would, if she had intended to regard a slaveholding bishop such a horrible monstrosity as was not to be tolerated, under any circumstances, have made some record of such opinion, judgment, decision, or "sense," in her book of laws. For if the framers of the book of Discipline, or the successive General conferences who quadrennially revised it, entertained the opinions now so boldly advocated on this subject, it is very difficult to reconcile their entire silence on this—as it is now alleged—essential and fundamental principle of Church polity, with the claims of honesty and godliness. Why has the Church all along maintained a guilty silence in her standards on this subject? Why has she not spoken out distinctly, and spread it out broadly and unequivocally on the pages of her statute book, that one of the main qualifications for the Episcopacy was the absence of all connection with slavery? Then she would have been consistent, and the world would have understood her. Why has she not done so? Truth, honesty, and godliness required it at her hands. With all these views, I could not, as an honest and independent man, feel myself bound by any opinions or views which may have governed the General conference in choosing me in preference to others who were believed to be better qualified for the office than I was. No, not even if I had known distinctly, at the time, that I was elected wholly and solely because I was too poor to own slaves, unless I had sought the office, or given some pledge of my acquiescence in the principle on which it seems their preference rested; neither of which has as yet been charged against me.

I must be indulged in a few more remarks at this point. I had supposed that the men who, twelve years ago, elected me to the most responsible position in the Church of God, did so because they believed, at least, that I possessed the requisite qualifications for discharging the high and sacred functions of that office; but it now appears that such was not the fact. No; there were other men supposed to be better qualified; but I was unknown—yet I was preferred, sim-

ply because I had no slaves. Now this might be sufficiently mortifying to my pride, but it is not; for I believed, at first, that they were mistaken in supposing me qualified for the duties of that office, and my subsequent experience has not tended to change these views. I have always felt myself not well qualified for the office, yet I have endeavored, as I could, to discharge the duties assigned me, and the Church has borne with me. My service has been a very imperfect one, yet I have honestly endeavored to promote the cause of God. I think I can, in good conscience, say, that there has never been a period since my consecration to the Episcopate, in which I would not most joyfully have resigned my office and returned to my former field of labor, if I had not feared its influence upon the peace and prosperity of the southern and south-western portions of the Church. I may have been mistaken in my estimate of this danger; but at any rate, I hesitated to take the step for several years past, at the suggestion of several valued friends, who knew the state of feeling among the people. With these views and feelings, I have frequently expressed myself in the carelessness and freedom of familiar conversation, especially with the preachers, to the effect that I thought a bishop ought to be permitted to resign, and that I thought I should do so at no very distant day; and I think it very likely that in this way I may have expressed myself in the last twelve months to some preacher who was traveling with me, in the language stated by Dr. Bond in his late editorial, though I certainly had no expectation that these familiar remarks of mine, made in the unsuspecting familiarity of friendly conversation, were to be honored with so conspicuous a place in the *Christian Advocate and Journal*. But my private conversations have become of great importance, recently, in certain quarters; yet, after all, it is difficult to see what purpose can be answered by luging such a thing into the newspapers, unless it was designed to prove that I had gone to the late General conference fully prepared to resign, independent of any thing which transpired afterward. Now I distinctly state, that I went there with no fixed purpose to do any such thing; though I felt, as I had long done, that I would most cheerfully lay down the office, if I could do so with safety and profit to the Church. My recent marriage had, however, taken away one of the reasons which had for a year or two rendered the office peculiarly onerous to me; and I was, therefore, in some sense, better prepared to go on in the discharge of its duties for a while longer. But when I reached New York, and found the course which events were likely to take, I resolved to resign and relieve myself from a burden of care and anxiety, which I had long felt too heavy to be borne with comfort; and also to prevent a General conference debate, which might, very possibly, be protracted and exciting. But knowing the peculiar circumstances and feelings of the southern portion of the Church, I thought it most prudent, before I carried my resolve into effect, to have an interview with the delegates of those conferences which I knew would be most likely to be affected by my action. I, therefore, sought and obtained an interview at an early day. I laid before these brethren, fully and frankly, my views and resolutions, and requested them, honestly and candidly, to give me their views on the matter, leaving my feelings altogether out of the question, assuring them that so far as my own preferences were concerned, I should most joy-

fully surrender my parchment to the General conference at the earliest practicable hour; that I had called them together because I supposed they best knew the state of things among their people; and that if, in their judgment, I could resign with safety to the peace of the southern portion of the Church, I should do so forthwith. They requested me to take no step in the matter till they could have a fuller meeting, and have time for a more thorough interchange of opinions. A day or two subsequently, I was waited on by the brethren—Early, Winans, and Pierce—who, in behalf of the southern delegations, conjured me, if I valued the peace and unity of the southern Methodist Church, not to think of resigning; that my cherished object of giving peace to the Church would not be accomplished by my resignation. They told me that our brethren in the south and south-west were already chafed on this subject up to the full amount of what they would bear, and that my resignation, under existing circumstances, would be the signal for wide-spread disaffection, and, very probably, a general secession of the greater portion of the southern Church. Under all the circumstances, I came soberly to the conclusion, that it was my safest course to maintain my position, and trust to God to direct matters in future. I told the committee, therefore, that I would stand my ground, although I foresaw that I was to endure a crucifixion of feeling great beyond conception. Nor was I mistaken in my estimate.

I see that Dr. Bond persists in maintaining the opinion advanced by him in his uncalled for and ungenerous editorial of the 20th May, that my resignation would restore peace to the Church, and preserve her unity. Of course, I can not hope to convince Dr. Bond; and I, therefore, speak to other and more impartial judges. I regarded this thing, when it first appeared in the paper, as an unkind and unnecessary attack upon my feelings, which might have been spared; but the perpetration, without end, of the same charge in the columns of the great official organ of the Church, is, I think, peculiarly unkind. I stated to the conference truly, in my address, that the allegation was untrue, and that if my resignation could restore peace to the Church, I would lay it on their table immediately. But I had ascertained, in a manner perfectly satisfactory to myself, that whatever quietude it would afford the non-slaveholding conferences, it would be the signal of trouble in the south, and particularly that it would endanger the very existence of most of the large missions to the slaves in the lower country; and as the southern conferences stood on the broad ground of the Discipline, and as I knew that the non-slaveholding conferences had no right to demand my resignation, I determined to maintain my position, cost what it might. Now I may have erred in this matter; perhaps I should have sought information as to the state of things in the southern Church from Drs. Durbin, Bond, Olin, and Bangs, or from Messrs. Hamline and Finley, who, from their positions at Carlisle, New York, Middletown, and Ohio, might have been reasonably supposed to understand the state of things at the south better than the men who reside there. But in my simplicity, I supposed that the delegates from the south, who were fresh from their fields of labor, were best qualified to understand the state of opinion and feeling there. Such were the convictions under which I acted, and my observation and information since my return have fully satisfied me that my resignation at the late

General conference would have been disastrous to the dearest interests of Methodism at the south. But enough of this for the present. I must proceed to notice some other points in the history of this case.

In the celebrated General conference editorial it is stated that action was long delayed in my case, to afford me the opportunity of resigning. Now for the facts: At the first meeting of the Committee on Episcopacy, after its organization—so says Dr. Payne—my case was introduced. It was discussed at several times before the committee; but at length a resolution was passed, appointing a sub-committee to wait on Bishop Andrew, and ascertain the facts in relation to his connection with slavery. The chairman, brother Crandall, waited on me the day before the anniversary of the American Bible Society, and on the afternoon of that anniversary day, I waited on the whole committee, and gave them, without reserve, the facts in the case. I knew what had been passing in the committee from the commencement, and considered my case as in a state of preparation for the action of the conference; but I suppose matters were not yet quite ready for action before that body. Probably they could not agree as to the best course to pursue with the sinning bishop; or possibly they were suffering from the grief, consternation, and dismay into which these good men were thrown, upon discovering that they were in such fearful proximity to a slaveholding bishop, which was so eloquently described in the reply by authority. It was understood, however, that meetings of the non-slaveholding delegates were held almost daily, in which the awful calamity which Bishop Andrew had brought on the Church was the subject of discussion, and the great object was to find out the best way to deal with the offender. It was rumored that there was some diversity of sentiment among them; some were for deposing the bishop, but it was not quite sure whether a bishop could be deposed who had broken no law, and who was reported to have been an efficient and faithful officer. Possibly his name might be left off the Minutes; or at any rate, by some means, right or wrong, they must show their detestation of the "great evil" by ejecting, after some form, the transgressor. Finally, after several days of repeated consultation in my case, I was waited on by a respectable committee, with Dr. Bangs at their head, who told me they had been sent by the representatives of some twenty annual conferences, in order to have a friendly conference with me on the subject of my connection with slavery. I told the Doctor that, circumstanced as I then was, I had resolved to have no verbal communication on the subject; but that if he would give me in writing the points on which they wished information, and append the names of the committee, and of the brethren by whom they were sent, I would pledge myself to answer the whole, fully and frankly. The Doctor said they were not prepared for that, and he supposed they had better return to those who sent them there, and so the communication ended. The fact is, if they had sent this committee to have a friendly interview with me at the commencement of the conference, I should probably have received them with very different feelings; but to send it now, after it was known all over the city, that my degradation was resolved on, I confess affected me painfully. I knew that these same men were engaged with others in seeking my disgrace, and deemed it most expedient not to trust myself in a verbal conference with my

avowed persecutors; and, therefore, preferred that any communication between us should be in writing. I heard no more of this friendly committee, except that I learned incidentally afterward, that their object in waiting upon me was to persuade me to act on my own responsibility, and resign, independently of the advice of the southern delegates. This interview took place, I think, on Saturday evening, and on Monday morning a resolution was introduced into the General conference, instructing the Committee on Episcopacy to inquire into Bishop Andrew's connection with slavery, and report next day, which was done, and resulted in the presentation of my letter, which has already been published. And here I will close, as it was my principal object in writing, to notice some matters connected with the history of this unhappy affair, which could scarcely be known to any one so well as to myself.

The foregoing statements I have felt called on to make, from the ceaseless efforts, and unwearied pains exhibited to put my course at the General conference in a wrong point of light. To candid and thinking men, I am not afraid to leave the judgment of my principles, motives, and conduct. I deprecate no investigation—I ask for no exemption from examination. It would, indeed, be grateful to my private feelings, if the course of denunciation, commenced by the leading paper of the Church, during the session of the General conference, and kept up with patient, dogged pertinacity ever since, might be terminated. But if this can not be hoped for, at least, I wish to stand before the southern community on the true ground which I have chosen to occupy, after many prayerful endeavors to know what my duty was, and after ascertaining, from the best sources of information within my reach, what course would best promote the peace and security of the Church. It is but due to the main prosecutor of this whole business, that I should add that Dr. T. E. Bond never said one word to me in person, on the subject of resigning—his advice being generally given in his paper. Nor do I remember that his personal bearing toward me, when we met, was other than respectful.

JAMES OSGOOD ANDREW.

Oxford, Georgia, August, 1844.\*

#### DOCUMENT 63.

*Extract from the Message of the Governor of South Carolina, to the Legislature, in December, 1844.*

MOR is the refusal to ratify this treaty, [of annexation,] so vitally important to the south, the only extraordinary proof which the past year has furnished, of the exuberant and rancorous hostility of the north to our domestic slavery. At a meeting, in May last, of the General conference of the Methodist denomination, whose ecclesiastical constitution and government bear, in some respects, a striking resemblance to the political constitution and government of this confederacy, a pious bishop of the south was virtually deposed from his sacred office because he was a slaveholder. It was openly and distinctly stated that the Methodist congregations in the non-slaveholding states, embracing a much larger proportion of

the masses than any others, would no longer tolerate a slaveholder in their pulpits—a fact which has been since exemplified. With becoming spirit, the patriotic Methodists of the south dissolved all connection with their brethren of the north; and for this they are entitled to lasting honor and gratitude from us. Other instances might be cited, not so striking, but equally decisive of the fact that the abolition frenzy is no longer confined to a few restless and daring spirits, but has seized the whole body of the people in the non-slaveholding states, and is rapidly superseding all other excitements, and trampling on all other interests. It has even been thought that the organized abolition vote might decide the pending Presidential election; and both parties at the north have been charged with endeavoring to conciliate it for their candidate; while England, encouraged by these movements, and exasperated by our tariff laws, is making avowed war on us, that she may strike a blow at those who are more our enemies than hers.

Though all these efforts may fail to coerce Congress to pass an act of emancipation, and can hardly succeed in organizing an extensive insurrection among our slaves, it can not be disguised that they are doing mischief here, and may soon effect irreparable injury. They must be arrested. It is indispensably necessary that they should be arrested in the shortest possible period of time. The question is, How is this to be done? Argument and remonstrance are clearly useless. All appeals to sympathy, to interest, and to the guarantee of the bond of Union, have failed, as yet, and will, I have no doubt, continue to fail. Seeing, as we of the south do, the naked impossibility of emancipation, without the extermination of one race or the other, through crime and horrors too shocking to be mentioned—leaving a devastated land, covered with ashes, tears, and blood—I can not doubt that you will be justified by God and future generations, in adopting any measures, however startling they may appear, that will place your rights and property exclusively under your own control, and enable you to repel all interference with them, whatever shape it may assume. And as you incur a danger of no ordinary character—one so subtle and insidious in its approaches, that there is no ascertaining how soon it may be too late to resist it—I believe you will be equally justified in taking these measures as early and decisively as, in your judgment, you may deem proper. (C., December 25, 1844; Scraps, I, p. 1121.)

#### DOCUMENT 64.

*Reply of Dr. Peck and Dr. Bangs, dated New York, November 8, 1844, in Reply to Dr. Tomlinson, of November 1, 1844, making inquiries whether the new Church will be a secession.*

REV. DR. TOMLINSON—Dear Brother,—We have read your letter in the Western Christian Advocate of the first instant, addressed to us, with the attention, we humbly trust, which its importance demands. Though we might remark upon some of the arguments and observations it contains, yet, for the sake of brevity and perspicuity, we think it best to confine ourselves principally to the questions you have propounded, and to which you have requested our answers. Your first question is as follows:

\* S., August 30, 1844. Scraps, I, pp. 244-247.

“Does the plan of division, as authorized by the General conference, place the southern and south-western conferences, in your estimation, in the attitude of *secession*, or *separation* from the Methodist Episcopal Church, should the division therein contemplated actually take place?”

In the first place, we think there is a little error committed in that clause of the query which takes for granted that the General conference “authorized the plan of division.” We think that the General conference did not, properly speaking, *authorize* any plan of division, but only provided for a possible, and, to all appearance, the *probable* contingency that a separate organization would take place by the action of the southern and south-western conferences; and then, *should* such separate organization actually occur, the General conference marked the line of division, and fixed the terms on which it should finally be settled.

This, indeed, was all the General conference could constitutionally do; for it was agreed on all hands, we believe, and we know that it was conceded, after a free interchange of thoughts in the committee of nine, who drafted the report, that the General conference had no right, and, consequently, had no constitutional power either to divide or to authorize the dividing of the Church.

These remarks will lead us to a direct answer to your question; namely, if such a separation does take place, do the southern and south-western conferences assume “the attitude of a *secession* or *separation* from the Methodist Episcopal Church?” As to *secession* we do not like the term in this connection, because it seems to convey an idea of a violent disruption of a portion of the Church, because it is dissatisfied with some doctrine of the Church, or item of Church government, and that the seceding party withdraws itself from all fellowship with the party from which it secedes. In this sense we do not understand that the southern and south-western conferences will put themselves in the attitude of a *secession* from the Methodist Episcopal Church, provided they divide according to the plan laid down by the General conference. If they pursue any other plan of division, let it be whatever it may, if it amounts to a separate organization, they must secede in the sense of the term above defined.

But that, if they form a separate organization, they will “*separate* from the Methodist Episcopal Church,” we have no hesitation in answering that they will and must do so to all intents and purposes. Indeed, it seems to us preposterous to think otherwise. This subject was fully canvassed in the committee of nine, and it was avowed, openly and frankly, on the floor of the General conference, and was, therefore, perfectly understood, we should suppose, by all concerned, that if the southern brethren could no longer remain under the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, then *they*, not *we*, not the General conference, must declare *themselves* independent of us, the Methodist Episcopal Church, by forming a separate organization.

Look at the report of the committee, which was, almost unanimously, adopted by the General conference, and you will find it will fully justify this view of the subject. In the preamble it is said, “Whereas, in the event of a separation, a contingency to which the declaration,”

that is, the declaration which the minority, or delegates of the southern and south-western conferences had made, and which was referred to this committee, “asks attention as not improbable.” Here is a *separation* spoken of as an event *not improbable*, because the southern delegates had declared that it was inevitable, and that they would be compelled, to save themselves and their institutions, to make it. The General conference, therefore, did not make, nor authorize, the separation; and, hence, if made at all, its responsibility must rest with those who make it, and who made it necessary. We forbear to enter on any discussion here as to the origin of this necessity; that is, whether it originated with Bishop Andrew in connecting himself with slavery, or with the action of the General conference on his case, although we should not hesitate to declare our views, at a suitable time, and on a proper occasion. This however, we do not consider that time and occasion, nor is it necessary, as we believe, for the argument. The separation, should it take place, must be made by the south, and on their own responsibility.

And that such separation will form a distinct organization, and entirely sever those who belong to it from the Methodist Episcopal Church, so far as government and property are concerned, and was so understood by the General conference, is further manifest from the following language, found in the report before alluded to. In the first resolution are the following words: “That should the annual conferences in the slaveholding states find it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection.” Here, also, the *necessity* of such a separation is spoken of as a contingency that may or may not happen, and its necessity is left altogether with the annual conferences in the slaveholding states, which shows again the truth of what we have before stated; namely, that the responsibility of the separation was, and is, with the slaveholding conferences, and not with the General conference; but that to which we would more particularly call your attention in the above extract is the *distinct ecclesiastical connection*. No words can more clearly and forcibly express the idea of a *distinct* and *entire* separate organization—a full separation from the Methodist Episcopal Church.

The phraseology in the subsequent resolutions of said report fully sustains these views, and corresponds with the sentiment which we shall presently submit; that is, that there can not be two The Methodist Episcopal Churches, possessing coordinate powers, rights, and privileges. The phraseology to which we allude is, “southern Church,” the “Church, south,” which frequently occurs in the resolutions, and that in distinction from the Methodist Episcopal Church, showing most clearly and emphatically that the General conference, in passing that report, understood that, should a separate organization be formed, *that* organization would not only be separate and distinct from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but, also, it must take *another name*, in order to be recognized in law or equity, or in ecclesiastical history; for nothing, it appears to us, would be more absurd than to suppose there can be two Churches under the same name, without any qualifying epithet to distinguish one from the other. If the separation takes place, the separatists are at liberty to assume whatever name they please

except that of "The Methodist Episcopal Church," which title they certainly can not expect the majority to relinquish, and thus to jeopard all their property, and forfeit their birthright.

And, as to their calling themselves "The Methodist Episcopal Church," and then claiming coordinate powers with "The Methodist Episcopal Church," it would involve an absurdity too monstrous for men of intelligence to entertain for a moment. For what does coordinate mean in this connection? It means of equal rank and degree, not, indeed, like two separate individuals possessing equal rank and degree, acting in their individual and separate capacity, but it must mean, if it have any consistent meaning at all, two separate parts of the same government, not unlike the senate and house of representatives, possessing an equality of rank and degree in respect to the law-making power, so that the consent of the one party is as necessary as the other, in order for any legal enactment. In this sense, therefore, it is utterly impossible that there should be two separate and distinct Churches with coordinate powers, the consent of both of which is necessary for the passage of a rule or regulation. In this case neither would be separate and distinct from the other, but they must act conjointly in order to make any thing binding.

If, however, those who talk thus mean to say that the separate organization, when effected, shall possess all the powers and privileges of an independent Church, fully as much as the Methodist Episcopal, or any other independent Church, we then yield to the correctness of the statement, and can certainly have no objections to their claiming coordinate powers with those from whom they have separated—only they must refrain from assuming the title, namely, "The Methodist Episcopal Church;" for this can never be relinquished by those who remain as they were. They may call themselves, if they choose, "The Methodist Episcopal Church, South," or the "Southern Methodist Episcopal Church," or any other name they may see fit to adopt—for we presume not to dictate nor advise in this matter—but surely they can not be the self-same Church from which they voluntarily separate.

Your next question is in the following words:

"If such is your opinion of the import of that plan, would you feel yourself authorized to cooperate in dividing the property of the Book Concern, should the southern and southwestern conferences, in separating, avow, either in form or substantially, that they are *not* a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but that they are still in law, and to all intents and purposes, a coordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in these United States?"

