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LIFE AND TIMES

OF

Rev. Allen Wiley, A. M.,

CONTAINING

SKETCHES OF EARLY METHODIST PREACHERS IN INDIANA, AND  
NOTICES OF THE INTRODUCTION AND PROGRESS OF  
METHODISM IN THE STATE;

ALSO, INCLUDING

HIS ORIGINAL LETTERS, ENTITLED, "A HELP TO THE  
PERFORMANCE OF MINISTERIAL DUTIES."

BY

Rev. J. C. Holliday, A. M.

EDITED BY REV. D. W. CLARK, D. D.

Cincinnati:

PUBLISHED BY L. SWORMSTEDT & A. POE,  
FOR THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, AT THE WESTERN BOOK CONCERN,  
CORNER OF MAIN AND EIGHTH STREETS.

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R. P. THOMPSON, PRINTER.

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## PREFACE.

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SINCE the death of Rev. Allen Wiley, a desire has been repeatedly expressed by many of his numerous friends, that some more extended account of his life and labors should be given to the public than has yet appeared. The conference of which he was a member, at its first session subsequent to his death, appointed a committee to report on the practicability of publishing a biography of Wiley. But, owing to the paucity of materials for such a work, the committee reported unfavorably. Many of his friends, still believing that such an account of his life and labors could be given to the public as would prove both acceptable and useful, urged the author to undertake the task of its preparation. Yielding to the judgment of those whose opinions he has long been accustomed to respect, he has endeavored to furnish, under the convenient title of "The Life and Times of Rev. Allen Wiley," such an account of his life and labors as the facts at his command would enable him to do, and to furnish brief sketches of a number of his coadjutors who have "ceased from their labors," and such notices of the progress of the Church in Indi-

ana as will serve to show what, under God, has been accomplished by the Methodist ministry. The work also contains outlines of ten sermons of Rev. Allen Wiley, and his original letters to ministers, entitled, "A help to the performance of ministerial duties in the Methodist Episcopal Church."

The author trusts that the work will not be subjected to the ordeal of rigid criticism. The recorded materials for the historical part of the work are very slight; for, brief as is the period since the introduction of Methodism into the west, it is difficult to procure well-authenticated accounts of the formation of many of its first societies, as well as of the labor and peril of many of its first ministers.

Anxious to save from utter loss many evanishing reminiscences, the author has recorded some things which the reader may regard as irrelevant. But it should be borne in mind that this work is neither strictly historical nor biographical, and rather a compilation of data than a continuous narrative arranged according to the rigid rules of historical composition. The author is indebted to the published Minutes of the Conferences, to conference documents, and to Wiley's account of the introduction of Methodism into south-eastern Indiana, for much of his data. Others have been received by correspondence from sources which will soon be inaccessible.

We are accustomed to honor the hardy pioneers who first settled the great west—who, in defiance of the dangers of savage warfare, the terrors of the wilderness, and the privations and hardships incident to a frontier life, dotted these broad val-

leys all over with their cabin homes. They had faith in human progress, and the lapse of one generation has sufficed to realize more than their brightest visions of future prosperity and competence. The biographer and historian have recorded their perils, their virtues, and their deeds of noble daring; but, as yet, little has been recorded of that *noble class of pioneers*, equally chivalrous and more self-sacrificing, who visited our fathers in their cabin homes, bringing with them the message of salvation. Their position, though one of toil and privation, was one of moral sublimity. They were laboring for posterity. Spurning the luxuries of life, the refinements of taste and elegance, the comforts of ease and affluence, and the allurements of the world, actuated by that spirit which brought the Savior from heaven to earth, they heeded not the dangers of the wilderness, and often exposed themselves to the deadly rifle and scalping-knife of the savage, that they might light up the log-cabin and the fort with the lamp of truth, and cause the voice of prayer and praise to arise from the deepest solitudes of the wilderness. Some of them descended to the tomb in the meridian of life, leaving scarcely a memorial of their resting-place or a stone to tell where they lie. But they have left a monument more enduring than marble, in the glorious fruit of their labors. Society owes them a debt of gratitude lasting as time. Hoping that the present work may stimulate other and abler pens to rescue from oblivion the memory of those moral heroes who, as "*spiritual leaders of the forlorn hope*," under the command of the great 'Cap-

tain of our salvation,' guided the Church to battle and to victory," the author submits it to the public, praying that the Divine blessing may accompany it, without which all our labor is vain.

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Part First.

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LIFE AND TIMES OF REV. ALLEN WILEY.



LIFE AND TIMES  
OF  
REV. ALLEN WILEY.

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CHAPTER I.

Moral heroism should command our highest esteem—Character of the early Methodist preachers in Indiana—Advantages of studying Christian biography—Rev. Allen Wiley—Place of his birth—Emigrates to Kentucky—State of the country—Removes to the vicinity of Lexington—School privileges—Removes to Indiana—Prevailing disease of the climate—Reflections on the state of society—Wiley's marriage—Influence of family religion.

THERE are names that should not be forgotten and deeds that ought to be remembered. The successful general, who has led his brave troops to victory on many a hard-fought battle-field, will not want for biographers. His path to victory may have been strewn with the mangled, the dying, and the dead; still he was brave and successful. Cities in ruins, agriculture suspended, commerce crippled, and a million hearts made desolate by the loss of friends, may all be the result of his victories. But, because he was victorious, the trumpet of fame proclaims, with clarion blast, the greatness of his deeds. That which is bold in conception, fearless and vigorous in execution, ever commands admiration, irrespective of its moral character. Hence, the lion, though ferocious and terrible, is, among men, an emblem of greatness and nobility, while the patient and vigilant

watch-dog, who guards his master's dwelling through the long hours of night from the approach of the thief and the incendiary, is the type of all that is low and mean.

There is a moral heroism that is not sufficiently studied and admired. In this land, where we have no hereditary honors, and where so little importance is attached to primogeniture—where nature, education, and grace issue the only patents of nobility—he is the true hero who, in spite of circumstances, rises to wisdom and usefulness, or who, in surveying the state of society around him, finds his heart moved at the sight of the desolation which sin has wrought, resolves, in the strength of HIM who gave him a heart to feel and the ability to will, that his efforts shall not cease till that moral waste shall bloom in Eden's loveliness, and who pursues his object, through opposition, and privation, and peril, with a devotion as true as the needle to the pole, till success crowns his efforts, or death terminates his career. Such moral heroes have blessed our country. Many of them have gone to their reward; but the fruit of their labor remains. They have shown us what man can be and what man can do. More than this—as the result of their cheerful self-denial and patient toil, they have left us a rich legacy, in the domestic quiet, the social order, and the public prosperity with which we are surrounded; for in a free government these can only result from intelligence and virtue.

The pioneers of religious truth in Indiana exerted an influence upon the minds, manners, and morals of our early population, which time will never efface. Theirs was the high privilege of molding society while in the transition state; for society, like the individual, has its different states and stages of progress—its infancy, and its maturity, and its transition state from rudeness to refinement. During this transition state, which corre-

sponds to the period of education in the individual man, society takes on, in a type more or less distinct and with great permanence, whatever influences may be exerted upon it; for early influences upon society, like impressions upon the youthful mind, are most permanent and influential. Indiana was fortunate in this respect. Those who directed the religious mind and led on the religious movements of the day were earnest and sincere men. None suspected, for a moment, that they were actuated by sinister or selfish motives. There was, in their manner, a directness of purpose which showed at once their sincerity. They were men of large views and high resolves. They knew that these broad valleys would soon teem with a crowded and busy population; and hence, in the nucleus of every growing settlement, and on the site of every rising town, they planted the standard of the cross. Theirs was no temporizing policy. Other communities, in the early periods of their history, have been cursed with a time-serving and sometimes a dram-drinking ministry—a ministry lacking the nerve to confront vice in all its forms. Widely different from all this were the men who preached the Gospel in the cabins of the first settlers in Indiana, and planted the Gospel in our wilderness land.

We have said they were earnest men. Their very vocation was proof of that. They abandoned all idea of ease or wealth. Intent upon their great mission, they penetrated the wilderness with cheeks unblenched, and met the dangers of flood and field with unquailing eye and unflinching nerve. And what though bridgeless streams had frequently to be swam, undrained swamps to be crossed; and what though they should occasionally have to lodge in a wilderness, with a stone for their pillow and the canopy of heaven for their covering—they believed that HE who watched over Jacob in the wil-

derness of Haran, would watch over them—and, with the apostle, they would exclaim, “None of these things move us.” Diligent in the acquisition of knowledge as they were faithful in disseminating and fearless in defending the truth, they became wise and able ministers of the Gospel. If they had but few books they studied them well. Their eloquence was the gushing forth of a heart full of emotion; and emotion is the true source of eloquence. They felt the truths which they spoke, and hence their influence upon others.

The study of Christian biography is always profitable; for there we see Christianity in action. Christians are living epistles of the truth and power of the Gospel. To cherish the memory, revere the virtues, and record the deeds of the men who first brought among us the blessings of the Gospel, and whose labors have made the wilderness and the solitary places glad, and caused the desert to bud and blossom as the rose, is alike a duty and a privilege.

Prominent among those who labored long and well for the improvement of society in Indiana, stands the name of REV. ALLEN WILEY—a name almost as familiar throughout Indiana as household words. His career commenced in comparative obscurity. His early opportunities for acquiring knowledge were very limited—such only as the sons of the adventurous settlers of Kentucky enjoyed from 1797 to 1804. And, although when he entered the ministry in 1816, he could boast of but the ordinary advantages of a common school education, yet, with a family dependent upon him, and subjected to the numerous disadvantages incident to a residence in a new and sparsely-settled country, and burdened with the daily and onerous duties of an itinerant preacher, he, nevertheless, attained to ripeness in scholarship, profoundness in theological learning, and to a commanding position as



an able expositor and defender of the doctrines of Christianity.

For many years previous to his death he was in the daily habit of reading portions of the Scriptures in the English, Latin, Greek, and Hebrew languages. He read his Hebrew Bible through with great care. He was familiar with profane and sacred history. As a theologian he ranked as a master; and, although his style was rarely ornate, yet with the rules of rhetoric his mind was familiar, and in logic and verbal criticism he was always at home. To trace the process by which so much was accomplished, and mark the stages by which the humble backwoodsman became the ripe scholar, the profound theologian, and the able minister, as well as to mark some of the incidents in a life not devoid of interest, shall be our object in these pages.

REV. ALLEN WILEY was born in Frederick county, Virginia, January 15, 1789. His father emigrated to Kentucky in the spring of 1797, and settled near the present site of Petersburg. Allen, of course, received but little instruction previous to their leaving the "Old Dominion," and at his new home in Kentucky, at that day, schools were few and far between. There were then but few families on the Indiana side of the Ohio river. Many of the Indians were yet hostile; and, after providing for the immediate wants of their families and guarding them from the incursions of the Indians, the attention of the early settlers was directed to such improvements as would insure their future comfort and competency, so that but little time was left for mental improvement, even if their opportunities had been greater than they were. In 1799 Mr. Wiley removed to Fayette county, in the vicinity of Lexington. Here young Allen enjoyed, for a short time, the advantages of a school, having for his instructor William Houston, who subsequently entered the ministry,

and has labored for a number of years as a member of the Baltimore conference.

In the fall of 1804 Mr. Wiley removed to Indiana, and settled about three miles above the present town of Harrison, on White Water, Allen then being in his sixteenth year. Here opportunities for school instruction were limited to the winter months, the rest of the year being devoted to labor on the farm, except the latter part of summer, or from the time designated by the phrase "laying the corn by," till early frost or corn-gathering time—a period in which the chills and fever or the old-fashioned ague never failed to pay the early settlers its annual visit. But the ague was not attended with much mortality, and disappeared at the approach of frost, leaving the farmer sufficient strength to gather his crop and a voracious appetite for his corn-bread, sweet milk, and pumpkin pies, luxuries not to be lightly esteemed. During the winter months, the youth of both sexes would flock with eagerness to the log school-house, where the Irish pedagogue or the "universal Yankee" dealt out lessons in orthography, penmanship, arithmetic, and flogging, quite indiscriminately to all who might attend. The different stages of improvement in society are distinctly marked by the character and qualifications of the school-teacher.

First. We have the *school-master*—the man with whip and ferule constantly in hand, whose authority is upheld by blows and knocks. Under the reign of these masters, there usually occurs, during the Christmas holidays, what is termed, "Turning out the teacher." The larger scholars will assemble at a given hour in the morning, and bar the entrance to the school-house, and prevent the master's admission, till he will capitulate, by promising to treat the school to apples, cakes, or such articles, and to such extent as the *vox populi* may demand; or, if this

is not sufficient, the person of the teacher is secured and conveyed to an adjoining stream or pond, where the danger of an immediate submersion will secure the Christmas treat. This over, rod and ferule are again reinstalled with absolute authority, and all things move on as before.