In this question you have a little changed the terms, or not used the same as in the former. In the former you said, "*secession, or separation from,*" and in the latter, you have confined yourself to the single word "*secession.*" For the reasons already assigned, we think they might deny that they have *seceded*; that is, they have not violently made a rupture in the Church, because they could not believe in some particular doctrine, or in some item of Church government; and, therefore, have withdrawn Christian fellowship from those from whom they *seceded*; but they have only formed

a separate organization, for reasons satisfactory to themselves. Understanding *secession* in this sense, we think they might deny that they are *seceders*; but yet, if they separate, we judge that they could not rightfully claim to be a coordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and, hence, if they did so, or shall do so, we should not feel "authorized to cooperate in dividing the property of the Book Concern" for their benefit, because we fully believe that, in so doing, they would contravene the rule, and defeat the pacific and equitable object of the General conference in proposing the conditions on which the division should be made.

Upon the whole, we conclude that it is left entirely with the slaveholding conferences to say whether they will form a separate organization, or whether they will remain in the Methodist Episcopal Church. If they resolve on separation, and carry their resolution into effect, according to the plan fixed by the General conference, peaceably and in good faith; and if three-fourths of all the voters, who are present and vote on the resolution offered by the late General conference, authorizing the division of the property, in the event of a separation, then they will be entitled to their share of said property; but if they adopt another plan, and make a violent disruption of the Church, they will become *seceders* in the sense before defined, and thereby deprive themselves not only of an equitable portion of the property, but also of the fellowship of those from whom they thus secede. This appears to us a plain view of the case—a conclusion which inevitably results from the premises laid down by the General conference.

We can not conclude this reply, already lengthened out beyond our expectation when we commenced, without adverting to an erroneous view, as we think, which some have taken of this subject. It has been supposed by at least one writer—and how many converts he may have made to his opinion we do not know—that, in order to complete the arrangement, another General conference must be held. That this is an erroneous view will be manifest to all who will look at the fourth resolution of the above-mentioned report, the part bearing upon this point reading as follows:

"That whenever the annual conferences, by a vote of three-fourths of all the members voting on the third resolution, shall have concurred in the recommendation to alter the sixth Restrictive Article, the Agents at New York and Cincinnati shall, and they are hereby authorized and directed to deliver over to any authorized agent, or appointee of the Church, south, should one be organized, all notes," etc., and then the seventh article appoints Nathan Bangs, George Peck, and James B. Finley commissioners to "act in concert with the same number of commissioners appointed by the southern organization—should one be formed—to estimate the amount," etc. By these articles it will be seen that the General conference provided for carrying the conditions of the separation into complete effect, by the Book Agents and commissioners, without waiting for any additional powers, so soon as the separate organization is formed by the action of the southern and south-western conferences, and so soon as the said Agents and commissioners are authorized to discharge their duties by three-fourths of all who are present, and entitled to vote in the annual conferences, and do actually vote directly

on the question at issue. When these preliminaries are prepared, that is to say, when the slaveholding conferences shall have completed their separate organization, according to the plan marked out by the General conference, and have appointed their commissioners, and the vote of three-fourths of all the members of the annual conferences, who choose to vote, shall have authorized us by their vote to act, we shall be then ready, so far as we are concerned, to discharge our duties in the premises.

We have thus, dear brother, given you our views with all frankness. We may have erred, and shall, in that case, be thankful to any one who will correct our errors, and set us right. As you addressed us publicly, through the press, we answer you, as we suppose you desired, through the same medium, before the same public.

Affectionately yours,

N. BANGS,  
GEO. PECK.

New York, November 8, 1844.\*

#### DOCUMENT 65.

*Letter of Bishop Soule of September 26, 1844, calling Bishop Andrew to perform official duties; and Bishop Andrew's Reply of November 4, 1844, accepting the call.*

To the Editor of the Southern Christian Advocate.

MY DEAR BROTHER,—I perceive from the resolutions passed at the various Church meetings in the south, that there is a very general expression of opinion in favor of my taking my appropriate share of episcopal labor; and as I have received, both from public meetings and individual correspondents, from ministers and laymen, the most earnest and affectionate invitations to attend the sessions of most of the southern and south-western conferences, I deem it due to all concerned, to state definitely the course I have pursued, and had resolved to pursue, till the meeting of the convention at Louisville, Kentucky. Immediately after the passing of the memorable resolution in my case in the late General conference, I left the city of New York, and spent the next day, which was the Sabbath, at Newark, New Jersey, to fulfill an engagement previously made; after which I returned to the bosom of my family in Georgia. From Newark I addressed a letter to Bishop Soule, assigning the reasons for my departure, and stating in substance to the following effect, namely: That I did not know whether the bishops would feel authorized, in view of the recent action of the General conference, to assign me a place among them for the next four years, unless that body should condescend to explain its action more definitely; but that if the bishops should see proper to assign me my share in the episcopal visitations, I should be glad that they would let my work commence as late in the season as convenient, inasmuch as I had been absent from my family most of the time for the last twelve months; but that if they did not feel authorized in view of the action of the General conference to give me work, I should not feel hurt with them. It will be remembered that there was subsequently introduced into the conference a resolution intended to explain the meaning of the former one

as being simply *advisory*; this was promptly laid on the table, which left no doubt of the correctness of the opinion I had previously formed, that the General conference designed the action as *mandatory*. I understand that the southern delegates afterward notified the bishops in duo form, that if they should give me my portion of the episcopal work, I would attend to it. The plan of episcopal visitation, however, was drawn up, and subsequently published without my name, as is well known. I have heard it rumored, indeed, that this plan was so arranged that I could be taken into it at *any time* when I should signify a wish to be so introduced; and some anonymous correspondents of the Western and South-Western Christian Advocates have expressed themselves in a manner which indicated some surprise that I had not availed myself of this kind provision of the Episcopal Board. Now, in reply to all this, I have only to say that I presume those gentlemen are mistaken entirely as to the practicability of any such arrangement; for if the bishops had contemplated the possibility of any such change in their plan, it is but fair to infer that either they would have appended to their published arrangement some note to that effect, or else they would have informed me of it by letter; and forasmuch as they have done neither, I presume that the aforementioned rumor is altogether without foundation. However, I may be mistaken in this judgment, as I know nothing of the plans of the bishops, other than what is published, not having received a line from one of them, since the General conference, save the accompanying letter from Bishop Soule. In view of all these facts I came deliberately to the conclusion that the bishops thought it most prudent, under the circumstances, not to invite me to perform any official action; and as I wished to be the cause of no unpleasant feeling to the bishops or the preachers, I determined not to visit any of the annual conferences at their respective sessions. At the urgent solicitation, however, of many of the preachers of the Kentucky conference, I so far changed my determination as to make an effort to reach that conference about the last day or two of the session; but a very unexpected detention on the road prevented the accomplishment of my purpose. Further reflection brought me back to my original purpose, and I abstained from visiting Holston and Missouri. On the important questions which now agitate us, I wished the conferences to act in view of the great facts and principles involved, apart from any influence which my personal presence among them might produce. I had laid out my plan of work for the winter; I designed to visit different portions of the Church in the slaveholding states, and publish among them, as I was able, the unsearchable riches of Christ. The following communication from Bishop Soule furnishes me a sufficient reason to change my arrangements, and to attend, in connection with him, the conferences allotted to him during the winter, in the distribution of episcopal labor.

And now permit me, in conclusion, to tender to my brethren, both of the south and south-west, my most cordial and grateful acknowledgments for their kind expressions of sympathy for me in the storm through which I have been passing, and to invoke their most fervent and continued prayers for me and mine, and especially for the Church of God. I thank them for the many affectionate invitations to attend their con-

\* C., November 20, 1844. W., December 6, 1844.



ferences, and most joyfully would I have been with them, but for the reasons indicated above.

May God abundantly bless us and guide us all into the way of truth and peace!

JAMES O. ANDREW.

Charleston, South Carolina, Nov. 4, 1844.

To the Rev. James O. Andrew, D. D., Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

MY DEAR BISHOP,—Since the close of the recent eventful session of the General conference, I have been watching, with deep solicitude, the “signs of the times,” and tracing causes, as far as I was able, to their ultimate issue. Some general results, growing out of the action of the conference, it required no prophetic vision to foresee. To prevent the measures, which, in my judgment, would lead to these results with demonstrative certainty, I labored day and night, with prayers and tears, till the deed was done—the eventful resolution passed. From that perilous hour my hands hung down, discouragement filled my heart, and the last hope of the unity of our beloved Zion well nigh fled from earth to heaven. My last effort to avert the threatening storm appears in the joint recommendation of all the bishops to suspend all action in the case till the ensuing General conference. At the presentation of this document, some brethren perceived that instead of light, the darkness around them was increased tenfold. *Others will judge*—have judged already. And those who come after us will examine the history of our acts. The document was respectfully laid upon the table, probably under the influence of deep regret that “our bishops should enter the arena of controversy in the General conference.” *But it can not—does not sleep there.* I have heard many excellent ministers, and distinguished laymen in our own communion, not in the slave states, refer to it as a measure of sound Christian policy, and with deep regret that the conference had not adopted it. Many of our northern brethren seem now deeply to deplore the division of the Church. O that there had been forethought as well as afterthought! I have seen various plans of compromise for the adjustment of our difficulties and preservation of the unity of the Church. The most prominent plan provides that a fundamental article in the treaty shall be, that no abolitionist or slaveholder shall be eligible to the office of a bishop in the Methodist Episcopal Church. Alas for us! Where are our men of wisdom, of experience? Where are our fathers and brethren who have analyzed the elements of civil or ecclesiastical compacts? who have studied man in his social relations? Who are the “high contracting parties,” and will they create a caste in the constitutional eldership in the Church of Christ? Will this tend to harmonize and consolidate the body? Brethren north and south will know that the cause must be removed that the effect may cease; that the fountain must be dried up before the streams will cease to flow. But I must pause on this subject. The time has not fully arrived for me to define my position in regard to the causes and remedies of the evils which now agitate and distract our once united and peaceful body. Still, I trust I have given such proofs, at different times, and under different circumstances, as not to render my position doubtful in the judgment of sober and discriminating men, either north or south. The Gen-

eral conference spoke in the language of wisdom and sound Christian policy, when, in the Pastoral Address of '36, it solemnly and affectionately advised the ministers and members of the Church to abstain from all agitation of the exciting subject of slavery and its abolition. Nor was the adoption of the report of the committee on the memorial of our brethren from a portion of Virginia, within the bounds of the Baltimore conference, less distinguished by the same characteristics of our holy Christianity, and the sound policy of our Discipline in providing for the case.

It has often been asked through the public journals, and otherwise, “why Bishop Andrew was not assigned his regular portion of the episcopal work for the four ensuing years, on the plan of visitation formed by the bishops and published in the official papers?” It devolves on the majority of my colleagues in the Episcopacy—if indeed we have an Episcopacy—rather than on me, to answer this question. Our difference of opinion in the premises, I have no doubt, was in Christian honesty and sincerity. Dismissing all further reference to the painful past, till I see you in the south, let me now most cordially invite you to meet me at the Virginia conference at Lynchburg, November 13, 1844, should it please a gracious Providence to enable me to be there. And I earnestly desire that you would, if practicable, make your arrangements to be with me at all the southern conferences in my division of the work for the present year, where I am sure your services will not be “unacceptable.” I am the more solicitous that you should be at Lynchburg, from the fact that my present state of health creates a doubt whether I shall be able to reach it. I am now laboring, and have been for nearly three weeks, under the most severe attack of asthma, which I have had for six or seven years—some nights unable to lie down for a moment. Great prostration of the vital functions, and indeed of the whole physical system, is the consequence. But no effort of mine shall be wanting to meet my work; and the inducements to effort are greatly increased by the present position of the Church, and the hope of relief from my present affliction, by the influence of a milder, and more congenial climate. I can not conclude without an expression of my sincere sympathy for you, and the second of your joys and sorrows, in the deep afflictions through which you have been called to pass. May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ sustain you both!

Yours, with sentiments of affection and esteem,

JOSHUA SOULE.

Lebanon, Ohio, September 26, 1844.\*

#### DOCUMENT 66.

Report of the Committee on Division of the Virginia Conference.

THE committee to whom was referred the resolution of the late General conference, recommending to all the annual conferences, at their first approaching sessions, to authorize a change of the sixth Restrictive Article, so that the first clause shall read—“They shall not appropriate the produce of the Book Concern nor of the

\* W., November 22, 1844. C., December 25, 1844. Scraps, I, p. 1121.

Chartered Fund to any purpose, other than the traveling, supernumerary, superannuated, and worn-out preachers, their wives, widows, and children, and to such other purposes as may be determined on by the votes of two thirds of the members of the General conference;" and to whom was also referred the Address of the southern delegates in the late General conference, recommending a southern convention, to be held in Louisville, Kentucky, on the first day of May, 1845; together with the proceedings of various primary and quarterly conference meetings within the bounds of the Virginia conference, on the subject of a separation from the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, beg leave to report:

That having maturely considered these subjects, they do not deem it necessary to present an argument upon the various topics submitted to them; but that the duty assigned them will probably be more satisfactorily accomplished in the following series of resolutions; namely,

1. *Resolved*, That we concur in the recommendation of the late General conference to change the sixth Restrictive Article of the Discipline of our Church.

2. *Resolved*, That, from the ample sources of information before your committee, in numerous primary meetings, which have been held in various charges within our pastoral limits, and the proceedings of quarterly meeting conferences, which we have the most sufficient reason to regard as a fair and full exponent of the mind and will of the membership upon the subject of the action of the recent General conference, and the propriety of division, we are of opinion that it is the mind of the laity of the Church, with no exception sufficient to be regarded as the basis of action, that, while they seriously deprecate division, considered relatively, and most earnestly wish that some ground of permanent union could have been found, they see no alternative, and therefore approve of a peaceable separation, in the present circumstances of our condition; and in *this opinion* and *this determination* your committee unanimously concur.

3. *Resolved*, That we concur in the recommendation of the southern delegates in the late General conference, that there be a southern convention, to be held in Louisville, Kentucky, on the first day of May, 1845; and in the objects of this convention, as is contemplated in the address of the southern delegates.

4. *Resolved*, That, while we do not propose to dissolve our connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, but only with the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, we are therefore entitled to our full portion of all the rights and privileges appertaining to the property of the Church; nevertheless, our delegates to the convention to be held in Louisville, Kentucky, in May, 1845, are hereby instructed not to allow the question of property to enter into the calculation whether or not we shall exist as a separate organization.

5. *Resolved*, That the action of the late General conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew, was in violation of the provisional rule of the Discipline on the subject of slavery, and in derogation of the dignity and authority of the episcopal office: it was, therefore, equally opposed to the rights of the southern portion of the Church, and of those of the incumbents of the episcopal office. But more than this: it was an effort to accomplish, by legislative action,

what it was only competent for them to do, *if at all*, by regular judicial process; the very attempt was an acknowledgment that there was no rule of Discipline under which he could either be deposed or censured, and that the General conference, being unrestrained by the authority of law, was supreme. Thus, both the episcopal office and its incumbents were taken from under the protection of the constitutional Restriction, and the provisional rule of Discipline, by which it was made a coordinate branch of the government, and placed at the caprice of a majority, which claims that its mere will is the law of the Church.

Bishop Andrew, therefore, in refusing to resign his office, or otherwise yield to this unwarranted assumption of authority on the part of the General conference, has taken a noble stand upon the platform of constitutional law, in defense of the episcopal office and the rights of the south, which entitles him to the cordial approbation and support of every friend of the Church; and we hereby tender him a unanimous expression of our admiration of his firmness in resisting the misrule of a popular majority.

6. *Resolved*, That we cordially approve the course of the southern and south-western delegates of the late General conference, in resisting with so much constancy and firmness the encroachments of the majority upon the rights of the south, and for so faithfully warning them against the tendency of those measures which we fear do inevitably draw after them the dissolution of our ecclesiastical union.

JOHN EARLY,  
THOS. CROWDER, JR.,  
WM. A. SMITH,  
ABRAM PENN,  
GEO. W. NOLLEY,  
ANTHONY DIBRELL,  
H. B. COWLES,  
D. S. DOGGETT,  
JOS. H. DAVIS.

On motion of Mr. Early,  
*Resolved*, That we unanimously invite Rev. Bishops Soule and Andrew to attend the Louisville convention, to be held in May, 1845. (W., December 20, 1844.)

*Report of the Committee of the Missouri Conference on Division.*

THE committee to whom was referred the subject of a division of the Church into two separate General conference jurisdictions, together with the causes and circumstances connected with the same, have bestowed upon it, in the most prayerful and religious manner, all the time and attention they could command for the purpose, and beg leave to present the following as their report:

That inasmuch as the conference is presumed to be well informed on the merits of the very important subject upon which your committee have been called to act, it was not deemed necessary to delay this report by an extended and argumentative investigation of the matters committed to them, in their various relations, principles, and bearings; they would, therefore, present the result of their deliberations to the conference by offering for adoption the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That we have looked for many years, with painful apprehension and disapproval, upon the agitation of the slavery and abolition subject in our General conference; and

now behold, with sorrow and regret, the disastrous results which it has brought about.

2. *Resolved*, That while we accord to the great majority of our northern brethren the utmost purity of intention; and while we would carefully refrain from all harsh denunciations, we are compelled to pronounce the proceeding of the late General conference against Bishop Andrew extrajudicial and oppressive.

3. *Resolved*, That we deeply regret the prospect of separation, growing out of these proceedings; and that we do most sincerely hope and pray that some effectual means, not inconsistent with the interests and honor of all concerned, may be suggested and devised, by which so great a calamity may be averted; and to this end we recommend that our societies be fully consulted on the subject.

4. *Resolved*, That we approve the holding of a convention of delegates from the conferences in the slaveholding states in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, on the first day of May next, agreeably to the recommendation of the delegates from the southern and south-western conferences in the late General conference; and that the ratio of representation proposed by said delegates—namely, one delegate from every eleven members of the conference—be, and the same is, hereby adopted; and that this conference will elect delegates to the proposed convention upon said basis.

5. *Resolved*, That our delegates act under the following instructions; namely, to oppose the division of the Church, unless such division, under all the circumstances of the case, be found to be indispensable, and consequently unavoidable; and should such necessity be found to exist, and the division be determined on, then, and in that event, the southern and south-western conferences shall not be regarded as a secession from the Methodist Episcopal Church, but they shall be recognized in law, and to all intents and purposes, as a coordinate branch of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, simply acting under a separate jurisdiction. And further, that, being well satisfied with the Discipline of the Church as it is, this conference instruct its delegates not to support or favor any change in said Discipline by said convention.

6. *Resolved*, That, unless we can be assured that the rights of our ministry and membership can be effectually secured, according to the Discipline, against future aggressions, we shall deem the contemplated division as unavoidable.

7. *Resolved*, That, should the proposed convention, representing the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states, appointed to assemble in the city of Louisville, Kentucky, the first day of May, 1845, proceed to a separate organization, as contingently provided for in the foregoing resolutions, then, and in that event, the convention shall be regarded as the regular General conference, authorized and appointed by the several annual conferences of the southern division of the Church, and as possessing all the rights, powers, and privileges of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, and subject to the same restrictions, limitations, and restraints.

8. *Resolved*, That, in order to secure the constitutional character and action of the convention as a General conference proper, should a separate organization take place, the ratio of representation, as now found in the second Restrictive

Rule—one for every twenty-one—shall prevail, and determine the constitutional delegates, taking and accrediting as such the proper number from each annual conference first elected in order; and that the supernumerary delegates be regarded as members of the convention to deliberate, but not members of the General conference proper, should the convention proceed to a separate organization in the south; provided, nevertheless, that should any delegate or delegates, who would not be excluded from the General conference proper, by the operation of the above regulation, be absent, then any delegate or delegates present, not admitted by said regulation as a member or members of the constitutional General conference, may lawfully take the seat or seats of such absent delegates upon the principle of selection named above.

9. *Resolved*, That we have read with deep regret the violent proceedings of some of our southern brethren in their primary meetings against some of our bishops and others; and that we do most cordially invite to our pulpits and firesides all our bishops and northern brethren who, in the event of a division, shall belong to the northern Methodist Episcopal Church.

10. *Resolved*, That the preachers shall take up public collections in all their circuits and stations some time before the first day of March next, for the purpose of defraying the expenses of the delegates to the above-named convention, and pay over the same to the delegates, or their respective presiding elders, so that the delegates may receive the same before starting to the convention.

W. PATTON, *Chairman*.  
ANDREW MONROE,  
J. BOYLE,  
W. W. REDMAN,  
JOHN GLANVILLE,  
E. PERKINS,  
T. W. CHANDLER,  
JAS. G. T. DUNLEAVY,  
JOHN THATCHER.