Next comes the *school-keeper*. Easy soul, he is anxious to please parents and pupils. Government he has none; of learning he has but little; and, as a consequence, he is "*not apt to teach.*"

Lastly. We have the *school-teacher*—the educator proper—with blackboard, and maps, and moral suasion in the foreground, while corporeal punishment is held as a dernier resort. Young men who have been educated in the west—a phrase of great ambiguity—have usually passed through these stages of social progress from the reign of the *school-master* to the arrival of the *school-teacher*. Young Wiley gave his teachers, what few of them he had, but little trouble. He was docile in his disposition, and allowed none whose advantages were not greatly superior to his, to be in advance of him. He was with the foremost in all that he undertook. Nature endowed him with a good constitution. Exercise in the open air, and plain but wholesome diet, had aided in a perfect development of his physical powers; and, as his health was fine, his spirits flowed freely, and young Wiley was usually on good terms with all around him. Accustomed from infancy to the hardships and privations of frontier life, he knew how to sympathize with the backwoodsmen in their cabin homes. He felt that he was one of them; and what, to one differently raised, would have seemed difficult, was with him a matter of course. To cross swollen and rapid streams, destitute of bridges and ferries, to find his way through difficult and unfrequented paths in the wilderness, were matters to

which he was accustomed. And thus Providence gave him in youth that kind of training which best fitted him for the post that in subsequent years he was called to fill. "For planets govern not the soul, nor guide the destiny of man."

Early in 1808 Mr. Wiley was united in marriage to Miss Margaret Eades, daughter of James Eades, who was one of the earliest settlers on the White Water, having settled a few miles below the site of the present town of Harrison as early as 1799. In the choice of a companion for life, Mr. Wiley was peculiarly fortunate; his wife proved a helpmeet indeed. Mr. Eades's family belonged to the Baptist persuasion, and had secured Baptist preaching in their neighborhood, which was the first in that part of the country. In the house of his father-in-law, he was, for the first time, brought into familiar intercourse with *family religion*.

## CHAPTER II.

Death of Mrs. Wiley's father—Wiley begins to read the Bible and pray in his family—Distress of mind on the subject of religion—Unhappy effects of the doctrine of predestination—Becomes acquainted with Rev. Moses Crume—Obtains a copy of the small Scriptural Catechism, and a copy of the Methodist Discipline, containing Coke's and Asbury's Explanatory Notes—Joins the Methodist Episcopal Church—Perplexed on the subject of baptism—Is baptized by pouring—Experiences religion during a love-feast.

“There are moments in life that are never forgot,  
Which brighten, and brighten, as time steals away.  
O, these hallowed remembrances can not decay;  
But they come on the soul with a magical thrill,  
And in days that are darkest they kindly will stay,  
And the heart in its last throb will beat with them still.”

SUCH, with the faithful Christian, is the period of his early espousal to Christ. In the fall of 1808 Mr. Wiley's father-in-law died. Two sons of Mr. Eades, who lived at a distance, and who were professors of religion, visited their mother, and the remainder of the family, upon the death of their father. During their stay, one of them conducted family prayer with much gravity and devotion, which made so powerful an impression upon the mind of Mr. Wiley that he resolved to become religious. He began immediately to read the Bible—a book to which he had paid but little attention. On returning home from his mother-in-law's, with his wife and child, he attempted family prayer in his own house, which, he said, was the first time that he ever kneeled down to pray in all his life. He continued this course for several months with a greatly-increased desire for salvation. But his feelings fluctuated, and his desire for salvation

began to abate, as he was endeavoring to travel alone in this, to him, new way. Previous to his marriage he was a confirmed *fatalist*; his religious acquaintances were of the Baptist persuasion. His predilections now were in favor of that Church, as most of his religious instruction had been received from them. They had taught him that it would be wrong for him to unite with any Church till he had experienced a gracious change upon his heart. But with a deep conviction of his sinfulness, there came such a sense of moral obligation and of his personal accountability to God for his actions, as at once overthrew all his previous notions about fatality. At this period of his existence he said, "I could no longer believe fatality nor unconditional election and reprobation." How was it possible for him to have such a sense of guilt for actions that were the result of necessity, or for having pursued a course that had been decreed for him from all eternity, unconditionally? He felt conscious of his moral agency and guilt for not having led a different life. And yet his previous views excited a bewildering and distracting influence upon his mind. In this unhappy state of mind he came near abandoning all effort for salvation. For a season he would cease to pray almost entirely, and then, becoming alarmed at his own indifference, he would renew his exertions, and seek, with increased earnestness, the way of salvation. But he had no one to guide him; his mind was a prey to conflicting influences, and his condition was deplorable. Fortunately, about this time he became acquainted with that excellent man of God, Rev. Moses Crume, who, that year, had been removed from the Cincinnati to the White Water circuit, to supply the place made vacant on the latter circuit by the removal of Thomas Nelson. Mr. Crume had preached at Mr. Manwaring's, whose house was the regular preaching-place for the Methodists in that part of the

White Water country, and his next appointment was somewhere on the upper waters of the Dry Fork, a tributary of White Water; but as he was unacquainted with the nearest route—it being but a pathway—Mr. Wiley volunteered to pilot him about seven miles on his way. During this short journey, they had much conversation on the subject of religion, and, at parting, Mr. Wiley desired to purchase a copy of the small Scriptural Catechism published by the Methodist Church, and which the preachers usually carried for sale. Mr. Crume declined selling him a copy, but made him a present of one. This little book, he remarked in after years, “laid the foundation of my present theological knowledge.” This little book corrected his false notions about *fatality, predestination, etc.*, and gave him Scriptural views of the plan of salvation. Mr. Crume exhorted him to go forward, assuring him that one cause of his perplexity was his neglect of duty. He now commenced afresh, and with more earnestness than ever, to seek the Lord. He had none of his friends to counsel and encourage him. His two brothers-in-law, who were religious, resided at a distance. He felt that his way was dark and his efforts feeble; still he struggled on. At length he borrowed a copy of the Methodist Discipline, which contained Coke’s and Asbury’s explanatory notes. This he read with great care, and found fault with a few things of minor importance in it. He stated his objections to Mr. Crume, who, at this time, was his only religious instructor, except his Scripture Catechism. Mr. Crume removed his objections, and Wiley finally concluded to join the Methodist Episcopal Church, which he did, with much fear and trembling, on the 18th of April, 1810, being then in the twenty-second year of his age. His earliest religious impressions were among the Baptists; and, as might have been expected, his mind was perplexed on the subject of immersion—not but what the

Methodists would have cheerfully immersed him; but they held that immersion was not the exclusive mode of Christian baptism; and, if not, the question presented itself fairly to his mind, Which of the different modes is the most Scriptural and proper? After much mental exercise on the subject, he became satisfied not only that sprinkling or pouring was a valid mode of baptism, but that infant baptism was both right and proper. Accordingly he and his two eldest children were baptized by Moses Crume, by pouring, about one year after he had joined the Church.

When he joined the Methodists he well knew that his course would subject him to much reproach, which, however, as it is frequently the case, was the very thing that he needed, as it cut him off from the world, and brought him into close intercourse with the people of God.

Some time in the summer after he joined the Church, at a love-feast, under the concluding prayer, the Lord blessed him with a satisfactory assurance that his sins were pardoned, and that he was measurably made a new creature. But he did not receive that clear and powerful evidence of his gracious state that many do; but his assurance was a gradual work, and continued to increase to the close of life.

Mr. Wiley is believed to be the first person who was both converted and licensed to preach the Gospel in Indiana. When Wiley joined the Church there were but few circuits in Indiana, and the total number of Methodists in the state was considerably less than *two thousand*.



## CHAPTER III.

Wiley's Call to the ministry—Is employed to travel with Bigelow on Lawrenceburg circuit—Is admitted on trial into the traveling connection and appointed to Lawrenceburg circuit—An extraordinary meeting at Wiley's house under the ministry of Bigelow—Remarkable conversion of an infidel lady—Revival of religion in Switzerland county—A backslidden local preacher reclaimed.

“ He was a man, by God,  
 The Lord, commissioned to make known to men  
 The eternal counsels—in the Master's name,  
 To treat with them of everlasting things.  
 The elders of the Church,  
 Indeed, upon him laid their hands, and set  
 Him visibly apart, to preach the word  
 Of life, but this was merely outward rite  
 And decent ceremonial. His call,  
 His consecration, his anointing, all  
 Were inward, in the conscience heard and felt.”

SHORTLY after Wiley's conversion he felt deeply impressed that it was his duty to preach the Gospel. But he believed in the outward as well as the inward call, or that whenever God called an individual to the performance of a particular work, that he would open his way before him. He did not have to wait long for the outward call. The preachers and people were alike convinced that it was his duty to preach. He was accordingly licensed to exhort the next year after he joined the Church, and at the quarterly meeting conference held for that circuit, July, 1813, he was licensed as a local preacher.

In 1816 Russel Bigelow was appointed to Lawrenceburg circuit alone. His circuit was large, embracing what now constitutes the Lawrenceburg, a large portion

of the Madison, and a part of the Brookville districts. Over this extensive territory Bigelow traveled every four weeks. Bigelow was zealous and successful. His word was in the demonstration of the Spirit and power. The people felt every-where that he came to them in the fullness of the blessing of the Gospel of Christ; but the circuit was too large for one man. Four weeks was too long an interval between appointments. Bigelow was anxious for a colleague, and his discerning eye fell on Wiley as a suitable person. He accordingly presented the subject to Wiley, and urged him to enter the itinerant ministry. But there were numerous difficulties in the way. He had but a few months previous removed to a new home in the wild woods, at least two miles from any other dwelling. He was poor, and had a wife and five children dependent upon him; and, among other objections, Wiley urged the unwillingness of his wife for him to enter the traveling connection. Bigelow asked him if he would be willing, provided his wife would give her consent. Thinking himself safe in that condition, he answered, "Yes." Bigelow immediately laid the matter before Mrs. Wiley, who, to the astonishment of her husband, readily gave her consent. His last excuse was now removed, and Wiley commenced making preparations for the work upon which he was about to enter. With the consent of his presiding elder he commenced his itinerant career, on the first day of December, 1816.

Bigelow and Wiley were united in the bonds of friendship as closely as David and Jonathan. They gave themselves to God and his work, and God greatly blessed their labors. Although Wiley intended to travel for but three months when he started, before that time had expired, he felt that God had called him to the work in which he was engaged; and when he would think of deserting, these words would seem to sound in his ears, and he constantly

presented to his mind, "It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables," and thus he continued to travel to the end of the year. At the last quarterly meeting conference for the circuit, for that year, he consented that they might recommend him to the Ohio conference as a suitable person to be received on trial in the traveling connection, and he was accordingly received in the summer of 1817, and was appointed to Lawrenceburg circuit with Samuel West, who had charge of the circuit.

There were several incidents connected with Wiley's first year on Lawrenceburg circuit in connection with Bigelow that are worthy of record. Although their circuit extended from the vicinity of Brookville down to Madison, on the Ohio river, during the year they enlarged its bounds considerably, and added a number of new appointments. At several points on the circuit there were glorious revivals of religion. Wiley's own house became a preaching-place; and although, a few months previous, there was not a dwelling within two miles of his, yet, in the course of the year, such was the immigration, and such the work of God among the new-comers, that a *society of forty* was raised up.

One night, when there was an appointment for Bigelow to preach at Wiley's house, a crowd collected, and, under the first prayer the power of God was manifested among the people, and many began to cry for mercy; and so great was their distress that preaching was dispensed with, and penitents were invited to the mourner's bench, and great was the work of the Lord among the people.

At Allensville, a little town in the northern part of Switzerland county, there was a glorious revival of religion. One day Wiley was preaching from the text, "The eyes of the Lord are over the righteous," etc. In the exposition of his text he remarked that when the Scrip-

tures ascribe eyes, and hands, and other bodily parts to the Deity, they were not to be understood literally, but as expressive of attributes and operations of the Deity. There was present a lady who had been a confirmed Deist for many years, who had supposed that Christians believed all such expressions were to be understood as physically descriptive of God, and she had always regarded with contempt such a petty and local God as these expressions seemed to intimate the God of the Bible to be. She began to think more seriously about the Bible and its doctrines than she had formerly done. Shortly after, she was riding alone in the woods, and a limb fell from a tree which came near striking her, and in her fright she exclaimed, "Lord Jesus!" This alarmed her the more to think that she should invoke a name for which she felt no respect. This incident fastened conviction upon her mind. Not long afterward she went to hear Bigelow preach, and the Lord powerfully convicted her soul; and this was soon followed by a powerful revival of religion all over the neighborhood. There had settled in the vicinity of Buchanan's station—a post nearly midway between the present town of Versailles and Madison—a man by the name of John Richey, who had been a local preacher in Kentucky, but who had got out of the Church, and was a miserable backslider. He came to hear Wiley, and remained after the sermon, and conversed with the preacher about his condition. He stated that he had not heard a traveling preacher preach for some years, and that he had not read a chapter in the Bible for three years—that it tortured him beyond endurance to read the Bible. Two weeks after, when Bigelow came around, he joined the Church, and, in a short time, was reclaimed, and was made class-leader, then exhorter, and then local preacher. He was for years one of the most popular and useful local preachers in all the land.

During this year there were two glorious camp meetings held within the bounds of this circuit, which shall be noticed hereafter. West and Wiley found Lawrenceburg in a prosperous condition the ensuing year, and revival influence continued to spread nearly all over the circuit. This year the circuit was still further enlarged by the addition of new preaching-places. A new society was formed on the flats, about nine miles southwest of Brookville, which has continued to prosper. A new society was also formed between South Hogan and Laughery, near the present site of Mount Tabor meeting-house. This was a prosperous year on Lawrenceburg circuit, as many substantial citizens united with the Church, and the Church received valuable additions by immigration from the older sections of the country.

## CHAPTER IV.

Early camp meetings—Camp meeting in the White Water country in 1808—Camp meeting near Madison in 1817—Camp meeting on Hogan creek, between Wilmington and Aurora, in 1817—A plea for camp meetings.

“The groves were God’s first temples—ere man learned  
To hew the shaft, and lay the architrave,  
And spread the roof above them—ere he framed  
The lofty vault, to gather and roll back  
The sound of anthems.”

CAMP MEETINGS exerted a salutary influence upon the early population of the west. Camp meetings originated in the west, so far, at least, as their modern history is concerned; for anciently God required all his people to attend camp meeting once a year; for what was the Jewish feast of tabernacles but an annual national camp meeting?

Camp meetings are identified with the earliest operations of Methodism in Indiana. The first camp meeting ever held in the White Water country was in 1808. The meeting was about five miles above the town of Harrison, near what is called the Lower Narrows, and was superintended by Hezekiah Shaw, who was in charge of the circuit that year. Shaw was anxious to secure good order during the meeting, but very injudicious in the means which he employed. He had put up at the different cross-roads, and other public places throughout the neighborhood, written advertisements, threatening the people with three dollars fine for sundry breaches of order, to be arrested by a magistrate in the neighborhood. This was considered, by all who were disposed

to be troublesome, as a kind of banter, and many who would never have thought of disturbing a religious assembly, were offended at these threats in advance, and, as might have been expected, many came to the meeting with feelings of insubordination. A humorous, witty fellow, by the name of Breckenridge, paraphrased Shaw's advertisement in a kind of doggerel poetry, every stanza ending with "three dollars fine." This furnished a good deal of sport for the "outsiders," and threw Shaw and his advertisements into ridicule. No disturbance, however, occurred during the meeting, and a great deal of good was accomplished. William Houston, who was on the Cincinnati circuit, attended this meeting, and labored with great success. At this meeting an intelligent gentleman by the name of Mervin, whose education had been in another Church, was struck under deep conviction while hearing Houston preach from the whole armor of God. He went home in the evening greatly excited on the subject of religion. His soul's salvation had become the all-absorbing subject of his meditations. He retired to bed with a heavy heart, mourning his sins and imploring the Divine mercy. But while in this state of mind, all at once light broke into his soul, and love flowed into his heart, and he felt as though he was in a new world. With him all things had become new. He began to shout aloud, and spent most of the night in rejoicing in God his Savior.

During this meeting a simple-hearted, honest fellow came forward to join the Church, and, being asked by the preacher whether he was willing to renounce the world and the devil, replied, in the simplicity of his heart, "I am willing to do any thing you tell me." It was at this meeting that Allen Wiley, for the first time in his life, was found at the mourner's bench as a penitent of salvation.

The following year there was a camp meeting held on the same ground, at which John Collins, Asset M'Guire, Elijah Sparks, Walter Griffeth, and several other ministers were present. The preaching was, of course, of a superior order. The arrangements for the meeting had all been made devoutly and prayerfully, and there went out an influence from that meeting in favor of religion and of Methodism, which extended from Brookville to the border of Kentucky, or at least for thirty miles.

In the summer of 1817 there were two glorious camp meetings held within the bounds of the Lawrenceburg circuit, which that year enjoyed the labors of Russel Bigelow and Allen Wiley. The first was on the bank of Crooked creek, where a portion of Madison now stands. Up to Saturday morning the meeting dragged heavily. The appointment for eleven o'clock on Saturday had been reserved for Thomas Hellums, one of the preachers from White Water circuit, who was expected at the meeting. Just before the hour of preaching, as Hellums had not arrived, Bigelow said to Wiley, "You will have to preach." Up to this time Wiley had preached more from a conviction of duty than from a love of preaching. But on that morning he remarked that he felt for the time a desire to preach. Consequently, when informed that he must preach at that hour, the intelligence was just what he desired. He requested Bigelow to tell him where the following passage could be found: "The wicked is driven away in his wickedness, but the righteous hath hope in his death." Bigelow named him the chapter and verse, and he immediately commenced the services of the hour. As he advanced, God filled his mind with ideas and his heart with zeal, and he preached with great success. At the close of the sermon twelve or fifteen came forward for prayers, and conversions commenced and continued to the close



of the meeting. Bigelow preached the closing sermon on Monday, which was one of decided ability, and attended with uncommon power. The results of this meeting were truly glorious, and much of its fruit remains to the present time; and some who were converted at that meeting are safely landed on the other shore. The revival did not close with the camp meeting, but continued with unabated interest for some time. The local preachers in the vicinity kept up the meeting, and people were converted in the church, and at their homes, and the work of God extended mightily and prevailed, so that many were saved as the fruit of the first camp meeting in that part of Indiana.

The other camp meeting was held near the bank of South Hogan, to the right of the road as one travels from the town of Wilmington to Aurora, near the residence of Mr. Milburn, whose house was the preaching-place for that region in early times. At this camp meeting Bigelow closed his official labors on Lawrenceburg circuit. There were perhaps as many souls converted at this meeting as there were during the progress of the Madison camp meeting, but its influence was not so extensive. The meeting closed on Monday in a very solemn and impressive manner. Bigelow had the congregation formed in a company, like soldiers in a double file, and marched around the encampment, singing appropriate farewell hymns; after which the preachers took their stand at some convenient point, and bade them all farewell by shaking hands with each one of them, and getting pledges from as many of them as they could to meet them in heaven. O, what a melting time was that! Christians had been associated together for several days in the worship of God on that consecrated spot. They had prayed and rejoiced together. And now they were about to separate, never all of them to meet again on

earth. Many had been converted during the meeting, and to them the place was consecrated ground. Bigelow was bidding adieu to his flock, and he exhorted them, in strains of eloquence that moved every heart, to meet him in heaven.

The glorious results of such meetings will never be fully known till God shall collect his redeemed children home. "The Lord shall count, when he righteth up the people, that this man was born there;" for many of the children of Zion shall date their spiritual birthplace upon the camp-ground. Why should we give up the camp meeting?—desert the venerable groves,

"God's ancient sanctuaries, and adore  
Only among the crowd, and under roofs  
That our frail hands have raised?"

True, we have our churches; but there are many who never enter them, or, if they do, it is but occasionally, and only for a brief hour. The current of worldly thought is hardly arrested. "But there are disorders at camp meetings." So there are in our town and city churches. Camp meetings do not make bad men, though bad men attend them, and men who have gone to scoff have remained to pray. "But it is a needless exposure of health to camp in the woods." We are not so certain but what it is conducive to health. If it had been dangerous to life or health, would God have required the Jews to encamp in booths for a week every year? We say, give us the camp meeting, where, day after day and night after night, the mind shall be called off from the world, and directed to the great subject of personal salvation. Let us hear the eloquence that is called forth by the presence of assembled thousands, and the music that ascends from a thousand pious hearts, as, with united voice, they join to sing the songs of Zion. Let us again see weeping hundreds crowd the camp meeting altar;

and O, let us again hear the shoutings of the newly-converted, as they arise and testify that Christ hath power on earth to forgive sins. There shall be in that innumerable company before the throne a mighty host who were converted at camp meetings.

## CHAPTER V.

Rev. Allen Wiley's career as a circuit preacher—A thrilling incident—Text at a funeral—Outline of a sermon on the word religion.

THE first eleven years of Wiley's itinerant ministry were spent in traveling extensive and laborious circuits, as follows: In 1817, Lawrenceburg; 1818, White Water; 1819, Oxford; 1820, Madison; 1821, White Water; 1822-3, Miami; 1824, Madison; 1825-6, Charlestown; and 1827, Lawrenceburg. These circuits averaged from twenty to twenty-five appointments each, and required four weeks to go around them. Many of the appointments were distant from each other. The roads—where there were any—were newly opened and poorly improved, and many of them were mere paths, or blind ways, recognized only by marks upon the trees. The streams were destitute of bridges or ferries, and yet the preachers were always expected at their appointments, no matter what was the state of the weather or the condition of the roads or streams. The writer witnessed an exciting scene that occurred while Wiley was on Lawrenceburg circuit the second time. A large congregation had assembled on a funeral occasion, near the bank of South Hogan. Wiley was expected to attend the funeral, but had to reach the appointment from the opposite side of the creek. Punctual to the hour, the preacher was seen on the opposite bank. But a heavy rain had suddenly raised the stream to what was considered an impassable depth. The current was uncommonly rapid, and the water came foaming and dashing over its uneven and rocky bed in the most turbulent and angry manner. A large portion

of the men repaired to the creek to ascertain whether it would be possible for the preacher to cross. Most of them were of the opinion that he ought not to attempt it; but, after surveying the stream for a few minutes, he ventured in. His horse was large and strong, and accustomed to fording difficult streams. But soon the horse was nearly buried in the angry water, which dashed its spray over both horse and rider. Now it seemed as though the noble animal would lose his footing, and both horse and rider perish. But, by yielding partially to the current, and inclining a little down stream, the shore was reached in safety. After wringing the water from his outer clothing and changing his socks, he preached an able and deeply-impressive sermon, from 2 Samuel xiv, 14: "For we must needs die, and are as water spilled on the ground, which can not be gathered up again; neither doth God respect any person; yet he doth devise means that his banished be not expelled from him." Not unfrequently would the preacher cross the fordless stream in an Indian canoe, or "dug-out," as they are familiarly called, carrying his saddle and saddle-bags with him, and swimming his faithful horse along side. Wiley was ordained a deacon by Bishop M'Kendree, August 25, 1818, and ordained an elder by Bishop Roberts, August 13, 1820.

Wiley was an indefatigable student, and, as a consequence, he not only increased his store of knowledge, but made rapid improvement in both the matter and style of his sermons. He studied his subjects well, but delivered them without the aid of written notes. But few of his discourses, on any occasion, were ever published, although many of them were master productions; and it is much to be regretted that his pulpit preparations were not committed to paper.

The following outline of a sermon preached by him,

from the word "religion," in 1827, will give some idea of his style of sermonizing at that time.

Text—Religion. The word is found twice in the first chapter of Galatians, once in the fifth verse of the twenty-sixth chapter of Acts, and in the twenty-seventh verse of the first chapter of James.

We shall discuss the subject under the following heads:

1. Its origin; 2. Its nature; 3. Its tendency; 4. Its end.

I. *Its origin.* 1. Endeavor to show that natural religion, properly speaking, was the religion of Adam before the fall, and that it is of no service to fallen man. 2. Show from Scripture and reason that man is fallen, and has no religion, if God has not revealed it to him, and of course its origin is in the Divine mind, and is revealed to us, which God has goodness, and wisdom, and power to do.

II. *Its nature.* 1. It is doctrinal; 2. It is experimental; 3. It is practical. Here we will consider the doctrines of a Gentile, a Jew, and a Christian. (1.) The Gentile believes that there is one supreme God, who is a rewarder of those who seek him, which faith is produced by tradition and the enlightenings of the Spirit which taught him the necessity of a medium of access to God. This is evident from his having tutelar gods and sacrifices. (2.) The Jew believes that there is one God, and a Messiah to come, which he discovers, First. By promise; Second. By sacrifices; Third. By prophecy. (3.) The Christian believes in one true God, and in justification by faith and regeneration by grace. The experimental includes justification, regeneration, and sanctification. The practical consists in doing justly, loving mercy, and walking humbly with God, or a discharge of all our personal duties.

III. *Its tendency.* 1. The doctrinal shows us our relation to God, and the way to obtain his favor. 2. The

experimental tends to make us happy in our own souls.  
3. The practical tends to promote peace and happiness among men.

IV. *Its end.* To prepare us for death and judgment, and to bring us to the enjoyment of God and heaven, in soul and body to all eternity.

Some of my readers may have heard Wiley preach the sermon of which the above is a meager sketch. If so, they will not ask the question, Can these dry bones live? They remember how he clothed them with flesh, in beautiful proportions, and breathed into them life and animation, and how, as he progressed with his subject and warmed with his theme, he presented the religion of the Christian to the delighted and enraptured minds of his hearers in its purity, its grandeur, and its power, as the last yet glorious hope of humanity--having the promise of the life that now is and of that which is to come.

## CHAPTER VI.

Wiley's first eleven years in the ministry—Progress of Methodism—Rev. William Cravens—Temperance and antislavery principles—Conversion of an infidel—Anecdotes of Cravens—Wiley's temperance resolutions—The Church an embodiment of moral power—Death of Cravens.