Immediately after the adoption of the above report, the following resolutions were passed:

*Resolved*, That we approve the course of our delegates in their action at the late General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew, and the part they took in the subsequent acts of the southern delegates growing out of the proceedings of the majority; and they are hereby entitled to our hearty thanks for their manly course in a trying crisis.

*Resolved*, That we invite the bishops of our Church who may feel free to do so, and they are hereby invited, to attend the contemplated convention at Louisville, Kentucky.

W. W. REDMAN,  
*Secretary of Missouri Annual Conference.*

In connection with the report of the committee of nine upon the subject of the division of the Church, the following resolution was passed:

*Resolved*, That the presiding elders and preachers in charge of their respective districts, circuits, and stations, lay before our people the subject of the division of the Church, and obtain, as far as may be, their wishes in regard thereto; and that they be required to send the same to the delegates, or any one of them, by the first of April next. And in order that there may be uniformity in regard to the manner of presenting this matter to our people, each preacher shall read before the societies under his care the report of the committee of nine, presented to

and adopted by this conference, without note or comment, except to answer questions and give information, when called for.

W. W. REDMAN, *Secretary.*  
St. Louis, Missouri, October 4, 1844.\*

DOCUMENT 67.

*Official Explanation of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in reference to their treatment of Bishop Andrew, in view of the action of the General Conference in his case.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—The time has arrived when, in the judgment of the undersigned, it is proper they should respond to calls which have been made, both privately and publicly, for authentic information in regard to the action of a majority of the superintendents, by which the name of Bishop Andrew was omitted from the Plan of Episcopal Visitation, which was arranged at the close of the late General conference, and published in the Christian Advocate, and other official journals of the Church. The statements which follow will, it is believed, place that action, and the grounds thereof, in a view intelligible to all; and beyond this, they have neither desire nor intention to go in this communication.

On the first day of June last, the following preamble and resolution were adopted by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church:

“Whereas, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery, by marriage and otherwise, and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not, in some places, entirely prevent it; therefore,

“Resolved, That it is the sense of this General conference that he desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remains.”

On the sixth of June the following note was presented to the General conference:

“Reverend and Dear Brethren,—As the case of Bishop Andrew unavoidably involves the future action of the superintendents, which, in their judgment, in the present position of the Bishop, they have no discretion to decide upon; they respectfully request from this General conference official instruction in answer to the following questions:

“1. Shall Bishop Andrew's name remain as it now stands in the Minutes, Hymn-Book, and Discipline, or shall it be struck off of these official records?

“2. How shall the Bishop obtain his support? As provided for in the form of Discipline, or in some other way?

“3. What work, if any, may the Bishop perform? and how shall he be appointed to his work?

JOSHUA SOULE,  
“ELIJAH HEDDING,  
“BEVERLY WAUGH,  
“THOMAS A. MORRIS.”

To which the General conference responded:

“1. Resolved, as the sense of this conference,

That Bishop Andrew's name stand in the Minutes, Hymn-Book, and Discipline as formerly.

“2. Resolved, That the rule in relation to the support of a bishop and his family applies to Bishop Andrew.

“3. Resolved, That whether in any, and if any, in what work Bishop Andrew be employed is to be determined by his own decision and action, in relation to the previous action of this conference in his case.”

In view of the aforesaid proceedings of the General conference, the undersigned, on the 11th of June, appended their names to a paper written in the words which follow:

“It is our opinion in regard to the action of the late General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew, that it was designed by that body to devolve the responsibility of the exercise of the functions of his office exclusively on himself. In the absence of Bishop Andrew, at the time of arranging the Plan of Episcopal Visitation for the ensuing four years, and he not having notified us of his desire or purpose with respect to it, we should regard ourselves as acting in contravention of the expressed will of the General conference if we apportioned to Bishop Andrew any definite portion thereof. But if he shall hereafter make a written application for a portion of the general oversight, we should feel ourselves justified in assigning it to him.”

After this paper was signed, and before the parting of the superintendents, it was agreed to make out a reserved Plan of Episcopal Visitation, including Bishop Andrew in the apportionment of the work thereof, which was done, and intrusted to the safe-keeping of Bishop Soule, with an explicit understanding that if he should receive from Bishop Andrew a written application for his portion of the general superintendence, he was then, and in that event, to publish the second or reserved plan in immediate connection with the said application, that the reason for the substitution of the second plan might accompany its publication. Such was the action of the undersigned in the case presented, and such the ground on which it was based. At present this is all that they feel themselves called to make public.

ELIJAH HEDDING,  
B. WAUGH,  
THOMAS A. MORRIS,  
L. L. HAMLINE.\*

DOCUMENT 68.

*Speech of Mr. Dunwoody before the Louisville Convention, May 10, 1845, from the manuscript report, by Rev. Granville Moody.*

MR. DUNWOODY said he thought the south was so unanimous that there would be no need to speak much on this subject. Although much had been said, still the subject was not exhausted, and the merits of it had not been touched. Different opinions exist relative to the moral character of slavery itself. The majority say that it is a moral evil in every case, and under all circumstances. We say not. The main body have always considered it as a moral evil: hence the General Rule and tenth section of our Discipline on the subject. I believe it is a moral evil in some circumstances,

\* W., November 1, 1844.

\* C., February 19, 1845, and W., February 28, 1845, Vol. XI, p. 161. Scraps, II, p. 277.

but not in others. Let our appeal, then, be to the *Bible*. First, I believe slavery was a moral evil in the case of the Hebrews who were enslaved by the Egyptians. [Gave history.] Now, God solely punished the Egyptians for their sinfulness. Second, The African slave-trade was founded in covetousness and wrong, and is sinful. Thirdly, The slave-trade between these states for gain and merchandise is also sinful. Yet I believe that slavery is not always sinful. Hear the *Bible*: In the fourth commandment it is recognized by God's own authority; also in the tenth commandment we are forbidden to covet our neighbor's servant as much as to covet his wife. Now, this holy decalogue, or moral law, was not to be abolished, but is to stand forever, and it thus recognizes the principle of slavery. The Old Testament shows us that Hebrews might be made slaves for six years—at farthest till the great jubilee. If held thereafter it was morally wrong. But of the heathen, they might buy servants to be their possession, and go as an inheritance to their children forever, no provision being made for their liberation. Thus we see that the principle of slavery was established and sanctioned by God when the Jews lived under a form of government called a theocracy, because specially enacted and governed by him. Now, here is a syllogism for an abolitionist. If slavery is a moral evil, God can not sanction it. But God has sanctioned it; therefore, it is not a moral evil. Or again: God could never authorize the practice of a moral evil. But God has authorized slavery; therefore, slavery is not a moral evil.

God requires us to be subject to the powers that be; that is, the civil power. And he that resists shall receive to himself damnation. Now, our civil powers recognize slavery; and our Discipline requires us to be subject to the civil powers. But the General conference requires us to do what we can not do. Now, we have been wrong all along. Our duty is to let state affairs alone; and slavery is an affair of state. But is slavery a moral evil as to the Church? No. Paul says, in a letter to Timothy, "Let as many servants, etc., doing service, because their believing masters are faithful and beloved, and partakers of the benefit." All our commentators translate the word slave; and yet they inconsistently oppose and revile slavery. Abraham was a slaveholder, and he has gone to heaven, for Christ says so: "Ye shall sit down with Abraham," etc. The centurion was a slaveholder, and Christ says he has not found so great faith; no, no not in Israel. So far from its being morally wrong, that we find that although it existed in the days of the apostles, yet they never found any fault with it. They pointed out the duties of husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and slaves. They were to obey their masters from the heart, and the masters were to forbear threatening. Peter says they must obey not only the good and gentle masters, but also the froward; hence, masters may be good and gentle. Now, if it is morally wrong to hold slaves, it is morally wrong to live in wedlock; for the duties of each state are prescribed by God. But God does not prescribe the duties of adulterers and robbers, because these practices are morally wrong. But God does prescribe the duties of wedlock, and masters and slaves. Paul says, "If thou art called, being a slave, care not for it. But if thou mayest be made free, choose it rather;" that is, it is not a matter of much im-

portance. Philemon was a slaveholder. When Paul sent him back to his master, he says in his letter, "that now being converted, he will be a profitable servant;" but not one word about emancipation. Thus the Scriptures authorize the practice of slavery, with regard to the Church. It is a state affair, and the Church has nothing to do with it. The apostles appointed the duties of slaves to their believing masters, and the presumption is that they were all in Church fellowship. Fletcher says, "We must not oppose the natural current of affairs, or we shall only dam up for a time, and the overpowering flood will ultimately bear all before it, and spread desolation around." We have acted thus in regard to slavery, and now we see the results. We have abandoned the word of the Lord, and hence this evil has come upon us. Abolitionists dread the *Bible*—it is as the terrors of death to them. In 1820 we had a discussion of slavery in General conference. I saw that if we admitted it to be a moral evil, we have not an inch of ground to stand upon; and hence I threw difficulties in its way from the *Bible*, and stopped it. History does not record a single instance of persecution of the apostles or others, for preaching against slavery. In 1836 abolitionists were so feeble in General conference, that Roszel and I, and others agreed to let them alone measurably. But, alas! in 1844 the conservatives went over and joined the abolitionists. And the only way they have to prove it morally wrong is by abstract reasoning. I have proved it is not morally wrong by the Holy *Bible*. Our General Rule is very weak; for how could I enslave—that is, deprive of liberty—a slave? If I were a private member, I could buy slaves in the Methodist Episcopal Church with impunity. It is, also, very unequal in its operations respecting persons. The tenth section is, also, oppressive; if it is sinful in ministers, it is, also, in membership. Beside, if a man becomes a minister, he thereby loses his rights as a citizen; which ought not so to be. Paul pleaded for his rights as a citizen. I don't believe that any man is bound to emancipate, even where civil laws admit of it—because the *Bible* don't require it. Many years ago I became the owner of two female slaves. One died; the other became the mother of twelve children, and raised three grandchildren. Now, must I set them free, and thus separate husbands and wives? No. Here I take *Bible* ground again. Abolitionists are consistent; but their premise is false; slavery is not a moral evil. We appeal to the *Bible*. God has sanctioned it. Let us now glance at conservatives. There is no difference between them and abolitionists, at all; only they don't want to lose all the south. They wish to get slavery out of the ministry, and then cause that ministry to bear against slavery in the membership, and thus extirpate it. They showed, in last General conference, that abolitionism is their child. When Solomon called for the sword to divide the living child, the real mother cried out, "spare it!" and so Solomon knew which was which. So when abolitionism was to be killed by Harding's and Andrew's cases being sustained, the conservatives cried out, "spare it," and thus we know who its father is. Their cases were covered by the Rule in the Discipline. But the rule of expediency was brought in. Episcopacy, too, is to be undermined. Bishop Hamline says that a bi-hop is no more than an editor, or class-leader. Although he is required to avow that he is called of God, and by the will of our Savior, to this office, yet he must resign when

popular clamor says so. And so the conservatives and abolitionists joined hands and elected Hamline bishop. And all their action has only made slavery worse and harder than before; and the south has risen up as one man, and said, dissolve the union. I love our unity—but it can not be preserved. The love of contention is among us, and the prospect is gloomy on every side. The people in the north have risen up against slavery, and the people in the south have risen up and say divide. If it was only in the ministry we could manage it. I fear for the Baltimore conference; for Philadelphia, Pittsburg, Virginia, Ohio, Kentucky, and Missouri conferences. The contention has commenced, and where will it end? The conservatives and abolitionists will divide, and the prospect all around is indeed gloomy. Alas, for our beloved Zion! Scylla is on one hand, Charybdis on the other, and the waters of strife roll between. The Bible will alone guide us safely through. Holy Spirit, open our eyes to see the safe way, and may the time soon come when the watchmen shall see eye to eye!

Dr. Capers said he wished it distinctly understood that their complaint is against the late General conference, and not against the Discipline.

Louisville, May 10.

#### DOCUMENT 69.

*Extract from the Minutes of a Meeting of the Bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, held in New York.*

Thursday Morning, July 3, 1845.

MET at 8 o'clock. After devotional exercises, took up for further consideration the question of the superintendents going south to preside in the conferences represented in the Louisville convention.

After much solemn and prayerful consideration, the following resolution was adopted by a majority of votes, Bishop Hamline giving his opinion by letter.

Whereas, at a general convention of delegates of the several annual conferences in May last, assembled in Louisville, Kentucky, the following resolution was adopted by a vote almost unanimous, to wit:

Be it resolved, by the delegates of the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the slaveholding states, in general convention assembled, That it is right, expedient, and necessary, to erect the annual conferences, represented in this convention, into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as at present constituted; and, accordingly, we, the delegates of said annual conferences, acting under the provisional plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said annual conferences, by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *entirely dissolved*; and that said annual conferences shall be, and they hereby are constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection under the provisional plan of separation aforesaid, and based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines, and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and economical rules and regulations of said Discipline, except only in so far as

verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of the *Methodist Episcopal Church, South*.

And whereas, the said convention, by the above resolution, did set forth and declare, "That it is right, expedient, and necessary, to erect the annual conferences represented in this convention, into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church as at present constituted;"

And, whereas, said convention, by said resolution, did then and there make the following declaration: "We, the delegates of the said annual conferences, acting under the provisional plan of separation adopted by the General conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said annual conferences, by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *entirely dissolved*;"

And, whereas, the said convention by said resolution did further declare and set forth: "That said annual conferences shall be, and they are hereby constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection, under the provisional plan of separation aforesaid, and based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and economical rules and regulations of said Discipline, except only in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of the *Methodist Episcopal Church, South*."

Therefore, resolved, That acting as we do, under the authority of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and amenable to said General conference, we should not consider ourselves justified in presiding in said conferences, conformably to the plan of visitation agreed upon at the close of the late General conference, and published in the journals of the Church.

Resolved, That the Secretary be instructed to publish the resolution just adopted, relating to the superintendents presiding in those conferences represented in the Louisville convention.

EDMUND S. JAMES, Secretary.

In view of the opinion of our colleagues, as above expressed, we hereby give notice to the conferences south, in our respective districts, that we respectfully decline attending said conferences.

THOMAS A. MORRIS,  
EDMUND S. JAMES.\*

#### DOCUMENT 70.

*Report of the Committee on the Episcopacy, adopted May 21, 1846, by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, held in Petersburg, Virginia.*

THE Committee on Episcopacy having been instructed to the following effect by a resolution of the General conference, namely:

"Resolved, That the Committee on Episcopacy be instructed to institute special inquiry into the character and grounds of the charge, so repeatedly preferred by the editors and correspondents of the Western Christian Advocate, and the Christian Advocate and Journal,

\* C., June 9, 1845. W. July 18, 1845. Scraps, III, p. 34; also p. 69.

against Bishops Soule and Andrew, to the effect that they have in numerous instances, not only constructively infringed, but grossly violated both the spirit and letter of the General conference plan of separation, in appointing ministers to border charges, stations or societies, when the people, or members of the Church, had not adhered south, by a vote of the majority, as directed by the General conference, and that said committee report the result of such inquiry, to this conference, during its present session"—beg respectfully to report:

That they have had the subject under careful advisement, and sought the most ample and trustworthy sources of information within their reach, and find that neither in the St. Louis, nor St. Charles districts of the Missouri conference, lying on the Illinois border, nor in the case of the Soule Chapel society, in Cincinnati, nor in the Maysville district, of the Kentucky conference, nor in the various instances of adherence south, that have taken place in the Kanawha district of the Ohio conference, nor in the instance of the Eastville circuit, lying on the border and formerly embraced in the Philadelphia conference, any violation has been made of the provisions of the plan of separation, on the part of the episcopal administration. On the contrary, documentary evidence in abundance, and perfectly satisfactory in its nature, has been furnished the committee, that the administration of the southern bishops has been strictly conformed to the rule laid down in the plan as the basis of operations in determining the ultimate northern boundaries of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South. The whole law of the General conference of 1844, on this subject, is in the following words: "All the societies, stations, and conferences, adhering to the Church in the south, by a vote of a majority of the members of said societies, stations, and conferences, shall remain under the unmolested pastoral care of the southern Church; and the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church shall in no wise attempt to organize Churches or societies within the limits of the Church, south, nor shall they attempt to exercise any pastoral oversight therein, it being understood that the ministry of the south reciprocally observe the same rule in relation to societies, stations, and conferences adhering by a vote of the majority to the Methodist Episcopal Church, provided that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and conferences *bordering on the line of division*, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated." The construction put upon the provisions of this rule by the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and by those of the Methodist Episcopal Church, also, for any thing that appears to the contrary to your committee, is that it gives a plain permissive grant of occupancy to the southern Church, along the border northwardly, till the dividing line is satisfactorily settled and determined by the formal adherence north of a definite line of societies and stations. This ascertained then, the societies and stations lying beyond that line became interior charges, which are to be left undisturbed by the southern ministry. But the line of division never becomes fixed till such an act of formal adherence north takes place. That act alone is made, by the aforesaid rule, the condition of protection against the advance of the southern boundary. And *vice versa*. Such a

construction of the law alone secures to border societies the rights and privileges allowed by the plan of separation, and provides at the same time for the peace and security of the border region. This construction your committee believe to be entirely correct and expressive of the original intention of the General conference of 1844 in the provisions of the plan.

A question has been raised whether the decision of a border annual conference to adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, does not necessarily carry with it all the societies and stations on its southern border? To affirm this, however, would be to deny to these societies and stations the precise rights of choice and adherence guaranteed to them by the very terms of the plan of separation. The rule embraces stations, societies, and conferences. To the former in broad distinction from the latter, it grants the privilege of choosing, independently of the position of the annual conference, to which of the two Churches they prefer to adhere. The very terms of the plan, as well as its principles, and the *animus imponentis*, settle this question, and concede to all border charges, irrespective of conference action, the right to elect for themselves by a resolution of the majority the ecclesiastical position which they prefer; and so far from its being true that the annual conferences hold the right of determining *primarily* in this matter, the very reverse is the fact. It is connection with the border, and not with the annual conference, which is the material thing. Conferences, as such, may make their adherence north or south, but so may societies and stations on the boundary line, with a freedom of election perfectly untrammelled by what the annual conference has done, and with a right, so far as the provisional grant of the plan is concerned, as distinct and primary as that of the conference, since no distinction in favor of one or the other is made in the grant. The disciplinary boundary line of a border conference adhering north or south prior to the action of the societies, brings those societies lying on the line into the northern or southern Church, as the case may be, and renders it unnecessary for the societies here referred to, to take formal action if they agree in sentiment with the annual conference. If, however, they do not thus agree, the conferential act does not bind them. They may take action as societies, or as charges, that is, circuits, and adhering to the other Church they transfer the boundary line to the next tier of societies adjoining, who thus become a line of border societies, who may by a similar action transmit the border relation and the accompanying provisional rights and privileges, to those immediately beyond them. Thus the line is movable northwardly or southwardly, till a line of societies or circuits is found who coincide in their affinities and election with those of the annual conference, and thus it becomes fixed. Then all beyond is considered the field of "interior charges," which, by the terms of the plan, are in all cases to be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated.

The right of border circuits to the benefits of the provisional arrangements of the plan, has also been denied. This has been urged chiefly on the ground that, in the plan, the term circuits is not used. The construction in question maintains that those societies alone, of a border circuit, lying adjoining the dividing line, are invested with the right of choice, and violently

considers the remainder of the societies on the circuit, *interior charges!* which by this summary interpretation, are cut off from all participation in the privilege of electing for themselves the Church to which they will adhere. But the answer to this is obvious. The Methodist book of Discipline, and the law of Methodist usage, no where consider a single society on a circuit, a charge. The entire circuit, composed of many or few societies, as the case may be, is a single charge, under the pastoral oversight of a preacher stationed by the authorized officer at the annual conference. No one society, except it be a station, is a pastoral charge, to the exclusion of the rest comprehended in the circuit. *Interior charges* are circuits or stations distinct in supervision, and lying back of the frontier or border line, and barred from the provisions of the plan only by the adverse action of the intermediate circuit or station.

The episcopal administration in the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has conformed rigorously to these obvious principles, and been shaped by these rules of procedure, which the south is perfectly willing and ready to have applied in the case of societies, stations, or circuits embraced in the southern jurisdiction, but which desire to adhere north. A formal notice was published by Bishop Soule, instructing all the societies bordering on the line of division, to have due notice given of the time, place, and object of meeting in regard to their adherence north or south, at which a chairman and secretary should be appointed, and the sense of all the members present might be ascertained, and the same forwarded to the bishop presiding at the ensuing annual conferences; or otherwise to forward to said presiding bishop a written request to be recognized and have a preacher sent them, with the names of the majority appended thereto. By adopting these measures due provision was made for the ascertainment of the position of border societies and circuits, before the sessions of the border conferences; and to meet the necessities of societies adhering since, the presiding elders of the border districts were instructed by the bishops to embrace them in their districts, and furnish a supply to the best of their ability till the ensuing sessions of the conferences. This has been done with a strict adherence to the principles heretofore referred to.

The committee do not consider it necessary to enter into any minute detail of particular cases, satisfied as they are from the best evidence that the episcopal administration has united a praiseworthy caution with a firm maintenance of principle. As, however, much capital has been attempted to be made out of the case of the Soule Chapel in the city of Cincinnati, the committee beg to be indulged with a particular statement of the facts. This society was formed under the pastoral care of the Rev. G. W. Maley, who was appointed by the last Ohio annual conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, a missionary for the city of Cincinnati. He was to labor generally within the bounds of the city, and acted under the advisement of the Board of Managers of the Missionary Society in Cincinnati. This society unanimously chose as one of the places of his labor, the Vine-street church, and advised him there to commence his labors. He accordingly did so. A number of the most respectable and pious members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in Cincinnati, took their certificates of member-

ship from their different charges, and attached themselves to the city mission at Vine-street. Leaders and stewards were regularly appointed. The congregation continued thus regularly to worship together as a society in the Methodist Episcopal Church, and under the pastoral care of a duly-authorized and appointed minister of the conference aforesaid. They thus worshipped till their number amounted to 98 members, male and female; when, after due notice had been given from the pulpit in the public congregation, the whole society came together, and having been duly organized by the election of a chairman and secretary from their own body, a resolution of adherence to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was unanimously adopted, ninety-eight voting in the affirmative. The Rev. E. W. Schon, who had previously adhered south, was invited to take charge of the congregation till they were duly received and provided for. The Rev. G. W. Maley, formerly city missionary, gave in his adherence to the south soon after; and upon the presentation of the facts in the case, duly attested, Bishop Andrew appointed to the pastoral oversight of the charge the Rev. Messrs. Schon and Maley.

The committee can not dismiss the subject without a word of reference to the singular course pursued by the official organs of the Methodist Episcopal Church. The papers at New York and Cincinnati, it is well known, have attacked the provisions of the plan of separation with an emphatic and unscrupulous hostility. With an unflinching purpose, worthy of a better cause, they have denounced it as unconstitutional, contemned the authority which enacted it, advised resistance to it, pledged character, influence, and religion for its overthrow, encouraged faction in the interior of the southern jurisdiction, and by every possible mode of address sought to embarrass and distract the minds of well-meaning persons, not only along the border, but in interior charges of the southern Church. The terms schismatics, disorganizers, and seceders have become stereotype phrases of reproach, to the detriment not only of the spirit and unity of good brotherhood between the two great divisions of the Methodist Episcopal family, but also of the character of the General conference which, by so great a majority of votes, adopted the plan, and especially of the equitable claims of the south to their just portion of the common property of the Church. Open resistance to the plan was declared by the Ohio and Illinois conferences, which, though border conferences, did not adhere by formal vote to the Methodist Episcopal Church according to the provisions of the plan aforesaid, and by this failure deliberately placed themselves beyond the protection of its provisions. In at least two instances, presiding elders belonging to those conferences have invaded the southern border, and sent preachers to dissatisfied minorities or societies which had adhered south by vote of the majority. And thus the wise and pacific policy of the General conference of 1844 has been impugned and its purposes thwarted. And finally to cover these revolutionary procedures, a hue and cry has been all the while kept up against the episcopal administration of the south. To say that we are utterly surprised and deeply mortified at the course which things have taken in reference to this subject, is but feebly to express the emotion produced by a view of the facts in the premises.



In conclusion, the committee recommend for adoption by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, now in session assembled, the following resolution:

*Resolved*, That after a full and patient examination of the particulars of the episcopal administration of the southern bishops, in relation to the plan of separation, the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, consider the charges so repeatedly made by the editors and correspondents of the Western Christian Advocate, and the Christian Advocate and Journal against Bishops Soule and Andrew, as entirely groundless; and that on the contrary the administration aforesaid has been strictly conformed to the rule set forth by authority of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in its legislation on this subject in 1844. (R., May 21, 1846. Scraps, IV, pp. 524-527.)

#### DOCUMENT 71.

*Extracts from Bishop Capers to Rev. Samuel T. Moorman, P. E., Charlottesville District, Virginia Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, dated May 22, 1847.*

MY DEAR BROTHER,—What you say concerning border societies deeply interests me. What have we to do with "war—border war?" It is all of the devil, first and last; a war in which he that fights hardest serves Satan best. It is not thus that we serve Christ. I am so deeply impressed with this conviction, my dear Moorman, that if even you were to turn a man of war, I should not hesitate to remove you from your district. Thank God, there is no danger of that. What we have to do in the first place, and at all events, is to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. The deed of separation, as adopted by the General conference of 1844, was a peace measure—an act of brotherly justice on the part of the majority holding the power of the General conference, toward the minority—or that portion of the Church, rather, represented by the ministry—to guard them against the consequences of certain acts then just performed. It was not enacted as if by men in a row, party pushing against party for as much as they could get of the Church from each other; but it was enacted in a solemn and Christian manner, with much deliberation, prayer, and patience, as the best which in their circumstances could be done for the relief of the Church in the slaveholding states. I consider it in the character of a *grant*, in which the majority, holding the power of the General conference, conceded to the minority—or rather to the societies, stations, and conferences represented by them—the right to do such and such things for reasons stated. It is virtually a grant for the relief of the Churches in the slaveholding states, in view of the solemn declaration of the southern delegates, formally made and subscribed with their names.

Now, certainly, there is no war here. Nothing like war. And whatever since has been brought about by poor, erring human nature, moving the pens and tongues of certain editors and others, the deed of separation itself is most manifestly and eminently a *peace measure*. Not Abraham and Lot separating from each other were more for peace, than were the committee in drawing up, and the General conference in

adopting this deed of separation. Such was the spirit in which it was passed; and in this self-same spirit let it be maintained. The case of our separation was entirely different, in nature and form, from a rupture on account of differences of opinion about points of doctrine or Church government. It was not at all for any difference of opinion, as such, that we separated. There were, indeed, differences of opinion, and serious ones, too, both as to abolitionism, and the character of the episcopal office, and the functions of the bishops; but such differences had always existed—at least since the General conferences of 1820 and 1824—and might have continued to exist without any cause of separation. But cause was found when the northern opinions were embodied in the form of judicial sentences—*extrajudicial*, we considered them—which the majority affirmed to be indispensable to the safety of the Churches in the north, but which the minority declared could not be endured by the Churches in the south, but must result in the discarding of the authority of the General conference by the Churches, or the discarding of our ministry by the people at large. That the majority were honest, and spoke advisedly in their affirmations, can hardly be doubted; and that the declarations of the minority were equally candid, has been confirmed as with a voice of seven thunders. We could not have taken measures for a division of the Church for differences of opinion merely. We could for no other cause than the actual one, that the Gospel was in danger, and that the poor especially could not otherwise have it preached unto them. And truly, my brother, so pious and yet so sad, holy and yet mournful, was that great occasion, that not only have I never doubted that God approved it, but I have ever since felt confident that the time will come, I trust shortly, when it shall be approved by all good men; and when the motives that prompted, and the meekness, forbearance, and charity that characterized the enactment of the deed of separation, shall be honored by all.

But, after all, suppose that, in flat contradiction to express stipulations, preachers should come, or even be sent from the Methodist Episcopal Church, to molest societies and stations adhering by vote of majorities of their members to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, what should then be done? Just what should be most charitable and brotherly. If they come of themselves, because they are zealous for good old Methodism, and want to preserve the sheep from the fangs of the southern wolf, they are grossly ignorant, and their zeal is misdirected. They have dreamed a dream, and you had better tell them a ghost story than have any quarrel with them. But talk to them by themselves calmly and kindly, and if they still persist, complain to the Church—their Church—in the meekness of wisdom. But if they say they have been *sent*, take it for granted that it has been occasioned by some misrepresentation of facts, and at once complain to the bishop—their bishop—stating the facts concerning the case fully, and with the proof. If they do us wrong, and we keep our patience, remonstrating earnestly, but all in love, we have gained our cause. Methodists, north or south, can not fight against true religion. If you have complained once, or even twice, to no purpose, never mind it—try again; Christ commands, and you must succeed. Let them know, at all events, that we are brethren, still endeavoring to keep the unity of

the Spirit in the bond of peace. Wherein do we differ from them, except it be in this, that we hold fast by our one great work of spreading Scripture holiness over these lands, without interfering with civil institutions, rights and duties?

I have no recollection of seeing any thing from the bishops, north, prescribing a uniform method of transferring border societies; nor am I advised of the adoption of any formal rule by us of the south. Nevertheless, I would have such transfers to be conducted with due discretion, and I think you do well in referring to the general superintendent. Every individual case involves a general interest, and more may be lost to the general cause than can be compensated by any gain to a particular place, by transfers inconsistent with the deed of separation. Nothing\* from the society at Harrisonburg has yet reached me, nor have I heard any thing, except by a letter from brother Dunn. As you state the case—you and he—it seems clear; except as regards the question of the admissibility of an interior society to the right of transfer—"adhering"—under the deed of separation, the original border society having already adhered south, and the one now applying to be transferred claiming to be eligible on account of its border position. This question, you are apprised, has been mooted; and what I now say concerns Harrisonburg, and the societies similarly situated; where, belonging to a slaveholding state, they are naturally involved in the difficulties which produced separation, and for the relief of which the deed of separation was enacted. It is a chief and ruling feature of that whole transaction, that it was not done for the sake of opinion merely, but for the Gospel's sake; because—says the declaration—the continuance of the jurisdiction of that General conference was inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states. And the deed of separation, quoting the declaration, puts it down in terms still more explicit, as meaning, that "the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization," could not be successfully accomplished. If, then, it was on this ground that the General conference authorized the separation, and the southern Church was organized—and the ground of the original grant, it will be conceded, must be good for what accrues under the grant—the inference is fair, that, wherever the reasons hold good, as above stated, why the south should be separated from the north, there it is agreeable to the intention of the act separating them, that the particular societies should adhere south.

But the execution of the plan of separation is not without embarrassment. The deed of separation itself is a general grant, covering numerous particulars to be regulated by it, but which are not specified in it; and to determine satisfactorily on any particular case, attention must be paid to the main intention of the general deed. A separation was in contemplation. This was owing to difficulties arising out of the difference between the civil and domestic institutions and laws of the northern and southern states. The separation was to be geographical; and yet the line was not definitely fixed, but made contingent—depending on the votes of majorities of the societies, stations, and conferences along the border; interior societies and charges being left, in

all cases, to the care of that Church within whose borders they should be situated. But why was not the line of division fixed at once? I know no other reason than that it could not at that time be ascertained how far north the reasons for separation might hold good. Otherwise, for whatever reason the relation of interior societies, north or south, was positively fixed, the line of the border should have been fixed also. And is not this further proof that the separation was based on a positive necessity, and not loosely on opinion, for only necessity, and not opinion, could have been relied on to operate with such uniformity along any supposed line as to produce an unbroken border. Opinion knows no border, and can not be bounded by border lines. And hence also the justice and propriety of requiring interior charges to abide in peace with either connection, north or south, as they might be situated—a requirement which might neither be just nor proper, if opinion alone made the separation.

The border line being left to be fixed by the action of societies, stations, and conferences, the question arises, what was meant by "*the line of division*," in the proviso of the deed of separation? For the right of adhering to the Church, South, was expressly restricted to "societies, stations, and conferences bordering on the line of division." Either it must have meant the line dividing between the thirteen annual conferences, whose delegates made the declaration, and the rest of the conferences; or the line dividing the slaveholding states, in which those thirteen annual conferences were situated, from the states northward of them. I think the latter was meant; and I think so because of the character of the whole subject of difference and difficulty. True, the delegates composing the General conference were not representatives of states, but of annual conferences; nevertheless, the thirteen minority conferences, and the societies and stations constituting them, made no complaint of the rest on the score of any thing purely spiritual, apart from the obligations and duties of civil society and government; but their complaint was, that Methodists subject to the authority of that General conference could not maintain their relation to it without sacrificing the success of the ministry "*in the slaveholding states*." It was believed that the action of the General conference so infringed the rights and duties of the citizen, and contravened the laws and constitution of society in the slaveholding states—not conferences—that it must put Methodists under the ban of civil society in those states; and that Methodists—for being good citizens of those states, and fulfilling their duty as citizens toward the state—not toward the annual conference—would even leave the Church rather than submit. The burden of the difficulty was civil, not spiritual; and "the slaveholding states," not the conferences in them, were to make it a burden too heavy to be borne. And this suggests a further reason why "*the line of division*" should have been intended of the state lines, and not the lines of conferences; for while it was apprehended that "the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states" would be prevented, from what quarter was the opposition to arise? Could it be thought that, unless they were separated, the southern conferences would take measures against the success of their own ministry? Certainly not; but it was thought that in such and such states, no matter what conferences might be there, the state, *the citizen people*, would oppose

\* A letter has come to hand since the writing of this.

our Methodist ministry as dangerous to the public peace. But it may be objected of the states to which the thirteen southern conferences belonged, one—Virginia—was occupied in part by several of the northern conferences, and were not their delegates as competent as those of the Virginia conference to judge of the state of things in so much of Virginia as belonged to their charge? We might answer, without any discouragement, perhaps not; for the reason that they were, or nearly were, northern men, belonging to the northern conferences, and voting as such in the General conference; and there was a difference between judging rightly of what concerned the slaveholding states only, and voting on a question which divided the conference north and south. But in a case where the vote had to be given adverse to the south, let us receive it as the same compensation that the voters for the north granted to the south the deed of separation along the state line. It would have been very easy for them, who belonged to so large a majority, to have conformed the deed expressly to conference lines before they granted border privileges, if they had been so minded; and that they did not, is no mean evidence that the line of division intended in that instrument was the line of the states to which the thirteen annual conferences belonged, and not conference lines.

But suppose, by "the line of division," the conference boundaries, and not the state lines, were intended. I am still content, if we can have the division carried out in the spirit of the deed of separation—the spirit of forbearance and charity. It is found that although the line of division may have been ever so certainly intended of the state lines, it makes little difference in operation, seeing that the right of election is granted alike to societies, stations, and conferences, bordering on the line, and the conference claim to fix the line, by its votes, along the southern boundary. This may seem hard; and it may be asked, to what purpose was the grant made to societies and stations at all, if the conference may thus override them in the exercise of it? But a right spirit will overcome the difficulty. Whether state lines or conference lines should form the line of division in the first instance, it can scarcely be contended that it was not the intention of the deed to relieve all those, whether conferences, stations, or societies, who are involved in the evil for the prevention or correction of which separation was granted. The main intention of the General conference can not be mistaken; and if this be preserved all may be well. There are two governing considerations: 1. That the line of division be so fixed as to secure the grand object of separation—the success of the Gospel in the slaveholding states; and, 2. That in fixing the line the border be entire and unbroken.

It has been thought that our brethren north set a high value on the consideration of expediency in hard cases; and, in the present matter, I think it would be well on all sides to let expediency be the umpire between us. Let us consent, on our part, that although the order of priority, as set down in the deed of separation, puts societies and stations before conferences, and this should seem natural and proper—at least on a question not involving points of theology, but civil rights and obligations—yet for expediency's

sake the annual conference may vote first, and its vote fix the border line along which societies and stations should begin to vote. This may be expedient, because the grant to societies and that to conferences can not otherwise stand together without conflict. And let them consent in return, that for the priority thus yielded them—as well as for the greater consideration of the equity of the case, and the main object of the deed of separation—the societies and stations of the doubtful territory between the conference line and the state line, may carry the line back—or as far back as they judge necessary to the success of the ministry—only preserving an unbroken border. This is expedient, because the grand object of the General conference, in the deed of separation, to preserve the success of the ministry, can not otherwise be fully accomplished.

To the few—I trust very few—who are inclined to look upon that great instrument, the deed of separation, as a mere nullity, obtained by fraud and I know not what, I have nothing to say. No, not one word. God is witness. Never could fraud, or any dishonest or unchristian means, have obtained such testimony for its support as the whole south have spontaneously furnished in the harmonious organization of the southern Church; and thanks be to God, who still lifts upon us the light of his countenance! Let us still walk by the same rule, and mind the same things; serving God, loving the brethren.

Long as this letter already is—and I could not make it shorter—I may not conclude it, my dear brethren, without, at least, one word more. I have written about separation, and have called the occasion—meaning the scene and the spirit of the scene—holy, and the deed itself a great one. But am I, therefore, a separatist? No more than for being a Methodist I should be a bigot. Were there not in Methodism a higher, better, nobler principle than might make conventional interests chief over all; and had not that principle been felt in the General conference of 1844, the deed of separation had only been talked of but never enacted. And now that we have it, what should it be worth if we might put it, or any conventional benefits accruing from it, in place of that first, best, noblest principle, to which we owe both it, and all that makes Methodism itself worthy of our love? What should my side, or your side, north or south, be worth, leaving out the cardinal principle of subordinating all things to our calling of God—the one great work of spreading Scripture holiness over these lands? Separation is a conventional matter, only. Methodists may divide, without splitting or mutilating Methodism, but rather for the preserving of its integrity. Because, among so many, differences may engender strife, and strife distraction; and Methodism has but one mind and one heart for all her sons. It is the doctrine of living for God—to him, in him; the economy of doing all things for the Gospel's sake; the discipline of first casting out the beam out of one's own eye, and keeping one's self from idols. It is neither for Cæsar nor Pompey, north nor south, but for Jesus Christ. What, then, is separation to us, only as by preventing offenses, and promoting peace, it keeps the way open for Methodism to spread Scripture holiness over these lands.

I am, dear brother, sincerely yours,  
W. CAPERS.\*

\* See Dr. Durbin's Letter in the Richmond Christian Advocate.

\* See S., April 2, 1847. R., May 20, 1847. W., May 7, 1847. Scraps, V, pp. 355-360.

## DOCUMENT 72.

*Pastoral Address of the Philadelphia Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to the Societies under its care within the bounds of the Northampton and Accomac Circuits, dated April 7, 1847.*

DEAR BRETHREN,—That glorious work of religion which for nearly a hundred years has pervaded our country, by means of the Methodist ministry and economy, has no where been more signal than upon the peninsula of which your territory is a part. It was here that the venerable Asbury frequently ministered, and from the homes of your fathers he sent his letters to Mr. Wesley, informing him of the wonderful work of God in America. Indeed, he was accustomed to speak of the peninsula as the garden spot of Methodism. We, too, have been accustomed to hear our fathers speak of it in the same terms; insomuch that your "praise is in all the Churches."

It is, therefore, with unfeigned regret we have learned, that events have occurred, which threaten to alienate from this conference the confidence and kind feelings of a portion, at least, of your community. Whatever may be the feelings of those whose expressions toward us may appear to be inconsiderate, we must be permitted to avow that we are greatly pained at the thought of losing their confidence and affection. We can not forget their kindness to us as a body of ministers for more than three-score years; and shall ever retain a lively remembrance of the spiritual communion we have so often had with them, which we regarded as a manifestation of the grace which we preached among them, and the love they bore toward us. We hold you, brethren, as a part of the flock of Christ, which we have received as a precious legacy from our fathers; and God is our record how greatly we long for you all in the bowels of Jesus.

In addressing you as your pastors, we would at all times use words of truth and soberness; and more especially would we, on this occasion, speak to you in the fear of God. We feel persuaded that the unhappy excitement, and its disastrous consequences, which have been manifested within your bounds, are owing to a misapprehension of the views and feelings of this conference. It is of these we would speak to you in this address, and not of those particular transactions among you which have disturbed your peace, and embarrassed the free publication of the word of God among you by us as heretofore.

It is well known to you, that at the late General conference, a violent rupture of our Church was apprehended. The spirit of peace and charity suggested the provision of a plan which should lessen the evils of division, if division, as was apprehended, should become inevitable. It is not our purpose to inquire whether a division of the Church was necessary. The division has taken place; and it is material to observe that each portion of the Church has claimed to regulate its administration by the plan provided to meet the exigency.

Finding that some portions of the Church, South, had suggested, and it was said had, in some cases, acted on the suggestion that a border conference, not voting to adhere to either side, was not under the protection of the plan in respect to restraining pastoral jurisdiction from the adjacent conference; and that ours was regarded by them as a border conference; in order

to cut off all occasion, and thereby to insure peace in the Church and community, we voted to adhere to the Methodist Episcopal Church, notwithstanding we are of opinion that we are not a border conference, within the meaning of the "plan;" as the Baltimore conference and Chesapeake Bay intervene between us and the Virginia conference. With this opinion agrees the decision of all our bishops, as expressed in their resolution, passed in Philadelphia, March 4th, last, and published in the Christian Advocate and Journal of the 24th of the same month, in these words:

"Whereas, the Discipline says, 'Virginia conference shall be bounded on the east by the Chesapeake Bay and the Atlantic Ocean;' and 'Philadelphia conference shall include the Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia'—the Chesapeake Bay, an arm of the ocean, being between them; therefore, *resolved*, That in our administration we will regard the 'Eastern Shore of Maryland and Virginia,' as not being 'border' work, in the sense of the 'plan of separation.'"