DURING the eleven years which Wiley spent in traveling circuits, religion, and especially that form of it called Methodism, had made rapid progress in Indiana. When Wiley commenced traveling, Lawrenceburg circuit was the only entire circuit in eastern Indiana. A few of the appointments on the White Water circuit were on the Indiana side of the line, and these were included in the Ohio conference.

The following circuits in Indiana were included in the Missouri conference: Silver Creek, which lay opposite Louisville, Ky.; Blue River, which derived its name from the waters of that river being blue; Patoka and Vincennes, on the Wabash.

In 1827 there were the following fields of labor, and supplied as follows: Madison district, John Strange, presiding elder; Madison station, Edwin Ray; Madison circuit, James Garner and Abner H. Cheever; Lawrenceburg, Allen Wiley and Daniel Newton; Lawrenceburg station, James L. Thompson; White Water, Thomas S. Hitt and James Scott; Wayne, Stephen R. Beggs and William Evans; Connersville, Robert Burns; Rushville, James Havens; Indianapolis, N. B. Griffith; Columbus, C. B. Jones; Vernon, Henry Buel. Charleston district, James Armstrong, presiding elder; Charleston, George Locke, C. W. Ruter, supernumerary, and E. G. Wood;



Corydon, J. W. M'Renolds, S. Lowe, supernumerary; Paoli, William Moore, James M. Kean; Eel River, W. H. Smith, Benjamin Stevenson; Crawfordsville, Eli P. Farmer; Bloomington, Daniel Anderson, S. M. Otwell; Salem, William Shanks, John Hardy; Washington, Thos. Davis. Wabash district, Charles Holliday, presiding elder, (a part of this district in Illinois;) Vincennes, J. Miller, Asahel Risley; Patoki, Charles Slocum; Boonville, William Mavity; Mount Vernon, Thomas Files.

Thus we have twenty-six different charges, and these enjoying the labors of thirty-eight men, and including an aggregate membership of more than twelve thousand. (See published Minutes for 1827.) During this period several of Wiley's associates in the ministry, in Indiana, had died. Of this number was Rev. William Cravens, than whom a braver man never lived. He was born in Virginia, July 31, 1766. He made a profession of religion, and joined the Methodist Church, in 1794. He removed to Indiana, and was received on trial in the Missouri conference in 1820. He had been a local preacher for a number of years in Virginia, previous to his immigration to Indiana, and had acquired great notoriety from the faithful and fearless manner in which he denounced vice in all its forms. He abhorred sin of all sorts, but especially the sins of *drunkenness and negro slavery*. Against these he declaimed with a zeal which made the wicked quail before him, even in the aristocratic parts of Virginia.

While residing in Virginia Mr. Cravens had an infidel neighbor by the name of T., who was a slaveholder. He had labored in vain alike to convert him to antislavery principles and to the truth of Christianity. At length Mr. T. was taken severely ill, and it soon became apparent that he would likely die. The prospect of death shook his confidence in his infidel principles, and he

became deeply concerned on the subject of his soul's salvation; and as his convictions increased he desired some one to instruct him in the way of salvation. At length he sent a servant with the request that Mr. Cravens would call and see him. Judging correctly as to the cause of the invitation, he hastened immediately to the home of the sick man, whom he found dangerously ill, and deeply distressed on account of his sins.

"O," said the sick man, "I am glad to see you. I want you to pray for me, and tell me what I must do to be saved."

"Ah, Mr. T., I thought it would come to this. What have you done with your negroes?"

"I have provided for them in my will," said Mr. T. "I have divided them among my children, as I wish them to remain in the family."

"I can not pray for you," said Cravens; "God will never have mercy on you till you are willing to do justly. You will never get religion till you set your negroes free." So Cravens returned home. But in a short time another messenger came for him.

"Master wants to see you immediately," was the substance of the request. The sick man felt that his condition was a perilous one. Death was approaching, and the preacher had refused to pray for him. He needed mercy, and yet he had failed to exercise it. The will was called for and altered, and soon the minister arrived."

"Well, T.," said Mr. Cravens, "how is it now?"

"Cravens, I want you to pray for me, and tell me how I can be saved."

"What have you done with your slaves?" said Cravens.

"I have altered my will," said Mr. T., "and have provided for their emancipation."

“I will pray for you now,” said Cravens; “and more than that, God will have mercy on you, too.”

The preacher was not mistaken. In answer to their joint supplications God did bless him, by removing the burden of guilt from his conscience, and giving him a satisfactory hope of a home in heaven.

In 1821 Mr. Cravens was sent to Indianapolis, or, rather, to organize a circuit to be called Indianapolis; for as yet there was no such circuit, except as the conference had that year named it on the Minutes. A few Methodist families had settled at different points on White river, in the vicinity of Indianapolis, and the conference resolved to send them a preacher; and, accordingly, Cravens was appointed to that work, with the view of taking care of the few sheep in the wilderness, and of planting the institutions of religion and disseminating its influence in the center of our young but promising state. Cravens was just the man for such a work. Zealous, fearless, and indefatigable, he would confront danger in any of its forms, if duty only led the way. On horseback and alone he threaded his way through the wilderness, from the settlements on the Ohio, to those on White river. The streams were swollen by the recent rains and difficult to cross. In attempting to ford Sugar creek, in the vicinity of where the old state road, leading from Madison to Indianapolis, crosses it, he was swept from his horse and left to buffet with the stream as best he could. His horse reached the bank in safety, and a man who had settled in that vicinity in an early day, observing the horse come out of the creek without its rider, he hastened down to the bank to see what was the matter. He states that when he arrived at the bank he saw a large, middle-aged man crawling out of the water upon the limbs of a tree-top that had fallen into the stream, and as he got on the trunk of the tree he heard him solilo-

quizing, and saying to himself, "Well, bless God, I would go to heaven if it were Sugar creek all the way." Said the backwoodsman, "I reckon you will get there; you seem to be in the right way. A man who could praise God in the midst of such trials would be likely to succeed in his mission and save his own soul."

Cravens did not cease his denunciations against the sin of slavery after he had come to a free state.

Here he found some who had hired out their slaves in the slave states, and were drawing their wages. Many more had sold their slaves, and removed to a free state, and purchased homes for themselves and their children with the price of their slaves, and were now zealous anti-slavery men. Such were denounced by him as blood-stained hypocrites, and worse than the actual slaveholder, who was still holding his slaves but treating them kindly. He seldom preached a sermon without making all who made, sold, or drank ardent spirits feel uneasy.

On one of his circuits a brother was reported as being guilty of "unnecessarily drinking ardent spirits." He was cited to trial, and found guilty. But the committee was anxious to retain him in the Church, if possible; and they wished to know of the accused brother if he would not quit his habit of dram-drinking. After reflecting a little, he said he would *try and quit*. But it was evident that he did not feel that there was much guilt attached to the mere habit of dram-drinking. He could drink or let it alone, and seemed to think it rather an interference with his personal rights to entirely prohibit him. But rather than give up the Church he would promise that he would *try to quit*. "But," said Cravens, "brother, you *must quit*." That was, however, more than the brother would promise to. But, on his pledge that he would try and quit, the committee retained him. Not satisfied with such a verdict, Cravens carried the case up to the quar-

terly meeting conference, where the brother was required either to give up his drams or to give up the Church. He concluded to give up the former, and was thus doubtless saved from a drunkard's grave by the uncompromising integrity of his pastor.

Cravens was not alone in his opposition to intemperance. Every Methodist preacher was expected to enforce the Discipline of the Church against dram-drinking and drunkenness. The following is a copy of the resolutions which Wiley was in the habit of getting his quarterly meeting conference to adopt. They are taken from the old Church Records at Indianapolis, and were adopted by the official members of that Church at their second quarterly meeting, in 1832.

*Resolved*, 1. That we will not use ardent spirits in any way or on any occasion, except in cases of extreme necessity.

*Resolved*, 2. That we will not treat with, nor offer in refreshment, ardent spirits, at home or abroad; neither will we use them on our farm in harvesting or in any other employment.

*Resolved*, 3. That we will not distill or make ardent spirits, nor cause the same to be made; neither will we buy or sell them for our own emolument, nor on commission for others.

*Resolved*, 4. That we will not permit our laborers, or any other person, to make use of ardent spirits on our premises.

*Resolved*, 5. That we will not vote for any person, when we can conscientiously avoid it, who will treat with ardent spirits at or previous to elections, for the purpose of securing votes.

*Resolved*, 6. That we will use our exertions in our respective neighborhoods, to suppress the use of ardent spirits, except as a medicine, and at all suitable oppor-

tunities we will endeavor to prevail on our neighbors to unite with a temperance society.

And yet we find a temperance lecturer so intemperate in his zeal to advance the temperance reformation and to glorify temperance societies, as to assert that our early ministry was a dram-drinking ministry, and that dram-drinking was tolerated in all the Churches. Such, however, was not the fact. The Church is an embodiment of that moral power which is to effect the regeneration of human nature, and as such her ministry and membership are rightly expected to take the lead in all moral reforms. Cravens died, after a short but severe illness, on the 10th of October, 1826. He was a man of very strong talents, and was remarkable for his practical common sense and ready wit.

His satire was scathing, his courage undaunted, and his zeal a constant flame. He devoted all his energies to the service of God, and his labors were crowned with success. Truth never had a bolder champion, nor vice a more uncompromising foe.

## CHAPTER VII.

Privations and hardships of early preachers—Shrader on Silver Creek circuit—Extent of the circuit—New preaching-places—Extensive revival—Pilots Bishop M'Kendree to the seat of Missouri conference—Sickness—Appointed to Spring River circuit, Arkansas—Account of the country, the people, etc.—Description of the mode of preparing breadstuff—Camp meeting on the bank of the Arkansas river—Dr. Oglesby's second appointment from the conference—Perils in the wilderness—Providential deliverance—Extent of his circuit—Explores the Missouri country—Visits Daniel Boone—Preaches at Boone's Lick—Early Jesuit Missionaries—Their reports—Central idea of Romanism—Central idea of Methodism—Protestantism favorable to free institutions.

As an illustration of the labors, privations, and hardships of the early pioneers of Methodism in the west take the following, furnished me by Rev. John Shrader, an early associate of Wiley's in the ministry, and who is yet living. He says, "In the spring of 1818, I was removed to Silver Creek circuit on the Ohio, embracing the country from the mouth of Blue river up to Madison. Rev. J. Cord had been appointed to this circuit by the Bishop; but his house being consumed by fire, he was compelled to quit traveling for a season, and return to his friends. I came to Cord's appointment at Gazaway's, and found him preaching from 'The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want.' It was a good sermon, preached by a good man. After service I told him that I had come to take his place. He appeared glad to be released, and hastened home. I now entered on my work with much fear and trembling. Revivals had commenced at different points on the circuit under Cord's preaching, and on me rested the responsibility of carrying on this great work, which extended nearly all over the circuit; and

during the year nearly six hundred were taken into the Church on trial. I took into the circuit, as new preaching-places, New Lexington, Jeffersonville, and New Albany. Some seven or eight members of the Church had formed themselves into a class at New Albany, and called on me to preach for them, which I did in a tavern occupied by a Mrs. Ruff. In this tavern I administered the sacrament of the Lord's supper for the first time, I suppose, that it was ever administered in New Albany.

“At the close of this year, by the direction of the presiding elder, I went to Cincinnati to meet Bishop M'Kendree, and conduct him to the seat of the Missouri conference, which was to be held at Bethel meeting-house, near the present town of Washington, the county seat of Davies county, Indiana. I was taken sick the first day of the conference, but was well taken care of at the house of William Hawkins. My appointment for the ensuing year was Spring River circuit, Arkansas territory. It was some time before I sufficiently recovered from my sickness to enable me to ride. But while yet feeble I started for my field of labor, which required a journey of five hundred miles. My circuit embraced a large extent of territory; it was mountainous and rocky; the settlements were very scattering, and it was far between the appointments. The inhabitants were mostly hunters, and lived on the game they caught. They generally brought their dogs and guns to meeting with them. The dogs very often differed with each other; and a quarrel ensued, and this ended in a general dog fight. This always produced a stir in the congregation, and consumed some time before peace could be restored and ratified. The preacher would be interrupted in his sermon, or perhaps forget his text, and have to finish with an exhortation. At other times the hunters would return home during divine service, with venison, bear meat, and dogs. But we were



not easily disturbed in those days. We had plenty of venison, bear-meat, and turkeys to eat; but our bread was corn, and coarse at that. In many places we had no way of grinding our grain, except on what was called Armstrong's mill. This was generally a long cedar pole, with one end made fast on the ground, and supported in the middle by two forks, with a pestle fastened to the small end. Under it we placed a mortar, and thus we prepared our breadstuff, and this we frequently baked without sifting; and perhaps this is the reason why we did not have the dyspepsia. In some parts of the circuit, however, we fared well for the times, found warm friends, and, at two or three appointments, had good revivals of religion. At the close of the year I traveled as far west as the Arkansas river, and attended a camp meeting on its bank. We had a good meeting, at the close of which I started for conference, which sat at M'Kendree Chapel, near Cape Girardeau, Missouri.