We can not, therefore, but regard all the Methodist societies within the peninsula as under our pastoral jurisdiction, according to the provisions of the "plan of separation;" and we have good hope that there will be an agreement with us in this opinion, when the matter is carefully and dispassionately considered.

If the "plan of separation" gives us the pastoral care of you, it remains to inquire whether we have done any thing as a conference, or as men, to forfeit your confidence and affection. We are not advised that even in the great excitement which has distressed you for some months past, any one has impeached our moral conduct, or charged us with unsoundness in doctrine, or corruption, or tyranny in the administration of Discipline. But we learn that the simple cause of the unhappy excitement among you is, that some suspect us, or affect to suspect us of being abolitionists. Yet no particular act of the conference, or any particular member thereof, is adduced as the ground of the erroneous and injurious suspicion. We would ask you, brethren, whether the conduct of our ministry among you for sixty years past ought not to be sufficient to protect us from this charge—whether the question we have been accustomed, for a few years past, to put to candidates for admission among us; namely, *Are you an abolitionist?* and without each one answered in the negative he was not received, ought not to protect us from the charge—whether the action of the last conference on this particular matter ought not to satisfy any fair and candid mind that we are not, and do not desire to be abolitionists? The views and purposes of the last conference to which we refer, were expressed in the words below, which we must believe have not been generally read in your community, or the apprehensions which have been so earnestly expressed would never have been entertained. The words of the conference are:

The committee, to whom was referred a certain preamble and resolution on the subject of slavery and abolition, recommend the following report:

That we, the members of the Philadelphia annual conference, are as much as ever convinced of the great evil of slavery; but at the same time we know our calling too well to interfere with matters not properly belonging to the Christian ministry. We stand, in relation to slavery and abolition, where we have always

stood, and where we expect to stand, "walking by the same rule, and minding the same things;" and ask that our action in the past may be taken as an index to our action in the future; therefore,

1. *Resolved*, That we will abide by the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church as it is; and will resist every attempt to alter it in reference to slavery so as to change the terms of membership.

2. *Resolved*, That we sincerely deprecate all agitation of the exciting subjects which have unhappily divided the Church; and, impressed with the vital importance, especially for these times, of the apostolic injunction, "Be at peace among yourselves," we will, as far as lies in our power, "follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord."

Upon presenting this paper to you, in which we say, "We stand in relation to slavery and abolition where we have always stood," it is proper that we should remind you of the fact, that the provisions in the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, with respect to slavery, are precisely the same, even to the very words. We can not, therefore, see how we can be regarded as abolitionists, without the ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, being considered in the same light. We must indulge the hope, that, when the facts and reasonings contained in this address come to be known to you, and to those among whom you live, reflection and truth will regain their wonted ascendancy, and peace and confidence return to your afflicted community. We would also say, that there are members of this conference who have from time to time given you the most conclusive evidence, by their public acts and writings, that they are far from being abolitionists, and who with confidence and love abide in the conference of their early choice.

In conclusion, brethren, allow us to assure you of our kindest regards, our tenderest sympathy, and our earnest and continued prayers for you; and to exhort you to use forbearance and prudence in your severe trials. We have confidence that you will stand fast and prove yourselves worthy in these your afflictions. We trust, in a short time, you will have the presence, and spiritual comfort, and support of ministers, such as you have been accustomed to esteem and reverence. And being fully apprised of your difficulties, and carefully advised and admonished of their delicate and arduous duties, we doubt not but that they will satisfy you by their conduct, of our kind and upright intentions herein set forth to you.

Wishing you all heavenly benedictions, we are dear brethren, yours, in Christ Jesus,

J. P. DUBIN,  
J. KENNADAY,  
IGNATIUS T. COOPER, } *Committee.*  
WILLIAM H. GILDER,  
JOSEPH CASTLE,

Wilmington, Delaware, April 7, 1847.\*

#### DOCUMENT 73.

*Report of Baltimore Conference on Memorials, dated March 23, 1846.*

Monday, March 23, 1846.

THE committee to whom were referred memorials and petitions from several circuits, or meet-

ings, official and otherwise, on such circuits within the bounds of this conference, hereby report, under the instructions of the conference, in the form of a pastoral address from the Baltimore annual conference to the members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the pastoral oversight of the conference, as follows:

WM. HAMILTON,  
*Chairman, in behalf of Committee.*

#### PASTORAL ADDRESS.

The Baltimore Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to the members of said Church under the especial care and pastoral oversight of the Conference.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHERN,—Grace be unto you, and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ. The spiritual relation which has so long subsisted between us, which has been always so dear to us, and which you have constantly maintained, not in word only, but in works also, receiving us as the ministers of Christ, supplying our necessities, and cooperating with us in the great work to which we have been called, the conversion of sinners, and the edification of those who believe in Christ, seems to require of us at the present time a "pastoral address," in which we may open our whole hearts unto you, in relation to matters which have disturbed the peace of our brethren in certain portions of our field of labor, as well as in respect to subjects of more general interest to the Church. There have come up to the conference memorials and petitions from several circuits, in which classes have been polled; from meetings, official and otherwise, in other circuits, and from quarterly meeting conferences; all which have been deliberately and prayerfully considered, and a due respect for the opinions and wishes of the memorialists requires, and our hearts are free to give, a kind, frank, and explicit answer to the requests contained in their communications.

The things prayed for in some of these memorials are, first, that the Baltimore annual conference shall withdraw itself from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and attach itself to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, a distinct ecclesiastical connection recently formed.

With this request the Baltimore annual conference can not comply consistently with its sense of duty to God, and his Church. First, because the members of the conference are confident that such an act would be in opposition to the wishes of the great body of the people under their pastoral care, even in the slaveholding portions of the conference territory. Our intercourse with our brethren of the membership has satisfied us that they, with few exceptions, comparatively, desire to remain in the communion of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and in this desire the Baltimore annual conference cordially and sincerely concurs. Secondly, we can not comply with the request, because the reason assigned by the General conference, and stated in the "plan of separation" for authorizing the formation of a "distinct ecclesiastical connection," does not apply to the Baltimore annual conference. In the report of the committee of nine, adopted by the General conference of 1844, it is given as the ground of the whole report, that "a declaration has been presented to this General conference, with the signatures of fifty-one delegates of the body, from thirteen annual conferences in the slaveholding states, representing that for various reasons enumerated, the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry and Church organization can

not be successfully accomplished by them under the jurisdiction of this General conference as now constituted," and upon this ground, and this only, was the whole "plan of separation" based. Now, no one of the delegates of the Baltimore annual conference united in this declaration, and up to the present time the members of the conference have neither seen nor heard any thing which would justify them in making such a declaration. To make it would be grossly to misrepresent their brethren and the communities among whom they labor. None of the "various reasons enumerated have opposed any obstacles to the accomplishment of the objects and purposes of the Christian ministry, or of our Church organization" under the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. We have not been cut off from access either to masters or slaves in the discharge of our duties as ministers, but have been allowed every-where to declare the whole counsel of God, and to administer without let or hinderance the wholesome Discipline of our Church. It is clear, therefore, that however true the declaration may be in regard to other annual conferences, it is not true in respect to the Baltimore annual conference, and that our conference could not properly withdraw from the Methodist Episcopal Church under the "plan of separation." Nor do we know of any other justifiable cause for changing the ecclesiastical relation which the conference and the people under its care have so long and so advantageously maintained.

Secondly. Some of the memorialists ask, that if the Baltimore conference should not change its ecclesiastical relation, it will divide itself into two conferences, erecting a new conference, to include all that portion of the state of Virginia which lies within the present bounds of the conference, and as much of Maryland now within these bounds as may so desire.

It would be a sufficient answer to this request to say, that an annual conference has no authority or power, under the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, to divide itself. It can only recommend such a measure to the General conference, and that body may act in accordance with such recommendation, or may decline the proposition. Our memorializing brethren will therefore see that they have asked what the conference can not grant. To do so would be revolutionary, and wholly inconsistent with its duties and ecclesiastical obligations. It would be a violent disruption, neither sanctioned by the Discipline of the Church, nor by the "plan of separation," and for both the memorialists profess the utmost regard.

But it is due to our brethren of the membership every-where in our conference explicitly to make known, that as the proposed division of the conference is expressly stated to be made with the view of erecting a new conference, which will be expected to dissolve its connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and attach itself to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, this conference has no disposition to favor the object proposed. As a body, we are as firmly as ever fixed in our attachment to the Church of which we are ministers, and believe the membership under our care are generally as strong in their adhesion to the Church of their choice as the members of this conference are. In this opinion we are confirmed by numerous memorialists from our brethren of Virginia themselves. We could not, therefore, divide our

conference for the purpose intended, even if we were constitutionally authorized to do so.

Finally. Some of the memorialists ask, that if the conference should determine to maintain its connection with the Methodist Episcopal Church, and decline to divide itself into two conferences, it will withdraw its jurisdiction from the memorializing circuits, that they may unite with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

We apprehend that this request, like those already referred to, rests upon mistaken views of the duties and obligations of the conference. The memorialists evidently understand the "plan of separation" as justifying their request; yet the authority to choose their Church relations is not given to circuits by the "plan." This privilege is confined to societies, stations, and conferences on the border, and the border is immutably fixed.

It was to be the northern boundary of the conferences adhering to the Church, South. Societies and stations on this border, thus defined, adhering to either one or the other Church by a vote of a majority, are authorized to transfer themselves. But it is expressly provided that this rule shall apply only to societies, stations, and conferences bordering on the line of division, and not to interior charges, which shall in all cases be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated. It must be evident, therefore, that the societies on a circuit, except those which are situated on the border, are "interior charges," and, according to the "plan," must be left to the care of that Church within whose territory they are situated. Thus the boundary being a fixed, and not a movable one, expressly determined by the conferences which have united in the contemplated distinct ecclesiastical connection authorized by the "plan of separation," and the choice of Church relation being confined to conferences, societies, and stations, excluding from such elections, presiding elder districts and circuits, the Baltimore annual conference can not withdraw its jurisdiction or its ministry from any circuit or presiding elder district situated within its territory. First, because the bishops of the Church, South, could not, in accordance with the "plan of separation," send preachers to such circuits and presiding elder districts; and secondly, because to deny the preaching of the Gospel, and the pastoral care of the ministry, to those in such circuits and districts who desire to remain in fellowship with the Methodist Episcopal Church, would be cruel and unjust. And the members of the Baltimore annual conference could not answer to God and to their own consciences for such a violation of their sacred obligations as overseers of the Church of God.

And now, dearly-beloved brethren, may we not ask, why should we forsake any portion of the flocks of Christ committed to our care? or why should any portion of our flocks forsake us? We have neither changed nor violated any part of the Discipline or usages of the Church, as they were found when our present relation of pastors and flocks commenced. And we are rejoiced to learn by the memorials before us, that there is no complaint against the preachers of the conference, who have from time to time labored among the memorialists, in respect either to their ministry or their administration of Discipline. On the contrary, they are spoken of in terms, which, if they have deserved the

commendations bestowed, are a rich reward for all their labors and cares. Why then should we part? The conference has learned, indeed, that the dissatisfaction which some express with their present Church relation is not on account of evils which exist, but the apprehension of evils to come. They have been made to believe that the Methodist Episcopal Church will be forced—now that many of the southern conferences have left her—into such an alteration of her Discipline as to make non-slaveholding, whatever the circumstances of the case may be, a condition of Church fellowship. But we have given no reason to suppose we could, as a conference, be forced into such a position. Nor have we any cause to fear that our sister conferences desire to force us into it. There are four annual conferences in the Methodist Episcopal Church which have slaveholding territory, and which, in this respect, are circumstanced as we are.

And the preachers in these conferences know that such a rule of Discipline, beside being unjust and oppressive to masters who can not make their servants free, would also be exceedingly injurious to the slaves themselves. We could not, therefore, consent to such a rule under the circumstances in which the laws of the slaveholding states have placed us; and we have no reason to believe that our sister conferences entertain any purpose or design to afflict us. On the contrary, we have the utmost confidence in at least a large majority of them, that they are entirely satisfied with the Discipline as it is in this respect. But if there were any grounds for suspicion that such an alteration of our Discipline is contemplated, may we not safely wait for its development? Will not the Baltimore conference be as competent to take the necessary measures which such a crisis might require at any future time, as it is now? Surely there is no occasion for a change of our position toward any portion of our work, nor for any of our flock to separate themselves from us, till we shall have lost confidence in each other, and this we hope, by the blessing of God will never occur.

In taking the position above expressed, the conference is gratified to find that it is sustained by much the larger portion of the memorialists from whom communications have been received, all of them residing in the state of Virginia; and it is confidently believed that those memorialists themselves, whose request the conference has been compelled to decline, will, upon more mature reflection, acquiesce in the propriety of our course.

Brethren, it is in our hearts to live and die with you. We have labored, and we desire still to labor among you only for the glory of God and the salvation of souls. Such is our commission from Him who hath called us to the work of the ministry. May we not, therefore, humbly, yet confidently, adopt the language of the apostle, and say, "Receive us; we have wronged no man, we have corrupted no man, we have defrauded no man. Do we begin again to commend ourselves? Or need we, as some others, epistles of commendation to you, or letters of commendation from you? Ye are our epistles, written in our hearts, known and read of all men, forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart. And such trust have we

through Christ to God-ward, not that we are sufficient of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God."

The important matters referred to above have demanded so much of the space which can properly be occupied by this address, that we have less room than we could desire for matters of more general concern. But we can not close without an exhortation to our brethren "to follow the same rule and to mind the same things" by which, through divine grace, we have heretofore prospered as a Church. We exhort you earnestly to be diligent in your attendance on the word, and at the Lord's supper, and in reading the holy Scriptures. Be careful to show your faith by your works, and endeavor to grow in grace. "Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord." The time is short in which we shall be permitted to preach and you to hear. Let us be diligent, therefore, each in the improvement of the talents committed to him by his Lord. So shall we, individually, secure the approbation of Him whom we serve: "Well done, thou good and faithful servant; enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

But beside attendance on the preaching of the Gospel and prayerful reading of the holy Scriptures, with other books, by which you may be built up in your most holy faith, we most affectionately commend to you a punctual attendance upon your class meetings and love-feasts. We can not be sufficiently thankful to God for these institutions, by which we have been so often blessed, and comforted and strengthened in our pilgrimage. They were greatly prized by our fathers; they are not less valuable to us. And our experience and observation both testify that a willful neglect of them by Methodists always marks a declension of spirituality and piety. Be faithful, brethren, in the improvement of these and all other means of grace, and God will still bless us and give us peace—yea, the abiding peace which is known only to those who know God as a pardoning and sanctifying God. We beseech you not to rely for the sustenance of your souls on the tainted manna of former experience, but pray for, and look for, by faith, your daily supply of spiritual food from heaven. Your heavenly Father knoweth what things ye need, both for the body and the soul; and while you confidently rely for the supply of your bodily wants on "Him who feedeth the fowls of the air," you may, in the full assurance of faith, look to Him for all spiritual good, for he "giveth the Holy Spirit to them that ask it."

Again, brethren, next to your own salvation, we know you do most earnestly desire the salvation of your children. Take care, then, mildly and gently to lead them in the way they should go, that they may not depart from it after they shall have grown to maturity. Keep them from evil company, and from vain amusements, which make them forget God, whatever be the specious arguments by which worldly men recommend or justify them. And above all, see that they are found in our Sunday schools, where both teaching and example tend to make them wise unto salvation.

We rejoice with you, that our gracious God has greatly blessed our labors in many parts of our work during the last conference year. Many have been brought from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God; and a goodly number have been able to testify that God hath

power on earth, not only to forgive sin, but to cleanse from all unrighteousness. We purpose, by the blessing of God, to go out from this conference to our several fields of labor, to press upon our people, with still greater earnestness, the necessity of entire sanctification, to urge upon them the duty of perfecting holiness in the fear of God. Pray for us, brethren, that we may be qualified for this work, by a gracious outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon us. Without this, our bodily exercise will profit you little; but with this, we shall be furnished to every good work.

But while we rejoice in the prosperity of some of our circuits and stations, we are humbled before God, on account of the barrenness and low state of piety to which others are reduced. Help us, brethren, to discover the cause of this, and unite with us to put it away. "Save now, O Lord, we beseech thee; O Lord, we beseech thee, send now prosperity."

Finally, brethren, we entreat you to bow your knees with us unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant both you and us, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man, that Christ may dwell in our hearts by faith; that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints, what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height, and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Now, unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be glory in the Church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

E. HEDDING.

True copy.

S. A. ROSZEL, *Secretary*.

The Pastoral Address and preamble adopted March 23, 1846, by a rising vote—affirmative, 177; negative, 3.

S. A. R., *Sec'y*.

*Whereas*, the General conference of 1844 adopted the report, generally known as the "Report of the Committee of Nine," embracing certain resolutions to meet the contingency of a separation of several annual conferences in the slaveholding states from under the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church;

And, *whereas*, that separation was carried into effect by a convention of delegates from sixteen annual conferences, assembled in Louisville, Kentucky, in May, 1845;

And, *whereas*, by the said separation, the Baltimore conference became a border conference; and as the first resolution of the said "Report of the Committee of Nine" seems to contemplate that societies, stations, and conferences bordering on the line of division, shall, "by a vote of a majority," decide whether they continue to adhere to, and remain under, the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church; therefore,

1. *Resolved*, by the Baltimore annual conference, in conference assembled, That we still continue to regard ourselves a constituent part of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States.

2. *Resolved*, That this conference disclaims having any fellowship with abolitionism. On the contrary, while it is determined to maintain its well-known and long-established position, by keeping the traveling preachers composing its own body free from slavery, it is also deter-

ined not to hold connection with any ecclesiastical body that shall make non-slaveholding a condition of membership in the Church, but to stand by, and maintain the Discipline as it is.

3. *Resolved*, That the decision of this conference, at its last session, non-concurring in the proposed alteration of the sixth Restriction, was not based upon opposition in the conference to a fair and equitable division and distribution of the property and funds of the Church, as provided for in the "plan of separation," to the Church, South, but on other grounds altogether.

Monday, March 23, 1846.

The first of the foregoing resolutions adopted *unanimously*, by a rising vote—183 affirmative.

The second of the foregoing resolutions adopted *unanimously*, by a rising vote—198 affirmative.

The third of the foregoing resolutions adopted by a rising vote—affirmative, 178; negative, 1.

On motion, the secretary was directed to furnish the above documents, for publication, as early as practicable, in the Christian Advocate and Journal, with a request that our other Church papers copy; and 5,000 extra copies were ordered to be printed, for distribution by members of the conference.

Attest.

S. A. ROSZEL,

*Secretary of Baltimore Annual Conference.\**

#### DOCUMENT 74.

##### *Bill of Complaint—United States of America, Circuit Court, District of Ohio.*

To the Honorable, the Judges of the Circuit Court of the United States, for the District of Ohio, next to be holden at the city of Columbus, on the third Monday in July next. [1850.]

THE Bill of Complaint of Henry B. Bascom, a citizen of Lexington, in the state of Kentucky; Alexander L. P. Green, a citizen of Nashville, in the state of Tennessee; Charles B. Parsons, a citizen of Louisville, in the state of Kentucky; John Kelly, a citizen of Wilson county, in the state of Tennessee; James W. Allen, a citizen of Limestone county, in the state of Alabama; and John Tevis, a citizen of Shelby county, in the state of Kentucky,

Against Leroy Swormstedt and John H. Power, Agents of the "Book Concern" at Cincinnati, and James B. Finley, all of whom are citizens of the state of Ohio; and George Peck and Nathan Bangs, who are citizens of the state of New York: who are made defendants to this Bill.

Humbly complaining, the complainants state and show to your honorable court, that before and on the day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1844, there existed in the United States of America, a voluntary association, known as the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America; not incorporated by any legal enactment, but composed of seven bishops, four thousand, eight hundred and twenty-eight preachers belonging to the traveling connection; and in bishops, ministers, and membership, about one million, one hundred and nine thousand, nine hundred and sixty—then being in the United States, and territories of the United States, united and holden together in one organized body, by certain doctrines of faith and morals, and by certain rules of government and discipline.

\* C., April 16, 1846. W., April 19, 1846. Scraps, VI, p. 224.



That the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church was vested in one general body, called the General conference, and in certain subordinate bodies, called annual conferences, and in bishops, and traveling ministers and preachers; and the great object of the said Methodist Episcopal Church was the diffusion of the principles of the Savior of mankind—good morals, pure religion, piety, and holiness among the people of the world. And the complainants allege, that the constitution, organization, form of government, and rules of discipline, as well as articles of religion and doctrines of faith of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were of general knowledge and notoriety; nevertheless, for the more particular information of the Court, they refer to a printed volume, which will be produced on the trial of the cause, entitled, "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church." And the complainants allege, that differences and disagreements have sprung up in the Church, between what was called by the Church, the northern and southern members, upon the administration of the Church government, with reference to the ownership of slaves by the ministers of the Church, of such a character, and attended with such consequences, as threatened fearfully to impair the usefulness of the Church, as well as permanently to disturb its harmony; and became, and was with the members of the Church, a question of very grave and serious importance, whether a separation ought not to take place by some geographical boundary, with necessary and proper exceptions, so as that the Methodist Episcopal Church should thereafter constitute two separate and distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches. And thereupon the complainants allege, that at a General conference of the Church, holden, according to usage and discipline, at New York, on the day of \_\_\_\_\_, 1844, the following resolutions were duly and legally, and by a majority of over three-fourths of the entire body, passed; which resolutions are herewith copied, and prayed to be taken as part of this Bill, which are in the words and figures, to wit:

[We omit here the plan, and refer to it in Document 56.]

And the complainants allege, that the said General conference had full, competent, and lawful power and authority to pass and adopt the said resolutions, and each and all of them, and that the same thereby became and were of binding force and validity.

And the complainants further allege, that, after the adoption of the foregoing resolutions, such proceedings were had in the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states; that a full convention thereof, by delegates elected on the basis of the resolutions of the General conference of 1844, assembled at Louisville, Kentucky, on the first day of May, 1845; and the said convention, after full and mature consideration, adopted the following resolutions, which they pray may be taken as part of this Bill:

"Be it resolved, by the delegates of the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the slaveholding states, in general convention assembled, That it is right, expedient, and necessary, to erect the annual conferences represented in this convention into a distinct ecclesiastical connection, separate from the jurisdiction of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as at present constituted; and, accord-

ingly we, the delegates of said annual conferences, acting under the provisional plan of separation, adopted by the General conference of 1844, do solemnly declare the jurisdiction hitherto exercised over said annual conferences, by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, *entirely dissolved*; and that said annual conferences shall be, and they hereby are constituted, a separate ecclesiastical connection, under the provisional plan of separation aforesaid, and based upon the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprehending the doctrines and entire moral, ecclesiastical, and economical rules and regulations of said Discipline, except only in so far as verbal alterations may be necessary to a distinct organization, and to be known by the style and title of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

"Resolved, That we can not abandon or compromise the principles of action upon which we proceed to a separate organization in the south; nevertheless, cherishing a sincere desire to maintain Christian union and fraternal intercourse with the Church, north, we shall always be ready, kindly and respectfully, to entertain, and duly and carefully consider, any proposition or plan, having for its object the union of the two great bodies in the north and south, whether such proposed union be jurisdictional or connectional."

And the complainants further allege, that afterward, namely, on the second day of July, Anno Domini, 1845, a council of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church met at New York—which council was composed of the northern bishops alone—and then and there unanimously adopted the following resolutions, which they pray may be taken as part of this Bill:

"Resolved, That the plan reported by the select committee of nine, at the last General conference, and adopted by that body, in regard to a distinct ecclesiastical connection—should such a course be found necessary by the annual conferences in the slaveholding states—is regarded by us as of binding obligation in the premises, so far as our administration is concerned.

"Resolved, That, in order to ascertain fairly the desire and purpose of those societies bordering on the line of division, in regard to their adherence to the Church north or south, due notice should be given of the time, place, and object of the meeting for the above purpose, at which a chairman and secretary shall be appointed, and the sense of all the members present be ascertained, and the same be forwarded to the bishop who may preside at the ensuing annual conferences; or forward to said presiding bishop a written request to be recognized and have a preacher sent them, with the names of the majority appended thereto."

And the complainants allege, that, by and in virtue of the foregoing proceedings, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, as it had existed before the year 1844, became, and was divided into two distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches, with distinct and independent powers and authority, composed of the several annual conferences, charges, stations, and societies, lying, or being situated north and south of the afore-described line of division.

And the complainants further allege, that, by force of the foregoing proceedings, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, became, and was entitled to its proportion of all the property, real

and personal, and all funds and effects—said property and funds of the Methodist Episcopal Church had been obtained and collected by voluntary contribution, in which contribution the members of the Church, South, contributed the largest portion of the same—which, up to the time of the separation, had belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, and that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was and is so entitled, without any change or alteration of the sixth Restrictive Article above mentioned; but the complainants allege, that if the change in the sixth Restrictive Article were necessary in order that the Church, South, should obtain an equitable division of the Church property, a majority of three-fourths of all the members of the several annual conferences which voted directly on the question, in view of a division of the property, has been obtained.

And the complainants further say, that, before and on the said day of , 1844, the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States, owned and possessed large amounts of property in various parts of the United States, in addition to the meeting-houses, parsonages, and other estates of that description, and that said property, real and personal, was in the hands of the agents and trustees, being in some instances corporations, but more frequently in private and unincorporated individuals; that, among other descriptions and claims of property, there belonged to the said Church what was denominated the "Methodist Book Concern," in the city of Cincinnati, consisting of houses, lots, machinery, printing-presses, bookbinding, books, paper, debts, cash, and other articles of property, amounting in all to about the sum of two hundred thousand dollars, the whole of which land and goods, property and effects, so situated, are now in the possession of the defendants, Swormstedt and Power.

And the complainants further say, that, after the separation of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two distinct Churches, by virtue of the resolutions of the General conference of 1844, and the action of the annual conferences in the south, as herein before set forth, the Agents of the Book Concern at New York, in pursuance of the provisions and terms of said resolutions, paid to the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, their proportion of profits and income of the Book Concern, as fixed and set apart by the said Agents for the year 1845. But the complainants further allege, that, since the year 1845 the said Agents and said defendants have utterly refused to pay to the said annual conferences, south, and to complainants, for and on behalf of them, their said just proportions of the profits and income of the said Book Concern, and still continue to withhold the same; to the manifest loss and injury of the said Church, South, and in plain violation of their rights. And the complainants further say, that the General conference of the Church, South, holden at Petersburg, Virginia, on the day of May, 1846, in pursuance of, and in compliance with, the aforesaid resolutions of the General conference of 1844, proceeded to appoint the complainants, Bascom and Green, together with S. A. Latta, commissioners, to meet the commissioners appointed by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1844, and settle and receive from said commissioners the just proportion of the property and

effects due the South, according to the plan of separation, which resolutions are in the words and figures following, to wit, and prayed to be taken as part of this Bill.

[These three resolutions are given in the proceedings of the Petersburg General conference.]

And thereupon, and under the authority of said last-recited resolutions, the said Bascom, Green, and Latta were duly appointed such commissioners, and their said appointment duly certified and made known to the commissioners appointed by the said resolutions of the General conference of 1844. And the said complainants further say, that the said Bascom, Green, and Latta, immediately after their said appointments as such commissioners as aforesaid, applied to Nathan Bangs, George Peck, and James B. Finley, commissioners appointed by the seventh resolution of the said General conference of 1844, and the said Book Agents at New York, to act in concert with the commissioners appointed on the part of the south, to settle and divide the property belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, between the Church, north, and the Church, South, and requested them to proceed to the duty assigned them, by dividing the property, as contemplated and directed by said resolution; and that they, the complainants, Bascom and Green, together with the said Latta, have repeatedly called on them since for this purpose; but the defendants have wholly failed and refused to act in the premises, and complainants have not been enabled, although they have used all honorable and fair means, to get a settlement with them of this unpleasant question; nor have they been enabled to induce the Agents of the Methodist Episcopal Church, nor the Church itself, nor the commissioners, to pay to the Church, South, its proportionate share of said property and funds, as provided by said plan of separation.

The complainants further show, that since the appointment of the said Samuel A. Latta, as one of the commissioners, by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, say, on the day of February, 1849, he, the said Latta, hath resigned his office as such commissioner; and that they, the said Bascom and Green, by virtue of, and under the authority of the said General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, have appointed their co-complainant, Parsons, to fill the vacancy of said Latta.

And the complainants allege, that they are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South; that they are preachers—Kelly and Allen are supernumerary, and Tevis superannuated preachers—and belong to the traveling connection of said Church, South; and that as such they have a personal interest in the real estate, personal property, debts, and funds now holden by the Methodist Episcopal Church, through the said defendants as Agents and trustees, appointed by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Complainants further allege, that there are about fifteen hundred preachers belonging to the traveling connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, each of whom has a direct and personal interest in the same right with your complainants to said property, as above described, situated, and held as aforesaid; that the great number of persons interested, as aforesaid, in the recovery sought by this Bill, makes it inconvenient, indeed impossible, to bring them all before the Court as complainants.

Complainants further allege, that the defendants are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church—are preachers belonging to the traveling connection of that Church, and that each of them has a personal interest in the said property and funds, as above described; in addition to which, the said defendants, Swormstedt and Power, have the custody and control by law, and by virtue of their appointment as Agents of the Methodist Book Concern by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, of all the said property and effects of said Book Concern above described; that, in addition to these defendants, there are nearly thirty-eight hundred preachers belonging to the traveling connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church, each of whom has an interest in the said property in the same right, so that it will be impossible, in view of attaining a just decision of this controversy, to make all those interested parties to this Bill.

Complainants further allege, that the entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is about four hundred and sixty thousand, five hundred and fifty-three, and that the entire membership of the Methodist Episcopal Church is about six hundred and thirty-nine thousand and sixty-six, so that it will be at once seen by the honorable Court, that it is utterly impracticable and impossible to bring all the parties in interest before the Court in this Bill, either as complainants or as defendants.

And the complainants further say, that they bring this Bill by authority, and under the direction of the General and the annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and for the benefit and in behalf of the said Church, South, and the said General conference, and for the benefit and in behalf of all the annual conferences in the said Church, South, and of themselves, and of all the preachers in the traveling connection, and all other ministers and members of said Church, and all others having an interest in the same right in its funds and property.

To the end, therefore, and forasmuch as complainants, and those they represent, are greatly aggrieved and injured by the oppressive course pursued by the Methodist Episcopal Church, in their refusal to divide the said property according to equity, and in pursuance of the plan of separation, so as aforesaid set forth; and that complainants, so as aforesaid, are without relief, except in a court of equity, they pray your honorable Court, that they may be allowed to prosecute this Bill in their own behalf, and in behalf of all those bodies and persons so interested, belonging to the Church, South, as above set forth; and that said defendants, Leroy Swormstedt, John H. Power, and James B. Finley, by suitable process of subpoena, etc., directed, etc., commanding, etc., be made defendants to this Bill, for themselves and those they represent, as Agents, trustees, and commissioners, and that, upon oath, they make full, true, and perfect answers to each allegation in this Bill contained, setting forth their own rights and the rights of those under whom they now act, and have heretofore acted, to the end that this honorable Court may be enabled to ascertain the rights of all the parties, and decree accordingly; and that, as to the other defendants, George Peck and Nathan Bangs, the complainants pray that process may issue, to make them parties to this Bill, if they should come within the jurisdiction of this Court.

And the complainants particularly pray, that defendants, Swormstedt and Power, may be required to produce a full, particular, and just account of all the real estate, personal estate, goods, debts, money, and effects of every sort or kind, now held by them, or either of them, as Agent or Agents, trustees or members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States; and that the said Bangs, Peck, and Finley, be required to answer, upon oath, whether they were not appointed by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of 1844, held at New York, commissioners, to act upon the part of the north, with the commissioners to be appointed on the part of the south, in case of a separate and distinct ecclesiastical connection being formed by the south, in the division of the Church property, so called; and whether the complainants, Bascom, Green, and Parsons, and the said Samuel A. Latta, as commissioners, did not call upon them for a settlement, and to arrange the distribution of the Church property according to the plan of separation; and if they did not refuse so to act in the settlement and division of said Church property; and that they, all the said defendants, also be made to answer, all and singular, the allegations and matters in this Bill, set forth as fully as though the same were repeated to them in the form of interrogatories, and they especially interrogated thereto.

And upon the hearing of the cause, complainants pray, that an account of all the property, real, personal, and mixed, and moneys, be ordered and taken, and the amount thereby ascertained, and that it be declared what complainants are entitled to, under the said plan of separation or otherwise. And upon the final hearing of the cause, may it please your honorable Court to decree, that the above-named land and other property, money, and effects, be divided between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, according to the said plan of separation, or as to your honorable Court shall seem just and equitable, under all the circumstances of this case; and that the share or portion belonging to said Methodist Episcopal Church, South, may be decreed to belong to the said Church, South, and be handed over, or conveyed, or transferred to the said complainants as the Agents of the said Church, to and for the use and benefit of said Church, South.

And, finally, complainants pray, that the Court will grant to complainants all such other different and further relief as they are, according to equity, entitled to, or as your Honors shall deem proper and due to the Church, South; and, as in duty bound, they will ever pray, etc.

SPENCER & CORWINE,  
JOHN S. BRIEN, and  
HENRY STANBERRY,  
*Solicitors for Complainants.*

#### DOCUMENT 75.

*Answer—United States Circuit Court, District of Ohio, in Chancery.*

The joint and several answer of Leroy Swormstedt and John H. Power, citizens of the State of Ohio, to the Bill of Complaint of Henry B. Bascom, Charles B. Parsons, and John Tevis, citizens of the state of Kentucky, Alexander L. P. Green, and John Kelly, citizens of the state of Tennessee, and James Allen, a citizen of the state of Alabama.

THESE defendants, saving and reserving to themselves, now and at all times hereafter, all

and all manner of advantage of exception, to the manifold errors, and uncertainties, and insufficiencies, and other imperfections in the plaintiffs' Bill of Complaint, for answer thereunto, or unto so much thereof as they are advised is necessary for them to answer—they answering say:

That they admit, that before and on the eighth day of June, 1844, there existed, and, as these defendants say, there still exists, in the United States of America, a voluntary association, known as "The Methodist Episcopal Church;" and, although not incorporated in one body by any legal enactment, is a duly-organized evangelical Church. The said association, as these defendants aver, is a duly and regularly-organized body, exercising and discharging powers and duties analogous to legal corporations, and, in all respects, controlled and protected in its functions, powers, and duties, by courts of equity, under the law relating to charitable uses. And these defendants admit the number of bishops in said Church on said day is truly stated in said Bill; but these defendants do not know that the number of traveling preachers, ministers, and members, belonging to said Church, is therein accurately set forth. And the defendants further admit, that said Church is united and holden together by certain doctrines of faith and morals, and certain rules of government and discipline.

The defendants further answering, say, that, exercised within the restrictions and constitutional powers, contained in its book of Discipline, the supreme government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, comprising the authority to make rules and regulations for the Church, limited by such restrictions and constitutional powers, was and is vested in a delegated body called the General conference; and that there are within the system and polity of the Church, annual conferences, which, in some, but not in all respects, are bodies subordinate to the General conference; also quarterly conferences, bishops, presiding elders, and traveling ministers, in whom and which, respectively, are vested the powers and authority specified in the book of Discipline; and, beyond the powers of government above stated, these defendants deny the allegation in the plaintiffs' Bill, that the general government of said Church was or is vested as is therein set forth.

And these defendants admit, that the plaintiffs have partially stated the great object of the said Methodist Episcopal Church; nevertheless, more fully to set forth the design of the same, the defendants say, that it comprehends the exercise of its ecclesiastical government and Discipline, especially involving the system of itinerancy of its bishops and ministers; the general promulgation of the doctrines of the Gospel; the due administration of Scriptural ordinances and the holy sacraments; the promotion of works of piety and benevolence; the revival and spread of Scriptural holiness, and the conversion of the world to the Christian faith and life.

The defendants admit, that the constitution, organization, form of government, and rules of discipline, as well as the articles of religion and doctrines of faith, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, were, and are, of general knowledge and notoriety; and are contained in a printed volume, which the defendants suppose to be the same as the plaintiffs have placed on file in this court; and for greater certainty, the defendants crave leave to produce and refer to

a copy of the book, entitled, "The Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church," and to the several editions thereof, published by the Methodist Book Concern of the city of New York, and to a certain other printed book, entitled, "Emory's History of the Discipline," by which the organization and polity of said Church, and such changes as have been made therein, will fully appear, but which if here related would extend this Answer to an inconvenient and unnecessary length.

And these defendants, in respect to the differences and disagreements alleged by the plaintiffs to have sprung up between what were called the northern and southern members, upon the administration of the Church government with reference to the ownership of slaves by the ministry of the Church, answer and say, that, according to the best of their knowledge, information, and belief, no such differences or disagreements had sprung up in the Church between the northern and southern members prior to the session of the General conference, held in the city of New York, in May, 1844, which were attended with, or seriously threatening, the consequences alleged by the plaintiffs.

And these defendants, according to their best knowledge, information, and belief, also deny, that, prior to that session of the General conference, it ever became, or was, a question of grave or serious importance with the members of the Church, or with any except a few of them, whether a separation ought not to take place, by geographical boundaries or otherwise, so that the Methodist Episcopal Church should thereafter constitute two separate and distinct Methodist Churches; or that it was "thereupon," as is erroneously alleged by said plaintiffs, that the resolutions, which they denominate the "plan of separation," and which are set forth in their Bill, were passed at the General conference of 1844, held in the city of New York; and these defendants say, that then, and always hitherto, the greater portion of the Church have not thought there was any sufficient cause for the separation and division of said Church.

And these defendants, further answering with respect to such differences and disagreements, say, that during and subsequent to the session of the General conference of 1844, those differences and disagreements principally grew out of the voluntary connection of a bishop with slavery, and out of the proceedings of that body, with reference thereto, hereafter referred to; that the rules of the book of Discipline, and the uniform action of the General conference, have always been adverse to human slavery, it being regarded a great evil; and prior to the session of the General conference in 1844, the whole Church, by common consent, united in proper efforts for its mitigation and final removal; that the ministers have never been allowed to hold slaves, except in cases which, under the laws of the slaveholding states, were deemed to be cases of necessity; that this Church never made, nor has its book of Discipline ever contained any law respecting the holding of slaves by a bishop of the Church; that the General conference always refused to elect a slaveholder to that office; that at the session of the General conference in 1844, held in the city of New York, it became known that the Rev. James O. Andrew, one of the bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, had, since his election to that office, become the owner of slaves—of one

by bequest, or another by inheritance, and of others by his intermarriage with a lady in the state of Georgia, who held a number of slaves in her own right, which, by the laws of that state, became the property of her husband; that, as will appear by its printed Journal—pp. 65-83—such proceedings were had by that General conference, upon the admitted facts, contained in a statement in writing, made by Bishop Andrew, and which, in due form, was brought before the conference by one of its standing committees, called the Committee on Episcopacy, whose duty it was to inquire into the conduct and administration of the bishops, and to make report to the conference—as that the following preamble and resolution were duly and legally adopted by that conference, to wit:

“Whereas, the Discipline of our Church forbids the doing any thing calculated to destroy our itinerant general superintendency; and whereas, Bishop Andrew has become connected with slavery by marriage and otherwise; and this act having drawn after it circumstances which, in the estimation of the General conference, will greatly embarrass the exercise of his office as an itinerant general superintendent, if not in some places entirely prevent it; therefore,

“Resolved, That it is the sense of this General conference that he desist from the exercise of his office so long as this impediment remains.”

And these defendants, upon their information and belief, further say, that the adoption of this resolution gave offense to a minority of the members of that General conference, and who were delegates from annual conferences in the slaveholding states; and it principally, if not wholly, induced these delegates to present a formal Protest against such action of the General conference, which was admitted to record on its Journal—pp. 186-210: to all which these defendants ask leave to refer, together with the report in reference thereto, of the committee by the General conference for that purpose appointed; and which also induced such delegations from the annual conferences in the slaveholding states to present to said General conference the declaration already referred to, which was read and referred to a committee of nine, whose report thereon is the so-called “plan of separation,” herein mentioned; which declaration is also recorded on page 109 of the printed Journal of the General conference, and to which, also, the defendants crave leave to refer; and which resolution, in the case of Bishop Andrew, further induced such delegates—although without the authority of the General conference, and in no wise sanctioned by any action of that body—immediately after the adjournment of such General conference of 1844—and before the contingencies mentioned in the so-called “plan of separation,” and necessary to give effect to it, had happened, and before such delegates had departed from the city of New York—to address a circular to their constituents, and to the ministers of the Church in the slaveholding states, therein expressing their own opinions in favor of a separation from the jurisdiction of the General conference, and advising the annual conferences within these states to elect from their own bodies, severally, delegates to a convention, to be held by them at Louisville, in Kentucky, in the May following, to consider and determine the matter: all which finally led these annual conferences, or portions of them, at that convention, to withdraw and separate from the Meth-

odist Episcopal Church, to renounce and declare themselves wholly absolved from its jurisdiction, government, and authority, and to institute a new and distinct ecclesiastical organization, separate from, and independent of, the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, under the name of “The Methodist Episcopal Church, South,” which is the same organization mentioned in said Bill of Complaint; and the plaintiffs, and all whom they profess to represent, are adherents thereof, and are no longer attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church. And these defendants believe and submit, that these proceedings were in no part authorized by the rules of government, or by the constitutional law of the Methodist Episcopal Church, as contained in its book of Discipline, but were in plain hostility to its requirements.