“My next appointment was Corydon circuit, Indiana. I was much pleased with this appointment, and felt myself at home among my old friends.”

In 1816 the Missouri conference was organized, and held its first session at Turkey Hill settlement, in Illinois. The following is father Shrader's account of the organization of the conference, and of his first appointment from the conference:

“Bishop M'Kendree and myself started from Louisville, Kentucky, for Vincennes, from whence Walker, Scripps, and others, were to travel with us through the wilderness to the Missouri conference. After camping in the wilderness three nights, we arrived at the seat of the conference. When the conference was organized we found that we had seven members present, and some few were admitted on trial. These are now all dead, except J. Scripps and myself. The conference extended over four different

states. Most of the members of conference were young men. We had received very little quarterage from our circuits, and consequently were in tolerably-straitened circumstances. Bishop M'Kendree gave the conference one hundred dollars, and this, added to our share of the funds, made us a pretty fair dividend. From this conference we scattered over this immense territory. My appointment was to Missouri circuit, embracing the settlements between the Missouri and Mississippi rivers. I commenced preaching in St. Charles, in a tavern. Some of the bacchanalians would leave their worship and listen to me awhile, and sometimes they would swear that I was preaching the best sermon that they ever heard. We had a good revival on the Missouri, above St. Charles. In the fall of this year—1817—the presiding elder and myself traveled up the Missouri as far as Boone's Lick, and held a camp meeting—the first ever held in that part of the world. Having to lodge in the woods six nights, going and returning, I was taken very sick, and had like to have died in the wilderness.”

We give another extract to show the hardships and perils through which our fathers in the ministry had to pass in that early day. The following is an account of Dr. Oglesby's second appointment from the conference. The Doctor died at Louisville, March 12, 1852, aged over seventy years :

“In the fall of 1804 I went a missionary to Illinois. When I left the Ohio river at Clarksville—foot of the falls—on my way to my field of labor, there was but one family living on the trace till I reached Vincennes—a distance of about one hundred and fifty miles, as the trace then ran. But there was a fearful amount of ferocious wild beasts, and Indians not a few, by a company of whom I expected to have been murdered at the crossing of the west fork of White river. I was then alone, in a

howling wilderness of one hundred and eighty miles before me. I was unwilling to undertake the journey alone. I therefore remained at Vincennes near two days, till company came up who were bound for Turkey Hill settlement, which was then the emporium of Illinois. After four days lonely and hard traveling, we reached our place of destination in safety.

“I soon commenced my labors, and formed a three weeks circuit, which was about three hundred miles in circumference. The circuit contained two respectable classes, besides a few scattering members. During that year my labor was hard, and my sufferings intolerable; but the pleasure of the Lord prospered in my unworthy hands. I was far beyond the reach of my presiding elder—Rev. William M’Kendree. I therefore had to bear the burden and heat of the day alone, not seeing one of the preachers that season. In June, 1805, I reconnoitered the Missouri country to the extremity of the settlement, and had the pleasure of seeing Daniel Boone, the mighty hunter, during my trip there. I preached frequently, which was novel to the people, as I was the first Methodist that had ever preached in that territory.”

Such indomitable energy, such tireless devotion, such uncomplaining toil, such cheerful self-denial as was manifested by the early pioneers of Methodism in the west, has never been equaled in the history of our country, except in the case of the early Jesuit missionaries of the Romish Church. They were the first in the field; they came with the early French traders and French troops. The Jesuit missionaries were the first historians and geographers of the great west. They not only visited the trading posts and small colonies established by the French, but they followed the Indian to his hunting-ground, threaded the forest, swam rivers, and endured all kinds of hardships in prosecuting their spiritual

mission and in furthering the objects of the government from whence they came.

The best and only authentic account of the country, bounded on the north by the lakes, east by the Wabash, south by the Ohio, and west by the Mississippi, one century ago, is to be found in the Missionary Reports of these Jesuit fathers. One of these Reports was written by father Gabriel Maust, missionary of the company of Jesus, and directed to father Gemon, of the same company, dated at Kaskaskia, an Indian village, November 9, 1712.

An edition of these Reports was published in Paris, in 1761; but while the influence of the Jesuit fathers was doomed to decline, the influence of Methodism was destined to rapidly increase. The cause which tended to produce such opposite results is obvious to the unprejudiced upon a moment's reflection.

There has ever been a strong bond of sympathy between the Papal religion and monarchical forms of government, which has ever led them to further each other's plans, and come to each other's relief in numerous emergencies. The central idea of the Romish Church is an aggregation of power, and hence her affinities and tendencies are all to a state of absolutism.

The Jesuit fathers, who established a cordon of missionary stations from the northern lakes down the Wabash and Illinois rivers to the Mississippi, and from these to the Gulf of Mexico, were, in an important sense, government officers under the French crown. Romanism was the established religion of France, and the Church was regarded by the court, as it has ever been by monarchs, as a powerful engine of state policy, and the Church in turn employed the state to further its schemes of conquest, and became the heritage of republicanism and the home of free institutions. Protestantism began

to appear in the ascendant. The history of Detroit, Vincennes, St. Louis, and New Orleans are proofs of my position. While the central idea of Romanism was power, the central idea of Methodism was *salvation from sin*. Methodism, like most other forms of Protestantism, has its sympathies, tendencies, and affinities all on the side of republicanism—on the side of liberal institutions and a free government; and all it asks of the state is to be let alone in its holy mission of saving sinners and of establishing the spiritual kingdom of Christ in the earth. The best evidence of the apostleship of our pioneer fathers in the ministry is found in the thousands who were converted through their instrumentality. They labored, and we enter into their labors. They have built up a Church, powerful in numbers, and with an organization admirably adapted to efficient action as an instrument of human salvation as well as in improving the minds, manners, and morals of society.

## CHAPTER VIII.

Wiley is appointed presiding elder on Madison district—Extent of the district—Revival on Lawrenceburg circuit under the labors of N. B. Griffith and E. G. Wood—Radical secession at Madison—Camp meeting on Pendleton circuit—Baptism of a sick man—Wiley continues on Madison district—His views in reference to the division of the larger fields of labor—Anecdote of a Roman farmer—Wiley's perseverance as a student—Visits Fort Wayne—Sketch of the character and labors of Rev. John Strange.

IN 1828 Wiley was appointed presiding elder on the Madison district. The appointments in his district were supplied as follows: Madison station, Edwin Ray; Madison circuit, Cornelius Ruddle and Abner H. Cheever; Lawrenceburg, Nehemiah B. Griffith and Enoch G. Wood; White Water, James L. Thompson; Wayne, Robert Burns; Connersville, William Evans; Rushville, James Havens and John Kerns; Fall Creek, Charles Bonner; Indianapolis station, James Armstrong; Columbus circuit, Asa Beck. The following were the metes and bounds of Madison district when Wiley took charge of it. It began at Madison on the Ohio river, and extended north of Randolph county, and thence west to White river, and thence down said river, including Andersontown, Noblesville, Indianapolis, and Martinsville. It then extended south-east to the east fork of White river, called Driftwood, some distance below Columbus, and thence to Madison, the place of beginning, embracing all the intermediate country, except a narrow strip extending from Paris to Versailles, called Vernon circuit.

The district included twenty county towns. Wiley's first year on Madison district was signalized by extensive

revivals of religion in many of the charges. Lawrenceburg circuit shared largely that year in revival influence, under the zealous and indefatigable labors of N. B. Griffith and E. G. Wood.

Nearly every part of the circuit was in a perfect blaze of religious excitement, and many were converted to God; and of the number were several young men, who subsequently entered the ministry. Of these we mention J. V. Watson, of the Michigan conference, Edward Oldham, formerly of the Indiana, but now deceased, and F. C. Holliday, as likely to be remembered by our readers. The year closed with a glorious camp meeting near Mount Tabor meeting-house, on the dividing ridge between the waters of Hogan and Laughery creeks. There was a net increase on the circuit, during the year, of two hundred and fourteen members, and much of the fruit of that year's labor remains to the present time; although many who were converted through the instrumentality of Griffith and Wood are numbered among the spirits before the throne.

This year witnessed considerable agitation in the Church at Madison, in consequence of the Radical excitement, as it was called. Ray did what he could to reclaim the disaffected brethren, by publicly vindicating the economy of the Church; but these efforts only hastened the crisis; and during the year a number withdrew, and organized a separate Church, which flourished for some time. They built a respectable church on Third-street, in the central part of the city, and at one time the society numbered about three hundred. But in a few years they began to decline. The greater part returned to the old Church, and for some years our Protestant brethren did not keep up worship in their house at all, and there is a sad prospect of their ever accomplishing much in that community. I inquired of an intelligent

brother, who was acquainted with the history of the unfortunate division in Madison, as to the cause of so total a failure on the part of our Protestant friends. His reply was, that Radicalism was like the small-pox—people would take it only once. Whatever causes of complaint existed at the time of the Radical secession, time has shown that they were more in the administrative policy of the Church than in any organic law or fundamental principle in the Discipline of the Church. It is not contended that the Discipline of the Church is not susceptible of improvement. But experience in the future will show, as it has in the past, that it is easier to improve it than find a substitute that will work better. The real friends of any system can not be opposed to such a change in its mode of operation, as a change of circumstances may require, or as the light of experience may prove to be desirable. It is doubtful whether there is any Church in which lay representation is more potential for all practical purposes than in the Methodist Episcopal; and yet it is highly probable that improvements can be profitably and judiciously made in that direction.

Fall Creek prospered considerably under the labors of Charles Bonner. Although it was his first year in the conference, his zeal, amiability, and piety made him popular with all classes. He was industrious to a proverb. Had he continued in the conference, and devoted his energies to the study of theology and general literature, and less to manual labor, he would have been one of the ablest and most useful ministers in Indiana. His family was large, and his receipts from the Church generally inadequate to their proper support, and, in an hour of temptation, he located. How many men have been lost to the Church under similar circumstances!

During Bonner's year on Fall Creek circuit, there was a glorious camp meeting held in the vicinity of Pendleton,



during which at least fifty souls were converted to God, and about the same number added to the Church. The following incident in connection with this meeting is from the pen of Wiley:

“A part of the sermon at the middle of the day, on Sabbath, was devoted to the subject of baptism, and at the close of the service some forty or fifty adults and infants were solemnly baptized. After the public baptism was over, the elder was informed that there was a poor, afflicted man in a wagon, whose body was, to a considerable extent, decayed by some kind of abscess or ulceration; but there was yet body enough left to hold the soul, which could not stay much longer on the earth, as disease was rapidly encroaching on the vital parts of the system. This poor Lazarus, with all his stench of disease, heard the sermon and felt its force, and was desirous to be baptized before he died; and his wish was met in the wagon. His meek, penitent, weeping countenance is still fresh in my recollection. If baptism were confined to immersion alone, this poor man must have died unbaptized; for I suppose the most zealous immersionist in the world would not have attempted to put the fragments of his decaying body under the water. To my mind this fact is a most powerful argument against the absolute necessity of immersion to constitute valid baptism; for if that be the case, this penitent believer must have died unsealed with God’s sign of the Christian covenant; but if pouring or sprinkling be valid baptism, while the head and heart are alive, and reason and feeling continue, the penitent may be baptized. This poor man felt that it was valid; and in a few days left the remains of a loathsome carcass, and went to rest.”

Armstrong had a successful year in Indianapolis station, and received many substantial citizens into the Church, who still remain active and influential members.

Wiley remained on the Madison district four years, during which he sustained the reputation, among both preachers and people, of a prudent administrator of the Discipline and an able expositor and defender of the doctrines and usages of the Church; and he was instrumental in bringing a number of young men into the conference who have done good service to the Church.

He early saw the necessity of dividing the larger fields of labor, so as to allow more time and a better opportunity for the performance of pastoral duties. The following were his views as early as 1830. He says, "We were slow to learn the true method of the Church's influence and usefulness by so multiplying charges as to bring more persons into active operation in the cause of religion. Formerly there was great reluctance to divide circuits, for four reasons: 1. For fear the preachers would not have enough to do; 2. For fear we could not find a sufficiency of preachers for the charges; 3. For fear the preachers could not get a competent support; 4. Because the official members who had long been associated together in the same quarterly meeting conference were unwilling to part. If all our work was to be done on horseback, or in the act of preaching and meeting classes, as many seem to suppose, there might have been some ground for the first reason. This mistaken view had well-nigh ruined most of us; and I fear the mass of the old and middle-aged preachers, and some of the young ones, too, will have to die off before we have a good body of pastors and Sunday school men, and men who will care for and attend to all the benevolent and literary interests of the Church. The second reason is a kind of infidel one, and seems to say that God has not the 'residue of the Spirit,' and could not supply the Church with a sufficient number of competent men to do the work which he has ordained and commanded to be done. The third reason has no

foundation in fact. Virgil says, in his *Bucolics*, 'Praise a large farm, but till a small one. A Roman gentleman had two daughters and a vineyard. On the marriage of one of his daughters, he gave her one-third of his vineyard, and bestowed the same amount of culture on the remaining two-thirds as he had done on the whole, and the consequence was that there was no diminution of the vintage. On the marriage of his second daughter, he gave her another third, and then bestowed the same amount of culture on the remaining third, and his vintage was equally abundant.' The same principle is equally true as it respects the culture of moral soil."

During Wiley's second year on the district he suffered from repeated attacks of the fever and ague; yet he was punctual in attending his appointments, whether he was able to preach or not. And, notwithstanding his district was large and the opportunity of studying poor, yet he prosecuted his study of the original languages of the holy Scriptures with an ardor that insured success, even under the greatest disadvantages and discouragements. Burdened as he was with the duties of a large district, and enfeebled by disease, he would sit down in the families where he staid, and commit a lesson in Latin, or pore over his Hebrew Bible and Lexicon, or his Greek grammar and Testament, with as much composure as though he were in the privacy of a quiet study. He studied grammar and logic on horseback, and elaborated many of his best sermons while riding to his appointments. He held that any man who entered the ministry before he had arrived at the meridian of life, could and ought to master the Greek and Hebrew languages, that he might be able to read the Scriptures in the languages in which they were originally written. Although he read the Latin classics himself, yet he regarded a knowledge of the Greek and Hebrew languages of more importance

to a minister of the Gospel, than a knowledge of the Latin. But highly as he prized a knowledge of the languages, he did not esteem them as indispensable qualifications for the work of the ministry, and in all his own studies he had a special view to usefulness.

In 1831 Wiley paid a visit to Fort Wayne, accompanied by Richard S. Robinson. During their stay they held a series of meetings in the Masonic Hall, which exerted a salutary and powerful influence on the minds of the people. Fort Wayne was then a mission, and N. B. Griffith was the missionary. Wiley preached in the morning and Robinson at night, for several days in succession; and it was Wiley's opinion, if the meeting had continued a few days longer, that nearly the whole community would have embraced religion. But the preachers had to leave to attend a camp meeting in Wayne county. Wiley frequently remarked that he never thought of their leaving Fort Wayne when they did, without feelings of regret.

The fall of 1832 witnessed the death of one of the most eloquent and useful ministers that had ever labored in Indiana—Rev. JOHN STRANGE, who died at Indianapolis, December 2, 1832. Strange was received on trial into the Western conference in 1810, when he was not quite twenty-one years of age. He had been employed a part of the year previous by Rev. James Quinn, who was then presiding elder on the Muskingum district. His ministerial life was spent in Ohio and Indiana. It is not our object to give an account of his labors; for that would require a volume; but to give a brief notice, and attempt a faint sketch of the man as one of the prominent actors in the early history of Methodism in Indiana. Strange was tall and slender, and stood remarkably erect. His hair was black as a raven, and his eyes were a mild blue, yet remarkably brilliant when he was animated.

His education was not very thorough; yet he was a close student, and but few men ever had a better command of language than he. For years he was in the habit of carrying Walker's octavo dictionary in his saddle-bags, and of studying it closely; and thus he acquired a very ready and happy use of language, and his storehouse of words seemed inexhaustible. His great attention to the choice of words frequently made his style quite florid and ornate. His leading mental traits were feeling and imagination, and, as a consequence, his sermons were highly descriptive. Sometimes his imagination would tower and soar aloft, till his hearers would be carried in feeling and fancy to the third heaven. He could paint a panoramic scene with the hand of a master, and he frequently employed metaphoric representations with wonderful effect. Once, when preaching on the love of God, he compared it to an ocean, and then he endeavored to sound it with a line. While letting down his line, he became most impassioned, and cried out, at the top of his shrill voice, "More line—more line!" and the effect was to enrapture and convulse the entire congregation on a large encampment, while they seemed lost in wonder and adoration at the unfathomable depths of God's love to a lost world.

Once, while on the Madison district, he was compelled, through feebleness and extreme indisposition, to desist from preaching, while in the midst of a sermon, at a quarterly meeting. But while abruptly closing, he exclaimed, with a pathos all his own, and perfectly inimitable, "God forbid that any of my hearers should wake up with the rich man in hell, where they must cry in vain for one drop of water to cool their parched tongues!" and, suiting the action to the word, he dipped his finger in a tumbler of water that was sitting on the pulpit, and letting a drop fall on his own tongue, fell immediately back upon his seat, while the congregation was suffused

in tears, and sobs and groans were heard from every part of the audience.

One secret of Strange's influence and of the extraordinary effect of his eloquence, was in the power of his voice. Its tones were always clear and musical, and it was capable of every variety of inflection and modulation. He could elevate it, without much effort, so as to be heard distinctly twenty or thirty rods, and retain all its music. He could sing, or pray, or preach for any length of time without becoming in the least degree hoarse. Such was the attraction of his voice and manner that when he would ascend the stand at camp meeting, many who were scattered through the surrounding woods would run with speed to get on the camp-ground to hear him. He knew nothing of the rudiments of music as a science, yet he could sing better without science than most men could with it. His singing and prayers frequently produced the most powerful impressions, and at times his eloquence was overwhelming, holding his audience at will, or raising them *en masse* from their seats. Strange's countenance was serious, approaching even to solemnity, and his appearance and manner dignified and commanding; but his style frequently savored of pleasantry, and in the social circle his wit and humor were rich and entertaining, although never degenerating into levity. But few men were ever more devoted to the interests of the Church, or were more perfectly influenced by a sense of duty, than John Strange. When, in 1814, he traveled White Water circuit, then a sparsely-settled frontier, he would go from one block-house to another, with his gun on his shoulder, to defend himself from the Indians, should he be attacked by them. Such conduct greatly endeared him to the people, and his monthly visits to the block-houses and forts were hailed with delight. Language can not describe the feeling and

impressive manner in which, on such occasions, he would sing the hymn beginning,

“And are we yet alive?”

But who would not be impressed with such a hymn under such circumstances? The following incidents will serve to show his deadness to the world, and his trust in divine Providence:

While on a visit to some of his old friends in Lawrenceburg, in 1816, he had a severe attack of fever. Toward the close of his sickness the horses which he and Mrs. Strange rode got out of the stable, and strayed off. The family with whom he staid, and other friends, having made an unsuccessful search for the horses, seemed quite uneasy about them. Strange said to them, in a mildly-chiding way, “Why are you so uneasy about the horses? All the horses in the world belong to the Lord, and he will give me just as many as I need.” At another time his horse strayed away from him at Cincinnati; but he seemed perfectly unconcerned, and borrowed another to go to his appointments. Some one said to him, “Brother Strange, are you going without your horse?” He replied, “There are hundreds of persons here who can hunt a horse as well as I can, who can not preach one word, and I shall go to my work.”

Strange may have erred in not devoting more attention to temporalities; but his firm reliance upon divine Providence must command our admiration. We shall ever revere the memory of the early pioneers of the cross, who visited our fathers in their cabin homes. In childhood we were taught to venerate them as the ambassadors of Christ, and in maturer years we have loved them for their work's sake. Their position in life, though one of toil and privation, was one of moral sublimity. They were laboring for posterity. Spurning the luxuries of life, the refinements of taste and elegance, the comforts

of ease and affluence, and the allurements of the world, they encountered untold perils and privations, that they might plant the standard of the cross on every hill-top and in every valley. That the voice of prayer and praise might ascend from the deepest solitudes of the wilderness, that the lamp of truth might light up the gloomy recesses of the lone cabin and the rude fort, and that the departing spirits of their rustic but noble tenants might be cheered and sustained in the solemn hour, by the promises of the Gospel and the hopes of a better world, they were willing to endure all things. A few of the early pioneers of the Gospel in the west yet linger among us, as noble specimens of a noble band. The rest live in our memory. Their early visits often brought childhood's sunniest smile to our cheek; and they live in their works. The face of the country is dotted all over with temples consecrated to the worship of God, and where but late was the primeval solitude a living multitude stand up to bless God for a preached Gospel and a zealous ministry.

Strange's mortal remains sleep in the quiet graveyard at Indianapolis. But recollections mournfully pleasing rush upon the minds of thousands at the mention of his name. Though his voice is hushed in death, yet in fancy we still seem to hear those thrilling peals of eloquence from lips on which hung, in breathless admiration and awe, enraptured thousands. O, how many listened, trembled, and wept, while he urged upon their consciences the claims of religion, throwing around it the interest of an endless duration! How impressive was the doctrine of eternal life, dropping like dew from his persuasive lips! "It was like the harp of David, which, struck by his skillful hand, sent forth more than mortal sounds."



## CHAPTER IX.

Division of the Illinois conference—First session of the Indiana conference—Report on Education—Subsequent action of the conference on the subject—Memorial to the state Legislature relative to the state university—Defense of the Memorial—Its failure—Founding of Indiana Asbury University—Success of the enterprise—Origin of the Preacher's Aid Society—Action of the Indiana conference on the resolutions of the General conference relative to a division of the Book Concern with the Canada conference—Wiley appointed to Indianapolis district—Reappointed to Madison district—Delegates to the General conference of 1836.

IN 1832 the Illinois conference was divided, and Indiana became a separate conference, including a small portion of Michigan, and Elizabethtown, in the state of Ohio. At the time of the division of the Missouri conference, in 1824, when Illinois and Indiana were separated from Missouri, and received the name of Illinois conference, the greater portion of the work and much the larger portion of the membership was in Indiana, and equity and propriety both seemed to say that the new conference should be called Indiana; yet, owing to the want of proper management on the part of the Indiana delegates, or to some other cause, our state did not give name to a conference till 1832. The Indiana conference held its first session in New Albany, beginning October 17, 1832. On the first day of its session A. Wiley, C. W. Ruter, and James Armstrong were appointed a committee to consider and report on the propriety of establishing a college or conference seminary. As the action of this conference was the first step toward the establishment of literary institutions under the patronage of the Church in Indiana, we insert the report of the committee, for the double purpose

of recording the fact, and as the best means of showing the views of the conference on the subject of education at that time :

“Next to the religion of the Son of God, your committee consider the lights of science best calculated to lessen human woe, and to increase the sum of human happiness. Therefore, we are of opinion that the means of education ought to be placed within the reach of the community in general, so that all may have the opportunity of obtaining an ordinary and necessary education. From observation and information, your committee are well convinced that where superior schools and colleges are neglected ordinary schools are almost universally in a languid state, and many persons are reared and live and die without any education. We, therefore, think that seminaries or colleges, under good literary and moral regulations, are of incalculable benefit to our country, and that a good conference seminary would be of great and growing utility to our people. We are aware that when a conference seminary is named, some of our preachers and many of our people suppose we are about to establish a manufactory in which preachers are to be made; but nothing is further from our views; for we are fully of Mr. Barrige’s opinion, who, when comparing ministers to pens, remarked, that although the seminaries have been trying to make pens for several hundred years, they will not write till God nibs them. When we examine the state of the literary institutions of our country, we find that a majority of them are in the hands of people of other denominations—whether rightly or otherwise, we do not take upon us to determine—whose doctrines, in many respects, we consider as incompatible with the doctrines of revelation, so that our people are unwilling—and we think properly so—to send their sons to such institutions. Therefore, we think it very desirable to

have an institution under our own control, from which we can exclude all doctrines which we deem dangerous, though, at the same time, we do not wish to make it so sectarian as to exclude or in the smallest degree repel the sons of our fellow-citizens from the same. To accomplish the foregoing objects we most earnestly recommend to the conference the use of the means that will lead to the end. We would advise that the presiding elders of the several districts be required to collect all the information in their power in reference to a site, and the means to build, and present the same to the next conference."

Although it was desirable, on many accounts, to have a literary institution of high grade under the control of the conference, yet, after surveying the entire ground, it was thought, if we could receive something like an equitable share of privileges in the state university at Bloomington, that that would answer the wants of our people for several years; and, accordingly, at the conference of 1834, it was resolved to memorialize the state Legislature on the subject; and, as the action of the Church in this matter has been grossly misrepresented at different times, and is perhaps imperfectly understood by many of her friends, we insert the memorial as the best means of communicating authentic information on the subject:

*"To the Senate and House of Representatives of the General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

"Your memorialists represent to your honorable body that they, in common with their fellow-citizens, recognize in the munificent grant of lands by the General Government to our state—to endow a state institution of learning—a correspondent obligation on our part so to manage it as not to defeat the charitable bequests of our common country. We feel that cause of complaint exists in regard to this matter, yet we do not approach your honorable body as irritated and injured individuals asking for the

redress of private wrongs, but as the patrons and advocates of general science, pleading her cause and imploring you, in your paternal character, to open her prison doors. We would impress it upon your honorable body that literature belongs to no one religious denomination of persons, and that no one exclusively should be allowed to possess the keys that unlock her treasures. We apprehend that the funds of our state college were designed, by their munificent donors, to patronize science and advance the cause of general literature, and not of religious sects; and should they be diverted from their original design, directly or indirectly, the donors are despoiled of a rich inheritance, and the legacy itself is betrayed to a very questionable purpose. We feel a deep and abiding interest in the success of the institution. We recognize in the provisions of its constitution—and particularly in the tenth section—the generous, confiding spirit in which its powers and functions were bestowed, as it were, in the absence of every uncharitable suspicion that the Hydra of sectarianism might erect its standard there. Yet we, in common with our fellow-citizens of the state, have to regret that our hopes in it have been disappointed. We look into the charter and read, that the places of president, professors, and teachers are open, soliciting capacity to occupy them, without regard to religious profession or doctrines. We then turn our eyes on the faculty, from the organization of the institution to this hour, and we see that one common hue, one common religious creed, characterizes every member, as if capacity and fitness were confined to one Church and one set of religious opinions. We have heretofore borne this without complaint, and would now be silent had we no higher object than to contend for the places and honors of the institution. But when we see the youth of our own and other Churches voluntarily abandoning and renouncing the

institution because the religion of their fathers *is but tolerated* and not domiciled there, we feel impelled, by every consideration that looks to the future, to speak out and invoke you to reclaim to the state the power bestowed on the trustees of filling their own vacancies, and give to them a fixed and definite term of service in the future. This wholesome restraint would, it is firmly believed, bring to the service of the institution a due proportion from other religious denominations, and breathe into it a new spirit, full of life and vigor. Your memorialists, therefore, earnestly solicit your interference in this matter; and that you in the premises may do what is best for the good of science, is the prayer of your memorialists."