These defendants, further answering, insist and submit that the said resolution of the General conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew, instead of moving to a secession, called for due submission and respect from all the delegates to that conference, and from all the ministers and members of that Church; and the defendants, upon their belief, say that the same, and all proceedings of that body leading thereto, were regular, constitutional, and valid; that the voluntary connection of Bishop Andrew with slavery was justly considered, by a majority of said General conference, and by most of the ministers and members of the Church, as “improper conduct;” and that each bishop is, by the law of the book of Discipline, amenable to the General conference, who are thereby declared to “have power to expel him for improper conduct, if they see necessary;” and that the resolution and proceedings in the case of Bishop Andrew were in due accordance with the good government of the Church.

And these defendants, further answering, admit that the resolutions set forth by the plaintiffs in their Bill, at a General conference of the Church, holden, according to usage and Discipline, at New York, were passed by a majority of over three-fourths the entire body, on the eighth day of June, 1844; although, as these defendants aver, said resolutions, in respect to their operation and effect, were provisional and contingent, were occasioned by, and based upon, the said declaration of the southern delegates, and were only intended to meet the emergency predicted therein, should the same afterward arise; and that said resolutions were conducted with, and preceded by the statement and preamble, embodied in the report of the said committee of nine, appointed by the General conference to consider and report upon such declaration, which report was adopted by the conference, as will appear by its printed Journal—pp. 130-137; and which statement and preamble are to be taken in connection with said resolutions, as a part of said report thus adopted, and to which the defendants crave leave to refer, as a part of this Answer. But these defendants are advised by counsel that the said resolutions embodied in such report of the committee of nine, called the “plan of separation,” were not duly or legally passed; and that the General conference of 1844 had no competent nor valid power or authority to pass or adopt said resolutions, called the “plan of separation,” or any or either of them, except that portion thereof comprising the recommendation to the annual conferences to change the sixth Restrictive Rule; and these defendants are also advised by counsel, that the last-named

resolutions, when adopted, were null and void, without any validity or binding force, except in the light of recommendation merely; and these defendants therefore humbly submit these questions to this honorable Court.

And to show the extent of the constitutional power of the said General conference, in this respect, these defendants state that, from the election and ordination of the first bishops of the Church in 1784, the General conference was composed of all the preachers in the connection who had traveled four years from the time that they were received by the annual conference; but in the General conference of 1808, on the recommendation of a majority of the annual conferences, severally acting in their primary capacities, it was proposed to do away with such general assembly of ministers, and to organize a delegate General conference, to consist of a delegated number, to be elected by the several annual conferences, according to a fixed ratio of representation, which proposition was agreed to, in said General convention of 1808, upon the condition of adopting certain articles to restrict the powers of future delegated General conferences; whereupon, a constitution was adopted for the government of the General conference, embracing six Restrictive Articles, which was accordingly established, defining who shall compose the said General conference, and what powers and regulations belong to it. And the whole body of preachers, then assembled in general convention, by such constitution, adopted the present plan of a delegated General conference, investing it with the powers of the whole body of preachers, as a General conference, but under the express exceptions and limitations of the said Restrictive Articles; which constitution and Restrictive Articles the defendants pray may be taken as a part of this Answer, as if here set forth; and for the contents of the same, and for the particulars of these facts and allegations, these defendants ask leave to produce and refer to the said constitution and Restrictive Articles, contained in the book of Discipline for 1808, pp. 14, 15; also, to the subsequent editions of the Discipline; also, to "Enory's History of the Discipline," pp. 111-113; also, to "Bangs's History of the Methodist Episcopal Church," Vol. II, pp. 225-234.

That such constitution and Restrictive Rules thus adopted, containing a general grant of all powers to make rules and regulations for the government of the Church, under the restraints and within the limitations therein embodied, constitute the paramount law of the Church, and have always been so considered, as well by the delegated General conferences, whose legislative action they were intended to regulate, as by the annual conferences, and by the bishops, ministers, and members of the Church, whose rights and privileges were thereby secured; nor has the delegated General conference ever had, or claimed, any power to alter or amend these Restrictive Articles, except in the manner therein prescribed, in conjunction with the constitutional majority and action of the annual conferences; nor have any alterations thereof ever been made, except in conformity with the provisions contained therein for such alterations; and never without such constitutional majority, and the assent of the several annual conferences voting in their primary capacity:

That this constitution, embodying these Restrictive Articles, is—and during the session of the General conference of 1844, and at the time

of the passage of the resolutions, was—the fundamental law of the Church, as will be seen by the book of Discipline—pp. 21-23, edition of 1844; that the General conference is the representative body above mentioned, with powers limited, as aforesaid, to make rules and regulations for the government of the Church. And these defendants, as advised by counsel, believe and submit, that these Restrictive Articles limit and restrain the powers of the General conference to the enactment of rules and regulations for the Church, to carry on, throughout the whole work, the economy and purposes of its government, as already settled; prohibiting any change in any part or rule of said government, so as to do away Episcopacy, or destroy the plan of the itinerant general superintendency of the Church; that they prohibit the exercise of any power by the General conference to do away the privileges of the ministers, preachers, or members, of trial by a committee, or before the society, or of an appeal; and, also, they prohibit the General conference, without the consent of three-fourths the whole body of ministers—to be expressed by their votes in their respective annual conferences—from appropriating the produce of the Book Concern, or Chartered Fund, to any other purpose than the benefit of those preachers which belong to the traveling connection of the Church, and to their wives, and widows, and children. And the defendants, therefore, submit to this honorable Court, whether the said resolutions, denominated the "plan of separation," are not, in each and every one of these particulars, inconsistent with, and subversive of, said constitutional law of the Church, and in contravention of the limitation contained in the aforesaid Restrictive Articles.

And these defendants, further answering, submit, as further advised by counsel, that, had even the so-called "plan of separation" been constitutional or valid, it merely provided a prospective "plan," which, without the happening of certain future conditions, or, on the failure of which conditions, or some of them, by its express terms, never could have, and, as defendants say, never was intended to have, any force or validity. And these defendants expressly aver that these conditions have not happened; and they, therefore, insist and submit that the said so-called "plan of separation" has always been inoperative, has never had any force and validity, and is absolutely null and void.

And these defendants, further answering, say, that the so-called "plan of separation," whether constitutional or not, was never ratified by the annual conferences therein named, and, therefore, gave the southern annual conferences no authority to act in the premises; and hence, as the defendants submit and insist, the southern annual conferences have, as to the Church, South, in all respects, acted on their own responsibility, without any authority from the General conference of 1844.

And the defendants, further answering, say, that they admit the resolutions set forth by the plaintiffs, were adopted at a convention of delegates from annual conferences in the slaveholding states, assembled at Louisville, in Kentucky, on the first day of May, 1845; but these defendants deny that the delegates composing that convention were elected on the basis, or according to the authority, of said provisional "plan of separation," so called, or of any resolutions of the General conference of 1844; and especially do these defendants deny that said Louis-

ville convention, in adopting their resolutions, or in any proceedings had therein, acted under the provisional "plan of separation," adopted by that General conference, as is stated in one of said resolutions; but, on the contrary thereof, these defendants say that said provisional "plan" did not confer any authority upon that convention to adopt their said resolutions—to organize a new ecclesiastical connection therein mentioned—or to dismember the Methodist Episcopal Church; and, further, that the said convention was not convened by, or in pursuance of, any constitutional authority of that Church, or of its General conference; and, also, that the proceedings leading to, and the transactions of, that said Louisville convention, and which resulted in the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, were occasioned and had, by such of the ministers and members of the annual conferences in the slaveholding states, as have attached themselves to the said Church, South, upon their own responsibility, and by their own unauthorized acts, while they repudiated the authority of the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church; they refusing, and declaring their refusal, to submit to such authority; and that, by revolutionary measures, tending to the dismemberment of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and by insubordinate proceedings, unwarranted by said "plan of separation," so called, or by any authority of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they did institute the said "Methodist Episcopal Church, South," as an independent ecclesiastical organization, separate from the jurisdiction of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and did solemnly declare such jurisdiction over them was entirely at an end. And, for some of the particulars of these facts and allegations, these defendants ask leave to refer to the aforesaid declaration, presented on the fifth day of June, 1844, to the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at its session in New York, signed by fifty-one of the delegates to that conference from the slaveholding states, and who are now attached to said Church, South; which declaration is recorded in the Journal of said conference, page 109; also to the "Protest in the case of Bishop Andrew," herein before referred to, presented to said General conference, on said fifth day of June, signed by such delegates and others, now attached to the said Church, South; also to the address to their constituents, and the resolutions and proceedings of such delegates, at their meeting in the city of New York, on the 11th day of June, 1844; also to the correspondence between Bishop Soule and Bishop Andrew, involving the request of the former to the latter, that he should resume his episcopal functions, and his acceptance of that request, notwithstanding the aforesaid resolution of the General conference of 1844, in his case; also to the proceedings of said Louisville convention; and also to the proceedings of the body, assuming to be a General conference, composed of delegates from the annual conferences attached to said Church, South, held at Petersburg, in Virginia, in May, 1846. Wherefore, these defendants insist and submit, that the "Methodist Episcopal Church, South," exists as a separate ecclesiastical community, solely by the result, and in virtue, of the acts and doings of the individual bishops, ministers, and members attached to such Church, South, proceeding in the premises upon their own responsibility; and that such bishops, ministers, and members, have voluntarily withdrawn them-

selves from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and have renounced all their rights and privileges in her communion and under her government. And these defendants deny that the annual conferences represented in said Louisville convention were, as is erroneously stated in the first of the resolutions of the convention set forth by the plaintiffs, constituted a separate ecclesiastical connection under the provisional, so-called "plan of separation," aforesaid.

And these defendants, further answering, admit that at the time and place in that behalf mentioned by the plaintiffs, a council of bishops of the Methodist Episcopal Church, called, by the plaintiffs, the "northern bishops," met, and unanimously adopted the resolutions set forth in the said Bill; but these defendants say that the same were, as well by the express terms thereof, as by the extent of any authority possessed by such council, or bishops, limited in their application and effect to the administration of such bishops; which administration, at that time, was interrupted, resisted, and prevented, in the slaveholding states, by such portion of the revolutionary measures above alluded to as had then occurred, and by kindred measures of some of the then adherents of said Church, South. Moreover, these defendants further state, that said bishops were amenable to the General conference, who have power to inquire into their administration, and expel them for "improper conduct," if they find it necessary; that the said provisional "plan" was an act of the General conference, to whom said bishops were amenable; and that said General conference had not then declared the said provisional "plan" null and void. But these defendants, with respect to these resolutions of the bishops, submit, that they can have no influence or effect whatever upon the question of the alleged division of the Church; nor can any effect or virtue be attached to their acts and resolutions, tending to divide or dismember the Church, or to warrant, in any sense, the allegation of the plaintiffs, that by or in virtue of such resolutions—in conjunction with such other proceedings as are alleged by the plaintiffs, or otherwise—the Methodist Episcopal Church ever became divided into two distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches.

And these defendants, further answering, deny that, by or in virtue of the proceedings alleged in the said Bill of Complaint, or of any part thereof, or otherwise however, "the Methodist Episcopal Church," as it existed before the year 1844, or as it at any time existed, was lawfully divided into two distinct Methodist Episcopal Churches, in the manner alleged in said Bill, or in any other manner whatever. And these defendants submit, that the separation and voluntary withdrawal from the said Church of a portion of her bishops, ministers, and members, as herein mentioned, was an unauthorized separation from the Church.

And these defendants, further answering, say, that the so-called "plan of separation" was wholly prospective and contingent in its provisions; and that the General conference adopted the said provisional "plan" in view of, and based the same entirely upon, the declaration of the delegates of the annual conferences in the slaveholding states, herein before mentioned, which alleged that certain acts of the General conference, therein referred to, especially the act in relation to Bishop Andrew, must produce a state of things in the south which would render a continuance of the jurisdiction of the General

conference over those conferences inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states; and, therefore, the General conference, by the said "plan," made provision for the adjustment of relations between the Methodist Episcopal Church and her separating ministers and members, to meet the emergency which might arise, in the event of the contingency thus predicted in such declaration, when the contingency might occur, by the act and deed of the annual conferences in the slaveholding states, from the necessity of the case. And these defendants are informed and believe, and therefore state, that, independent of the aforesaid proceedings of the southern delegates, which contributed to such separation, the acts of the General conference alone, and which are thus complained of, did not produce a state of things in the south which rendered a continuance of the jurisdiction aforesaid "inconsistent with the success of the ministry in the slaveholding states;" nor was a separation of the ministers and members now composing the Southern Church occasioned solely because the annual conferences in the slaveholding states found it necessary to unite in a distinct ecclesiastical connection; but the way for such separation was prepared, and the same was superinduced and consummated by the revolutionary measures herein before referred to, and which were begun at the seat, and nearly at the time, of the session of the said General conference, before the predicted state of things was, or could possibly be, produced by the acts of the General conference.

Also, that the General conference, by such provisional "plan," proposed, in the happening of the contingencies therein mentioned, *regulations* to be mutually observed, by the Methodist Episcopal Church on the one part, and by the proposed new Church, and by the ministers and members thereof, on the other part, with respect to the "northern boundary" of such new Church, which required that the northern boundary should be fixed at the northern extremities of those "societies, stations, and conferences," a majority of whose members should, of their own free will and accord, vote to adhere to the said Southern Church; the due observance of which regulations, as these defendants insist and submit, was a fundamental condition of said provisional "plan." And these defendants, as they are informed and believe, state that, in this respect, said provisional "plan" has been violated by the said Church, South, and by said separating bishops, ministers, and members now attached thereto, more particularly in the instances following: That Bishops Andrew and Soule, since the said southern organization, have stationed preachers in Accomac and Northampton counties, in Virginia, within the district of the Philadelphia annual conference, and have sent and stationed preachers at several societies and stations within the bounds of the Baltimore conference, which, as well as the Philadelphia conference, always belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church; namely, upon the Northern Neck, and to the Warrenton circuit, and to Harrisonburg, and Leesburg; that the Kanawha district was within the bounds of the Ohio conference, and was duly supplied with preachers and a presiding elder; but the constituted authorities of the Kentucky annual conference have supplied the district with preachers who were in connection with that conference, and even with another presiding elder, so that the district of Kanawha now has a full ministry from each con-

ference at the same time; in Parkersburg, particularly, which is not a border but an interior station in that district, the preacher who was there stationed by the Ohio conference was compelled to leave his charge, by threats of personal violence, and by preparations to execute those threats. But the defendants more particularly refer to the unwarrantable interposition of the bishops, preachers, and conferences of the Church, South, in the stations and charges at Cincinnati, within the Ohio annual conference. Although no one of the societies which existed in that city in the summer of 1844, by a vote of a majority of its members, adhered to the Church, South, yet Bishops Andrew and Soule, or one of them, did proceed to organize "Churches and societies" within said city; namely, the society worshipping at the meeting-house called "Soule Chapel," and the society worshipping at the meeting-house called "Andrew Chapel;" and they "attempted to exercise," and did actually exercise "pastoral oversight" over the same, by receiving the said societies as members of the Kentucky annual conference, and by stationing preachers in and over said societies; namely, the Rev. Mr. Schon, and the Rev. Mr. Latta, and the Rev. Mr. Parsons, and the Rev. Mr. Corwin, and the Rev. G. W. Maley, and the Rev. H. H. Kavanaugh, who are all preachers in full connection with the Church, South, and, as these defendants believe, members of the Kentucky annual conference. And, contrary to the whole polity of the Methodist Church, and the express recommendation of the book of Discipline—for which the defendants refer to the twelfth section of the sixth chapter of the third part—and in especial contravention to the spirit and letter of said resolutions, in the so-called "plan"—although the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church has, for many years, maintained, at Cincinnati, the newspaper called the "Western Christian Advocate," which is recognized in the Discipline as a General conference paper—the Kentucky annual conference, now connected with said Church, South, with the countenance and assistance of other ministers and conferences of the said Church, South, and with the approbation of one or more of the bishops of the said Church, South—as these defendants believe, and, therefore, allege—have established their conference newspaper, called the "Methodist Expositor," at said Cincinnati, from the office of which, located in said city, it is published and circulated, all which will more fully appear by the tenth number of the second volume of said Methodist Expositor, which these defendants will produce, as this honorable Court may direct, and to which they crave leave to refer. And the aforesaid Church, South, as the defendants have heard, and believe, and state, acting as the General conference of the Church, South, sanctioned those doings of said bishops, and also authorized the Virginia annual conference, which is claimed as a member of the Church, South, to send ministers into the territory of the Baltimore annual conference, which is still attached to the Methodist Episcopal Church. And so the said Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the bishops, ministers, and members attached thereto, as thus stated, have violated and disregarded said so-called "plan."

And these defendants expressly aver and charge, that the said Maley, Kavanaugh, and Latta, together with one William Burke, are all now residents of the said city of Cincinnati, and all are citizens of the state of Ohio; and all are



ministers and members of the said Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of the traveling connection; and all are beneficiaries, for whose use—among others—the plaintiffs profess to bring this suit; and if any thing shall be recovered or obtained by the plaintiffs, under the decree in this case, all will be entitled to their proportionate share of the same.

Also, the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, at its session held in Pittsburgh, in Pennsylvania, in May, 1848, did find and declare that the fundamental conditions of said proposed "plan" had severally failed; that the failure of either of them separately was sufficient to render the said so-called "plan" null and void; and that the practical workings of said so-called "plan" were incompatible with the great constitutional provisions contained in said book of Discipline; and they, the said General conference, did also find and declare the whole and every part of said provisional "plan," so called, to be null and void. The defendants, as advised by counsel, believe, and state, and submit, that these steps of the General conference were fully within their powers and rightful authority. For the particulars hereof, these defendants desire leave to refer to the proceedings of, and the reports adopted by said General conference of 1848; especially to its printed Journal—pp. 73-85, 129, 130—and to the final report of the Committee on the State of the Church, adopted by said conference, and appended to its Journal—pp. 154-164; and the same and said General conference then further declared, that the so-called "plan of separation" in no event authorized a division or reorganization of the Methodist Episcopal Church into two separate Churches, and passed a solemn resolution, that there exists no power in the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church to pass any act which, either directly or indirectly, effectuates, authorizes, or sanctions a division of said Church.

Wherefore, these defendants further insist and submit that, instead of the Methodist Episcopal Church being divided into two distinct Churches, under and in pursuance of said so-called "plan of separation," as is alleged by the plaintiffs, all those bishops, ministers, and members who have attached themselves, by their own act and deed, to the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, including the plaintiffs, and all those represented in or by them in said Bill of Complaint, have voluntarily withdrawn from the Methodist Episcopal Church, and separated themselves from its privileges and government; and have thereby renounced and forfeited all claim, either in law or equity, to any portion of the funds and property in question, in this case.

And these defendants, further answering, deny that, by force of the proceedings alleged by the plaintiffs, or otherwise, the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, became, was, or is entitled, at law or equity, to any proportion of all or any of the property, real or personal, or of all or any of the funds or effects which, up to the time of separation, or at any other time, belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the United States or elsewhere; and especially do these defendants deny, that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, was or is so entitled to any produce of the Book Concern or Chartered Fund, or to any property or funds pertaining thereto, without any change or alteration of the Sixth Restrictive Article above mentioned; or that, as erroneously alleged by the plaintiffs, the vote of a majority of three-fourths of all the members of the sev-

eral annual conferences, which voted directly on the question in view of a division of the property, has been obtained in favor of any alteration of that Article.

And these defendants, with respect to the allegation of the plaintiffs, that the property and funds of the Methodist Episcopal Church had been obtained and collected by voluntary contribution, in which contribution the members of the Church, South, contributed the largest portion of the same, deny that, so far as the allegation has reference to "the Methodist Book Concern" in the city of Cincinnati, its property, funds, or appendages, the same, or a greater portion thereof, have been chiefly obtained by voluntary contribution; the defendants say, that they were obtained in the manner hereafter stated; but, in so far as they were obtained by voluntary contribution, and in respect to any portion thereof contributed from the south, these defendants state, that all such contributions were made and given for the very object for which said Book Concern was designed; that, on occasion of the contributions referred to, many others largely contributed, who have since left the Church, yet that any such separatists have never had, nor presumed to make any claim for their share of such contributions; nor on that account, as these defendants submit, can they, or the plaintiffs, or those whom they represent, have or make any claim to reach the portion of donations they have severally made by such voluntary gifts and contributions.