Was there any thing unreasonable in this memorial? The evils complained of were notorious. The funds of the university, belonging alike to the whole state, were employed for strictly-sectarian purposes; and the institution was regarded as belonging more to the Presbyterian Church than to the state. It found its place in the public prints, in the catalogue of Presbyterian colleges. The Church fostered it as an adopted child that had brought with it a rich legacy, to be employed in the Church's service. Students whose religious tenets differed from the dogmas of Calvinism were regarded as ignorant or fanatical, and were compelled to hear the faith of their fathers, which they had learned to love and venerate, denounced as the rankest heresy. Nor was this all. Efforts were strenuously made to impress the public mind with the belief that none but Presbyterians were competent to teach in our higher institutions of learning. It was not enough that Methodists should be deprived of equal privileges in the university, but they must submit to be treated as constituting an inferior caste; and though the Methodist Church was by far the most numerous sect in the state, yet the self-perpetuating feature in the Board

of Trustees might forever preclude them from any representation on that Board. Under these circumstances, the conference asked as little as it could have asked. It did not petition for a Methodist president, professor, or teacher, but simply that the power of filling vacancies should be taken from the trustees and restored to the Legislature, where it rightly belonged, and that the trustees should have a definite term of service, thereby bringing the Board of Trustees, and, through them, all the interests of the university more directly under the control of the representatives of the whole people, for whose common benefit the university was founded, and to whom it belonged. It was further believed that by limiting the term of service on the part of the trustees, and making them elective by the Legislature, it would elevate the university to a higher place in the affections of the whole people, and that it would preserve the institution from being prostituted to sectarian or partisan ends.

The memorial of the conference, and similar memorials, numerously signed, were sent up from different parts of the state, to the Legislature, at its next session; and, although they were referred to an able committee, yet, from some cause, the committee have never made their report, and, from subsequent developments, it was believed that those who were opposed to any change in the manner of controlling the university judged that it would be easier to smother the report while in the hands of the committee than to answer before the people for their opposition to a reform so just and equitable. There being now no hope of obtaining, at an early day, an equitable share of the privileges of the state university, the conference turned their thoughts seriously toward the establishment of a literary institution of high grade, under the control of the Church; and, accordingly, at the session of the conference in 1835, a plan was agreed

upon for the founding of a university. Subscriptions were taken up, and proposals made from different points in the state, with a view of securing the location of the university. Lafayette, Rockville, Greencastle, Putnamville, and Indianapolis were the principal competitors for the seat of the university. After receiving proposals, and hearing the representations from the different points, the conference, at its session at Indianapolis, in 1836, located the institution at Greencastle, and in 1837 a liberal charter was secured and a Board of Trustees incorporated. In 1839 the first Catalogue was issued, and in 1840 the first Commencement was held. In 1844 a plan of permanent endowment, by the sale of perpetual scholarships, was projected. Efficient agents were appointed to carry out the plan. Up to 1848 there had been collected, in cash and notes, by the sale of scholarships for permanent endowment, \$104,000. This amount, added to \$10,000 given by ten individuals in 1840, for the endowment of the professorship of mathematics, makes \$114,000 as the present fund. Agents are now engaged in collecting this endowment, as the notes fall due, that it may be safely and profitably invested for the permanent support of instruction in the university. The amount of endowment is being increased by the sale of additional scholarships. The Board of Trustees have established a medical department, which went into operation in the city of Indianapolis in November, 1849, and it is in contemplation to open a law department at no distant day.

But let us go back again to the session of the conference in New Albany, in 1832. It having been announced to the conference that James Paxton, deceased, late of Indianapolis, had bequeathed a portion of his property to the Methodist Episcopal Church, in the state of Indiana, "to be employed in extending the work of the Lord in the bounds of the state of Indiana, helping the most needy

preachers belonging to that Church, whether effective or superannuated," James Armstrong was appointed an agent on behalf of the conference to receive the same. Allen Wiley was also appointed an agent on behalf of the conference to receive a similar bequest, left for the same purpose, by Isaac Swearingin. These, with one or two other bequests, laid the foundation for the Preachers' Aid Society of the Indiana Conference.

The subject of the division of the capital stock of the Book Concern with the Canada conference was laid before the Indiana conference, at its session in 1832, in due course, in accordance with a resolution of the previous General conference, which was, "That if three-fourths of the members of the several annual conferences present and voting on the subject shall concur therein, and as soon as the fact of such concurrence is certified by the secretaries of the several annual conferences, the Book Agents and the Book Committee in New York shall be, and they hereby are authorized and directed to settle with the agents of the Canada conference," etc. After considerable discussion, upon the vote being taken, the conference was unanimous in the negative. To this result Bishop Soule greatly contributed by the delivery of a forcible address to the conference on the subject.

Brother Wiley's time having expired on the Madison district, he was appointed to the Indianapolis district, and was succeeded on the Madison district by James Havens. But at the close of the year, as Havens lived within the bounds of the Indianapolis district, and Wiley within the Madison district, and as neither of them were in the habit, in those days, of removing their families, they exchanged districts—or the bishop changed them—and Wiley was returned to the Madison district and Havens to Indianapolis.

Wiley remained on the Madison district till the fall of



1835; and, notwithstanding he had traveled over most of the ground as a circuit preacher, and was presiding elder of the district for seven years, with an interval of but one year, he continued to be acceptable and useful, and ranked high among all classes as an able, instructive, and profitable preacher.

At the session of the conference held at Lafayette, October, 1835, C. W. Ruter, Allen Wiley, James Havens, and James L. Thompson were elected delegates to the ensuing General conference, to be held in Cincinnati in the May following.

## CHAPTER X.

Wiley publishes a series of articles addressed to ministers—His style as a preacher—Is stationed in New Albany—Wiley as a pastor—Is appointed presiding elder of Crawfordsville district—His feelings, and an account of his district—Sickness, etc.—Preaches the funeral of Rev. B. N. Barnes—Notice of Mr. Barnes—Temperance resolutions by the conference—Wiley is stationed in Indianapolis—Anniversary of the centenary of Methodism—The eighth annual session of the conference is held in Lawrenceburg—Dr. Simpson's Centenary Sermon—Conference at Indianapolis—Unprecedented increase in the membership of the Church—Wiley is appointed to Greencastle district—Conference at Terre Haute—Portrait of Bishop Roberts.

IN 1834 and 1835 Wiley wrote a series of articles, which appeared in the *Western Christian Advocate* under the signature of "A Friend to Ministers," which were designed as a help to a better understanding and performance of the duties of the ministry in the Methodist Episcopal Church. They were revised and prepared for publication in book form, by Mr. Wiley, a short time previous to his death.

At the period of which we now write Wiley had arrived at his zenith as a popular preacher; for although he continued a close student to the day of his death, his style of preaching was greatly modified after he had been stationed a few years. Although his sermons continued equally instructive, and were certainly more practical, yet they lost much of that popular cast which marked his ministrations while on the district. His sermons might be denominated doctrinal, and his style was argumentative and elaborate. His sermons were carefully studied, and all his treasures of knowledge were laid under contribution for materials to enrich them. The

etymology of words, verbal criticism, the natural sciences, profane and ecclesiastical history, all contributed their share; and, although his voice was heavy and monotonous, and his style unadorned with the flowers of rhetoric, yet would he enchain an audience for an hour and a half, or two hours, with the force of his arguments and the clearness of his illustrations, and so fixed would be their attention that they would scarcely be conscious of the time that had been consumed by the sermon.

In 1836 Wiley was stationed in New Albany; and, although the duties of a stationed preacher differed widely from those of a presiding elder, and notwithstanding this was his first year in a station, he soon adapted himself to his new position, and attended to all the duties of the pastoral office with a systematic regularity and fidelity seldom equaled, and perhaps never surpassed. In his visiting memorandum book he made a map of the town—as he did of all his subsequent stations—and kept a record of the residences of all his members. He did his visiting by streets, taking each family in consecutive order, and visiting them all at regular intervals of not more than three months apart, and frequently semi-quarterly. He left among his papers, at the time of his death, memorandum books, containing complete lists of the names of the members of the Church in nearly every circuit and station of which he had ever had charge. System characterized all his operations and constituted the secret of his success in all his undertakings.

At the close of Wiley's year in New Albany, he was appointed presiding elder on Crawfordsville district. This was to him the most afflicting appointment he ever received. It involved the trouble and expense of a long and difficult journey if he removed his family, and if he

did not, it would require him to be absent from home the greater part of the year. After due deliberation, he concluded to remove his family to his residence in Switzerland county, and leave them on his farm, where they had spent most of the time since he had entered the ministry. He found his district a heavy one, and the traveling difficult. Much of the country was new, and the roads muddy and poorly improved.

The following extract from one of his letters, dated Crawfordsville, February 6, 1838, will give some idea of his district and of his own state of mind:

“When I wrote you last I was on the eve of starting to the extreme part of the district; but, in consequence of the ice, I had to travel between fifty and sixty miles extra, and a part of it on foot; but I have gone all around the district once, and held the second quarterly meeting for this station. Owing to a failure on the part of some of the preachers, and the bad weather, the prospects on the district are not very flattering; but we have had some good quarterly meetings, particularly in this station, which is doing well. My own health is middling good, and I try to be as cheerful as my present pilgrim state will permit; but it is rather sad to be so far from a good home and a family which I so ardently love, and be in this new country, where comfortable houses are so scarce, and the traveling unpleasant this changeful winter. My mind still remains in a state of painful suspense on the subject of moving to this town. The people on the district are anxious that we should move; but I fear we should be much embarrassed to live on what we should receive from the district, and you know I am determined to spend no more of my own money, as I have made all the sacrifice in that respect that I feel it my duty to make. It is rather my impression that we will not move this year, as the district is so large and badly formed that I

would not be willing to travel it as it now stands. To move where we can seldom see most of our children, and grandchildren, and old friends, in our old age, seems rather gloomy to my mind; but we must soon move to another world; but that will be in the order of Divine providence, and we must submit.”

During the ensuing summer Wiley was prostrated by a violent attack of fever, and for some time was apparently near the grave. After he began to recover he suffered much from chills and fever, and for some time feared that he would be unable to take work the ensuing year. But he recovered in time to attend the conference which met that fall in Rockville; and on the Sabbath of the conference he preached the funeral of Rev. BENJAMIN N. BARNES, who had been stationed the year previous at Crawfordsville, and had died during the year.

Brother Barnes was a native of Virginia. He embraced religion, and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1827. In 1830 he joined the Virginia conference, in connection with which he labored acceptably and usefully for six years. In 1836 he located and came to Indiana, and was employed by the presiding elder to fill the Greencastle station till the close of the year. In the fall of 1837 he was readmitted into the traveling connection, as a member of the Indiana conference, and stationed at Crawfordsville, where the Lord crowned his labors with abundant success, and where he ended his life, on the 6th of September, 1838. His last sermon was preached at a camp meeting in the vicinity of Crawfordsville, from, “We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord.”

The conference, at its session in Rockville, in 1838, adopted the following resolutions on the subject of temperance:

1. *Resolved*, That we feel deeply convinced of the

necessity, importance, and utility of the temperance reformation, as carried on by the organization of temperance societies upon the principles of entire abstinence from all intoxicating drinks.

2. That we view the organization which brings to bear against the cause of intemperance, the united energies of the philanthropists, moralists, and Christians who will engage therein, as the only safe and speedy remedy for intemperance, and therefore demand the hearty co-operation of the above-named classes of society.

3. That this conference requests each preacher to exert his influence in behalf of this good cause, by aiding in temperance investigations privately, co-operating with temperance organizations publicly, soliciting subscriptions to the Indiana Temperance Journal, and other temperance publications, that the public may be informed on this important subject.