These defendants, further answering, admit that, on the 8th day of June, 1844, with the qualification and exception hereinafter stated, relative to the Chartered Fund, and the Book Concerns in New York and Cincinnati, the Methodist Episcopal Church owned and possessed large amounts of property, in various parts of the United States, not, however, as the plaintiffs say, in addition to, but principally consisting of meeting-houses, parsonages, and other estates of that description. But these defendants deny that, among other or any description of property, there ever belonged to said Church, in the aggregate, or to its lay membership, what was and still is denominated "The Methodist Book Concern," in the city of Cincinnati. And these defendants say, that said Book Concern, with all houses, lots, printing-presses, book-binderies, books, papers, debts, cash, and other articles of property pertaining thereunto, is now, and always has been beneficially the property of the preachers belonging to the traveling connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church; but if any such preachers do not, during life, continue in such traveling connection, and in the communion, and subject to the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church, they forfeit, for themselves and their families, all their ownership in, or claim to and upon said Book Concern and the produce thereof. And further, these defendants admit, that the property of said Book Concern, consisting as aforesaid, amounts, in value, at the present time, to about the sum stated in schedule A, hereunto annexed, which contains a general statement of all its assets and property to it pertaining, and of the value thereof, on the 1st day of April, 1849, as accurately as the same could then or can now be conveniently ascertained, and which schedule is here referred to, and made part of this Answer. And the defendants, further answering, state, that the end and object of said Book Concern, at Cincinnati, is carried out, under and by virtue of a certain statute of the state of Ohio, passed on the 12th day of March, 1839,

entitled, "An act to incorporate the Methodist Book Concern, at Cincinnati," which was, and still is a valid law of the said state, and of which the following is a copy, to wit:

"An act to incorporate the Methodist Book Concern, at Cincinnati.

"Sec. 1. Be it enacted, by the General Assembly of the state of Ohio, that John F. Wright and Leroy Swormstedt, Agents of the Methodist Book Concern, their successor or successors, are hereby created a body-politic and corporate by the name of 'The Methodist Book Concern,' and as such shall have succession for thirty years, and by that name may contract and be contracted with, sue and be sued—may have a common seal, and the same alter and renew at pleasure.

"Sec. 2. Said Methodist Book Concern shall be capable in law of holding property—real, personal, or mixed—either by purchase, gift, grant, devise, or legacy, and to sell and convey the same; but the value of the real estate so held shall not exceed one hundred thousand dollars; provided that all such property shall be held in trust only, for the purposes of the said Book Concern; provided that such corporation shall not be authorized or permitted to issue any certificates of loan, or, by any device, to issue any circulating medium, to be used as money; provided, further, that this act shall not be, at any time, construed as conferring banking or any other powers, except those expressly granted by it.

"Sec. 3. The General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States shall elect and appoint a successor or successors of said John F. Wright and Leroy Swormstedt, at any regular meeting thereof; and should an agent so appointed die, resign, or be removed from said agency, in the interval of the General conference, such vacancy may be filled in such way as the General conference shall prescribe; and the said John F. Wright and Leroy Swormstedt, and their successor or successors in office, shall hold their agency and conduct the business of the Book Concern in conformity with the rules and regulations of the said General conference.

"Sec. 4. The real estate heretofore conveyed to John F. Wright and Leroy Swormstedt, as Agents of the Methodist Book Concern, shall be considered as part of the real estate to be held by said corporation.

"Sec. 5. Any future Legislature shall have power to modify or repeal this act; provided such modification or repeal shall not affect the title to any real estate or personal property acquired or conveyed under its provisions."

And the defendants state, that John F. Wright, one of the corporate members named in said act, hath ceased to be a member of said corporation, and that the defendant—John H. Power—hath been lawfully appointed the other member of said corporation; so that said corporation is now composed of the said Swormstedt and Power. And these defendants deny that the said property, effects, or lands, or any of them, are now owned or holden, or are in the possession of these defendants, as individuals, either in their own right, or as trustees; but they aver that the said corporation is both the legal owner and possessor of the same, in its corporate capacity, and upon the trusts, and for the purposes and objects which said Book Concern was designed to effect, and which are more minutely specified below.

And these defendants, further answering, state, that the said Book Concern was originally commenced and instituted by traveling ministers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, on their

own capital, with the great design, in the first place, of circulating religious knowledge; by whom it was surrendered to the ownership of all the traveling preachers, in their General convention, there called the General conference; and it was agreed, from time to time, that the profits arising from the sale of books should be applied to pious and charitable objects, but principally to the support of traveling ministers and their families, till, in the General conference of 1796, it was determined that the said moneys should be in future applied wholly to the relief of traveling preachers, including of them such as were superannuated, and the widows and orphans of such as were deceased. One of the decisions of the General conference of that year was, that "the produce of the sale of our books, after the book debts are paid, and a sufficient capital is provided for carrying on the business, shall be regularly paid into the Chartered Fund;" and the object of said Fund was for "the relief of distressed traveling preachers, for the families of traveling preachers, and for the superannuated and worn-out preachers, and the widows and orphans of preachers;" that, from that time to the General conference of 1808, no other appropriation whatever was made of the proceeds of said Book Concern, but for the benefit of the traveling preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and their families; and that till and in the General conference of that year, as is herein before stated, all the traveling preachers in full connection, who have traveled four years, belonging to the Church, had a seat in, and were members of the General conference; at which time, on the occasion of adopting a delegated General conference, with constitutional powers, limited by certain restrictions, as above detailed, the said General conference of traveling preachers established a constitution as above stated, specifying who should compose, and defining the regulations and powers belonging to such delegated General conference, and therein and thereby providing, that the General conference should have full powers to make rules and regulations for the Church, under six specified limitations and restrictions, commonly called the Restrictive Articles, which are fully set out in the book of Discipline; by means whereof the said General convention of traveling preachers, as defendants submit they lawfully might do, committed the management of said Book Concern to such delegated General conference, as agents, or trustees, or superintendents, under and subject to the limitation and restriction contained in the sixth of said Restrictive Articles, which the defendants crave leave to read and refer to, as a part of this Answer.

And the defendants pray, that the said constitution and said Restrictive Articles, especially the above-recited sixth Restrictive Article, may be taken as a part of this Answer; and that they may have leave to read and refer to said constitution and Restrictive Articles, and to the proceedings of said General convention of traveling preachers, as a part, also, of this Answer.

And these defendants, further answering, say that the recommendation of the General conference of 1844, contained in the aforesaid resolution, embodied in the so-called "plan of separation," to all the annual conferences, to authorize a change of the sixth Restrictive Article, so that the first clause might read as in said resolution is specified, has not been concurred in by a majority of the members of said annual conferences, and that such recommendation has entirely failed; that such recom-

mentation was duly laid before all the annual conferences, but, on canvassing the votes, at the General conference of 1848, which body had full power for determining the number of votes, by the annual conferences, for altering said Restrictive Rules, it was ascertained and declared that the number of votes necessary to authorize such alteration had not been obtained, nor have the annual conferences, at any time, authorized such change in said Article.

And these defendants, for the proceedings of said General conference, and the particulars in respect to such votes, crave leave to refer to the Journal of that conference—p. 56—and to the report of the Committee on the State of the Church, being document L, recorded in the Journal of Reports of said General conference.

Wherefore, these defendants, as touching the allegations and claims in the plaintiffs' Bill, with regard to the property denominated the Book Concern, and the Chartered Fund, and the moneys, effects, and credits pertaining thereunto, insist and submit, that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, is not entitled, at law or in equity, to have a division of such property made, as is claimed in said Bill; nor is such Church, South, thus entitled to any share or portion thereof; nor are any ministers, preachers, or members, attached to such Church, South, thus entitled to any portion of the same; and that they, being no longer "traveling preachers" belonging to the Methodist Episcopal Church, could not be so entitled, without a constitutional change in the said sixth Restrictive Article, to authorize such division.

And the defendants, further answering, say, that, by the provisions of the book of Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, "the principal establishment of the Book Concern" is situated in the city of New York, and that the business of circulating books, by the Methodist Book Concern in the western states, is chiefly conducted by the aforesaid corporation in Cincinnati, called the Methodist Book Concern; that, by the above regulations and provisions, it is their duty and the course of business, for the said corporation, to place at the disposal of the Agents of the Methodist Book Concern in the city of New York, all its earnings, after supplying the necessary capital, and defraying the expenses of its own business, to be added to the profits of the Concern in New York, and by those Agents alone appropriated to the said purposes and objects. These particulars will more fully appear, and are more fully defined, in the sixth chapter of the third part of said book of Discipline, to which these defendants crave leave to refer as fully as if here at length recited and set forth. The defendants, therefore, insist and submit, that, inasmuch as the Methodist Book Concern at Cincinnati is a lawful corporation, whose functions, after its income has been received, are solely confined to accounting with "the principal establishment" in New York, and in paying its profits to the New York Agents, without the power of distribution among the beneficiaries of the General conference, whether the said plaintiffs can sustain their claim against said corporation, and especially against these defendants, under the statements of the present Bill.

And these defendants, further answering, deny that, at the time alleged by the plaintiffs, or at any other time, the Agents of the Book Concern in New York, in pursuance of the provisions and terms of the said resolutions,

called, by the plaintiffs, the "plan of separation," paid to the several annual conferences of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, their proportion of the profits and income of the Book Concern, as fixed and set apart, by said Agents, for the year 1845. And in respect to said allegation, that they are informed and believe, and, therefore, aver, that the portion of profits and income alluded to by the plaintiffs, which said Agents paid to such annual conferences, had accrued and had been apportioned to such southern conferences previous to the organization of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and that such payment was made without any reference to the so-called "plan of separation." And the defendants are informed, and, therefore, admit, that, since the year 1845, the said Agents had refused to pay to the annual conferences, south, who have separated from the Methodist Episcopal Church, as aforesaid, any thing further from the profits or income of the Book Concern; and, these defendants insist, as in justice and right, and according to their duty said Agents ought to have done; and these defendants deny, that such annual conferences, south, are legally entitled to any portion or share of such profits or income, or that the withholding thereof from them by said Agents is any violation of their rights.

And these defendants, further answering, admit that the body, assuming to act as the General conference of the Church, South, holden at Petersburg, in Virginia, in May, 1846, proceeded to appoint the commissioners, as stated in said Bill, and for the purposes therein stated; and the defendants also admit, that the body aforesaid adopted the resolutions specified in the plaintiffs' Bill; but these defendants submit and insist, that said resolutions are entirely nugatory, in their effect upon the property and funds therein referred to, and the matters pertaining to the same.

And the defendants admit, that said commissioners have made the applications to these defendants, and are advised that the same were made to the said James B. Finley, and the requests as is in said Bill stated; and that these defendants have refused to act in the premises; and they say they have refused for the reasons and on the grounds above set forth.

And these defendants also admit, that the plaintiffs have not been enabled to induce the said Book Agents, nor the commissioners named by the plaintiffs, nor the Methodist Episcopal Church, to pay to the Church, South, any portion or share of said property or funds, except as aforesaid; but the defendants deny, that said Church, South, is lawfully entitled to any proportionate, or other share of said property or funds, as provided by said "plan of separation," so called, or otherwise.

And the defendants admit, that the plaintiffs are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and that they are preachers belonging to the traveling connection of said Church, South; but these defendants deny that, as such, they, or either of them, have any personal interest in the real estate, personal property, debts, or funds, above mentioned; or in any property, debts, or funds, if any, now holden by the Methodist Episcopal Church, through these defendants, or any of them, as Agents or Trustees, appointed by the General conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, or otherwise.

And these defendants, further answering, say, that they have not sufficient knowledge or infor-

mation, either to deny or admit, whether the allegations of the plaintiffs' Bill, respecting the number of preachers belonging to the traveling connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the number in the membership of that Church, are true or not; and the plaintiffs are therefore left to make such proof thereof as they may be able and advised to do. These defendants, however, according to the best of their belief, say, that such numbers have been overstated by the plaintiffs.

And these defendants, further answering, deny, that the preachers belonging to the traveling connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, or any, or either of them, have a direct and personal, or other legal or equitable interest in the same right with the plaintiffs, or otherwise, in said property, situated and held as herein before stated, or in any part or portion thereof, to any amount whatever. And the defendants utterly deny, that the lay membership of the Church, South, whether in number stated by the plaintiffs, or otherwise, are parties in interest in the subject-matter of the plaintiffs' Bill, or have, or ever had, any pecuniary interests in said funds or property.

And these defendants, further answering, admit, that these defendants are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and are preachers belonging to the traveling connection of that Church, and that each of them has a personal interest in said property and funds. But these defendants state, that such interest is the same only as is held in common by all the preachers in the traveling connection of the Methodist Episcopal Church. And these defendants deny, that they, or either of them, in their own right, and as individuals, have the custody or control, by law, of the property and effects of said Methodist Book Concern; but they state, that the title to the same is held by the said corporation, and that the defendants have no other property, interest, and control thereof—save as above stated—except as officers and members of the said corporation. These defendants, therefore, are advised by counsel, and, therefore, insist, that no such case is made by the plaintiffs' Bill, as makes it necessary for these defendants to set forth any account or inventory of the property of the said corporation; but in this they submit their rights and duties to the judgment of this honorable Court, and offer to comply with any directions which it may give.

And these defendants, further answering, say, they have no certain knowledge, but, according to their information and belief, they deny the plaintiffs have brought their said Bill by the authority and under the direction of all the annual conferences, and traveling preachers, and members in said Church, South. And these defendants claim and insist upon the same benefit and advantage of their objection to the right of said plaintiffs to bring said Bill, as if the same were interposed by plea, or demurrer, or any other proper manner.

And these defendants submit, that the plaintiffs are not entitled to any relief or decree, prayed for in said Bill of Complaint, or to any other relief or decree against these defendants, touching the matters in the said Bill set forth.

And these defendants, further answering, say, as they are advised by counsel, and believe, and therefore submit, that the claim of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, to any proportional part of the funds and property in question in this suit, is not clear, but, on the

contrary, is at least doubtful in law; and that these defendants can not safely pay or deliver over the same to them, or their agents, unless their rights thereunto are established and sanctioned by a court of law. They, therefore, pray, that, in any event, they may be protected and properly indemnified in the premises, that their rights and duties may be recognized and established, and all proper costs, counsel fees, commission, and expenses of every kind, may be allowed them under the decree of this honorable Court.

All which matters and things these defendants, are ready to prove, as this honorable Court may direct; and they humbly pray to be here dismissed, with their reasonable costs and charges, in this behalf most wrongfully sustained.

*Dated at Cincinnati, January 1, 1850.*

#### DOCUMENT 76.

##### *Judge Nelson's Decision.*

For this see the printed Decision at the time; also, C., November 20, 1851; W., December 3, 1851; Scraps, VII, pp. 660-670. Our limits do not allow us to insert this Document; but the references will suffice, and its preservation.

#### DOCUMENT 77.

*Declaration drawn up by Drs. Paine and Smith, to which the Southern Delegates were believed by him to be agreed, intended to supersede the Declaration, but not presented to General Conference, because it was believed it would not pass, as it was somewhat identical with the Plan offered by Dr. Capers, and rejected.*

THE delegates of the southern and southwestern conferences, having been appealed to by the committee appointed by the General conference on the subject of the proposed division of the Church for their views in the premises, concur in the following declaration of sentiment;

1. That they have always deprecated division of any kind, and still regard it as a dernier resort, to which nothing short of imperative and uncontrollable necessity could reconcile them even for a moment to entertain.

2. Such necessity they have been constrained to feel is now imposed upon them by the extrajudicial action of a majority of the General conference in the case of Bishop Andrew, taken as it has been in defiance of our united remonstrance, made in view of averting this precise calamity, as well as our repeated assurances given the conference, that such action would render it inevitable.

3. Thus compelled against our will to entertain the idea of division, we can not even now consent to a division of the Church, but only a division of our *great field of ministerial labor*, by the organization of two General conferences, each retaining the patronymic name—Methodist Episcopal Church—the Articles of Religion, General Rules, and Restrictive Articles.

Such division of the *work* would not necessarily involve either schism or secession, to both which we are irreconcilably opposed.

4. This kind of division in the General conference we regard as necessary and even desirable, unless the future agitation of the subject of slavery in the General conference can be wholly interdicted by express statute, excluding it from the counsels of the Church as

exclusively belonging to the civil and not to ecclesiastical government.

5. It is only under the stress of these circumstances, that, yielding to the necessity which the present emergency has occasioned, we concur in soliciting the committee to report a plan for the amicable division, not of the Church, but only our field of ministerial labor, including an equitable partition of the property and funds heretofore held in common by all the annual conferences.

Signed,

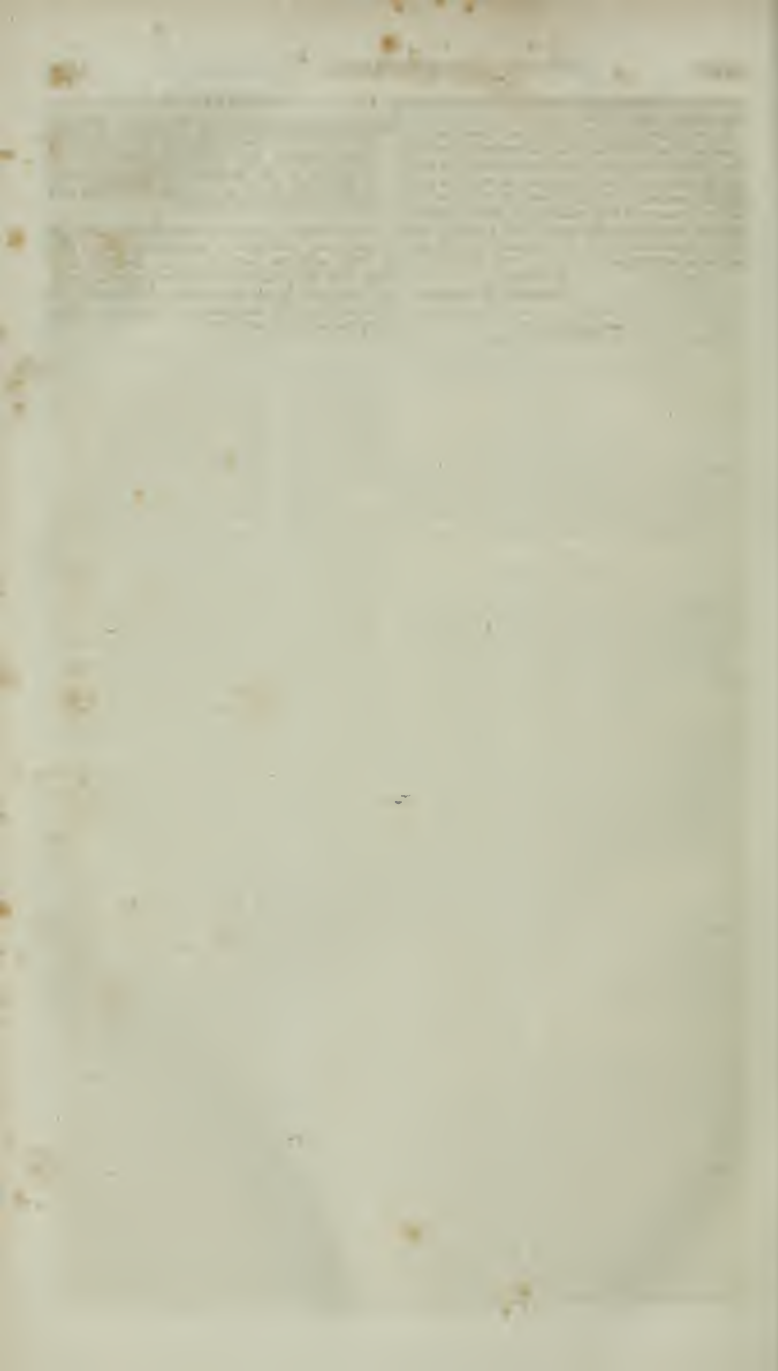
R. PAINE,  
WILLIAM A. SMITH.\*

\* Scraps, I, p. 527.

## DOCUMENT 78.

*Articles of Association of the Trustees of the Fund for the relief and support of the Itinerant, Superannuated, and worn-out Ministers and Preachers of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States of America, their wives and children, widows and orphans.*

THE charter, with its amendment, may be found in my collection of pamphlets, Vol. VIII, p. 466; and the body of it in Bangs's History, Vol. II, p. 45. This, it is presumed, will be sufficient, as all concerned may consult the Document in the one place or the other. This, we presume, will suffice.



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