The Methodist ministry in Indiana were pioneers in the cause of temperance, having been temperance men from the beginning. But few temperance societies at this date were organized on the total-abstinence principle; and, although this was several years in advance of the Washingtonian reformation, the conference recognized no remedy as efficient and safe but that of *total abstinence*, and pledged themselves to co-operate with such organizations.

As Wiley was unable, in view of the state of his health, to continue on the district, he was stationed in Indianapolis, where he remained the two following years.

The conference, at its session in 1838, resolved to celebrate the centenary of Methodism the ensuing year, and recommended that contributions be received in aid of the various religious and literary enterprises under the care of the conference; and, accordingly, collections were taken up in aid of the Bible and Missionary Societies and for the endowment of the university at Greencastle.

In addition to these, the brethren in different localities appropriated their free-will thank-offerings to God to the erection of churches in their immediate vicinity, and by this means there were built a number of valuable centenary churches in different parts of the state, which stand not only as memorials of the history of Methodism at large, but as monuments to the liberality, piety, and zeal of Indiana Methodism.

The conference held its eighth annual session in Lawrenceburg, beginning October 3, 1839. At this conference, Bishop Roberts presided, assisted a portion of the time by Bishop Morris. The conference resolved to observe Friday, the 25th of October, as the anniversary of the centenary of Methodism; and accordingly on that day there was a conference prayer meeting held at sunrise in the morning, which was conducted by James Havens, one of the oldest members of the conference. At ten o'clock, A. M., a centenary sermon was preached before the conference and a large number of citizens, by Dr. Simpson. The sermon was founded on Ezekiel xlvii, 6, 9, and was one of remarkable beauty and power.

The Doctor analyzed the structure of Methodism, and reviewed its history, and showed its adaptation to the great work of the world's evangelization; that it was so arranged as to retain its internal vigor and purity, while, at the same time, it was adapted to indefinite expansion. At three o'clock, P. M., the conference held a meeting for the purpose of receiving centenary offerings, and the Conference Missionary Society held its anniversary in the evening. The exercises of the day were highly interesting, and produced a salutary impression upon the minds of all that were in attendance.

Allen Wiley, E. R. Ames, C. W. Ruter, Augustus Eddy, and Aaron Wood were elected delegates to the ensuing General conference.

The ninth annual session of the conference was held in Indianapolis, October 21, 1840. The year had been one of great prosperity; and, although the General conference had, at its session in the May preceding, stricken off that portion of the conference lying in the state of Michigan, and attached it to the Michigan conference, yet there had been an increase of over seven thousand during the year. What an intimate connection there is between the Church's liberality and her prosperity! During the year the Methodists of Indiana had perhaps doubled their ordinary Church contributions. They had honored God with their substance, and, in return, he had greatly increased their number and abundantly enriched them with spiritual blessings. Nearly the whole state was in a blaze of religious excitement. The conference adopted the following resolution:

“*Resolved*, That the 25th day of December next be set apart to be observed as a day of thanksgiving and praise to almighty God for the mercies of the year—especially for the almost unprecedented increase in the membership of the Church, and that we recommend to all our people to make, on that occasion, a missionary thank-offering.”

Wiley's constitutional time having expired in the Indianapolis station, he was, at this conference, appointed to the Greencastle district, where he continued but one year. At the close of this year, conference met to hold its tenth session in Terre Haute. During its session the conference requested Bishop Roberts to sit for his portrait, and allow the conference to pay the expense of the painting. The painting represents the Bishop as he would appear when presiding in conference. On the table before him are lying a number of papers and letters, some of which he has just opened; and, although the painting may not be regarded as one of the finest specimens of the art, it presents a fair likeness of that venerable man, and fore-



ibly expresses the easy and unaffected dignity for which he was so remarkable. The painting cost \$66.53, and, by an order of the conference, was deposited in the chapel of the university at Greencastle, where it still remains.

The session of the conference at Terre Haute was one of great harmony, and an unusual spirit of piety characterized all its deliberations, and its influence on the community was most salutary, and most of the preachers felt that they had received a fresh anointing from on high.

## CHAPTER XI.

Wiley is stationed in Madison—Session of the conference at Centerville, 1842—Action relative to a division of the conference—Formation of a new charge in Indianapolis—History of Church extension in Indianapolis—Wiley is appointed to Connersville district—Session of conference at Crawfordsville—Delegates to General conference—Conference resolutions on the death of Bishop Roberts—Sketch of his labors, etc.—Conference at Madison—Close of Wiley's term on Brookville district—Writes the Introduction and Progress of Methodism in south-eastern Indiana—Is stationed at Centenary Church, New Albany—Notices of Beauchamp, Stevenson, Locke, Griffith, Armstrong, and Ray.

IN 1841 Wiley was stationed in Madison. In 1842 the conference met at Centerville. At this session it was resolved to request the ensuing General conference to divide the conference, and that the National Road should be the line of separation between the conferences. The towns east of Indianapolis, on the line, were to belong to the north conference, and Indianapolis, with the towns west, lying on the National Road, to belong to the southern division. But, at the next session of the conference, it was agreed that Terre Haute and the eastern charge in Indianapolis should belong to the northern conference. At the Centerville conference it was resolved to form a new charge in Indianapolis. That portion of the town lying east of Pennsylvania-street was separated from the other charge, and was designated as the Eastern charge, and John S. Bayless was appointed to it. This was the beginning of Church extension in Indianapolis. Though Bayless had no church, he collected a congregation in the court-house, and organized his charge, which has continued to be one of the most efficient and prosperous Churches in Indiana.

Up to 1842 the Methodists had but one church in Indianapolis, and that an old building which was beginning to be considered unsafe, as the walls were considerably cracked. The Eastern charge erected Roberts Chapel, a fine, commodious church, with a basement for the accommodation of the Sabbath school, class meetings, and preacher's study. The church has a front gallery, and is surmounted with a steeple and a fine bell. The Western charge, as it was then called, took down their old church and erected on the same lot an elegant church *seventy-five feet by eighty*, with the basement story above ground, containing a lecture-room, class-rooms, library-room, and study. The entrance to the body of the church is from the vestibule in front, by two flights of stairs. The church has a front gallery, two central, and two side aisles.

The first Methodist church in Indianapolis was a hewed log house, which the brethren purchased in 1825, and subsequently enlarged, so that it would hold about two hundred persons. The whole cost of the lot and house did not exceed \$300. This was used as a school-house for several years; and it was not till 1829 that they were able to complete a better building. There are now—in 1852—six Methodist churches within the corporate limits of the city, exclusive of the African Methodist church; and they are all of them neat and commodious edifices. The two largest—Wesley Chapel and Roberts Chapel—are each capable of seating at least *one thousand persons*, and, with the appurtenances, the cost of both was about \$20,000. All these churches have been built within the last ten years, illustrating most clearly the advantages of a system of Church extension.

In 1842 Wiley was appointed to the Connersville district, where he remained four years. In 1843 the name of the district was changed from Connersville to that of

Brookville. The twelfth session of the Indiana conference was held in Crawfordsville, October 18, 1843. At this session the following brethren were elected delegates to the ensuing General conference: M. Simpson, Allen Wiley, E. R. Ames, John Miller, C. W. Ruter, Aaron Wood, Augustus Eddy, and James Havens.

Bishop Roberts having died during the year, the conference adopted the following resolutions:

1. *Resolved*, That we regard, with deep gratitude, that providence which granted us the privilege of claiming, for the period of twenty years, Bishop Roberts as a fellow-citizen and a patriarchal minister resident among us.

2. *Resolved*, That, in view of the intellectual and moral worth of Bishop Roberts, and his kind regard for us and the whole Church, his death be considered as a paternal bereavement to the whole Church in general, and to the Indiana conference in particular, which calls for proper humiliation and resignation.

3. *Resolved*, That we shall be greatly wanting to ourselves and to the cause of God if we do not imbibe his spirit and imitate his godly example.

4. *Resolved*, That the remains of the venerable Bishop—the widow consenting—be removed from their present obscure lodgment, and transferred to Greencastle.

5. *Resolved*, That a suitable monument or tombstone be erected to the memory of the Bishop.

6. *Resolved*, That the expenses incurred in carrying into effect the last two resolutions be met by the Indiana conference, or, should the conference be divided, by the two conferences jointly, according to their numerical strength.

7. *Resolved*, That Bishop Soule be requested to furnish a suitable epitaph or inscription for the Bishop's tomb.

8. *Resolved*, That M. Simpson, and the presiding elder of Greencastle district, and the presiding elder of the

district in which Bishop Roberts was buried, be a committee to carry into effect the foregoing resolutions.

9. *Resolved*, That the foregoing resolutions be spread upon the journals of the conference, and a copy of them be furnished to the aged widow of the Bishop, and also that a copy of them be forwarded to the editor of the *Western Christian Advocate* for publication.

The remains of Bishop Roberts were accordingly removed to Greencastle and interred in the college grounds, and an appropriate monument of limestone marble was erected over his grave; but as yet no inscription is placed thereon. No man ever stood higher in the regards of the ministry in Indiana than Bishop Roberts. His presence was always hailed with delight, and his influence among them was that of a father over his children. Bishop Roberts was born in Frederick county, Maryland, August 2, 1778. He made a profession of religion and united with the Methodist Episcopal Church at the age of fifteen or sixteen. He was received on trial in the Baltimore conference in the spring of 1802. He was elected to the episcopacy in 1816, and continued to discharge the duties of that important and highly-responsible office to the entire satisfaction of the Church to the day of his death. Up to 1824 there was no provision in the Discipline for the support of a bishop's family, and he consequently received, during eight years service in the episcopal office, but two hundred dollars per year, and traveling expenses. From 1820 to 1824, Bishop M'Kendree being in poor health, the whole weight of episcopal labor fell upon him and Bishop George. There were then eleven conferences, extending from Maine to Mississippi. His labors, consequently, in traveling and attending conferences, were incalculably great. But, amid all his privations and toils, he never complained. As a faithful, unflinching servant of the

Church, he counted not his own life dear, so that he might finish his course with joy, and the ministry he had received of the Lord Jesus to testify the Gospel of the grace of God.

Bishop Roberts's natural abilities were of a high order, and he had accumulated a rich store of various and useful knowledge. As a preacher he was clear and forcible in the presentation of truth, and was often truly eloquent. At times he would so captivate his hearers that they would forget where they were, and lose sight of every surrounding object except the preacher and his theme. As a superintendent he was discriminating, affable, conciliatory, and yet firm. He preached the Gospel in all the states of the Union, and left behind him much fruit of his labors, and many seals to his ministry. He died at his residence, in Indiana, on the 26th of March, 1843.

Bishop Roberts was pre-eminently a peace-maker, both in the councils of the Church and in his social intercourse. The late Bishop Bascom remarked, a few days previous to his death, that the Methodist Church had never been honored and blessed with a purer and better man in the episcopacy than Bishop Roberts; and added, "But for his timely interposition in my behalf, I know not what would have become of me. I have long regarded him as my *ecclesiastical senior*." Although Bishop Roberts belonged to the whole Church, yet he belonged to Indiana Methodism in a peculiar and important sense. He gave shape and direction to its early movements, and saw it flourish and approximate a vigorous maturity beneath his fostering care. He died, as he had lived, in the faith of Christ, with the certain hope of eternal life, and in love and peace with all mankind.

The thirteenth session of the Indiana conference was held in Bloomington, September 25th, 1844, Bishop Waugh presiding. At this conference resolutions were

adopted, approving of the editorial course of Dr. Bond, and of the votes given, by the Indiana delegation, in the preceding General conference, in the case of Bishop Andrew, and of non-concurrence with the recommendation of the General conference relative to the alteration of the sixth restrictive rule of the Discipline.

The conference for 1845 was held in Madison; and with the close of the ensuing year terminated Wiley's constitutional term on the Brookville district. During 1845 and 1846 he published a series of articles in the *Western Christian Advocate* on the "Introduction and Progress of Methodism in south-eastern Indiana," which were extensively read, and which would doubtless have been revised and given to the public in a more permanent form had his life been spared.

In 1846 Wiley was stationed at the Centenary Church in New Albany, where, in addition to his regular duties, he delivered a series of Wednesday evening lectures on the decalogue, and also upon the Lord's prayer. The following is an outline of his introductory lecture upon the ten commandments:

1. Man had, originally, an intuitive or perfectly-revealed knowledge of his Maker's will, which constitutes the perfect rule of human conduct.

2. A uniform continuance in the performance of duty would have secured the Divine approbation, and with it a continued knowledge of God and his will.

3. A failure to perform duty forfeited the approbation of God, and caused him measurably to withdraw from man, in consequence of which his mind became dark and his moral sense greatly weakened; so that, for more than two thousand, five hundred years, the mass of mankind imperfectly knew, and more imperfectly did, the will of God.

4. Jehovah being about to make known his will a

second time, employs such august scenery as is calculated to fix man's attention and inspire him with faith in a present God and in the reality of the revelation which he was about to make. Thunders roar; lightnings flash; thick darkness settles down; the voice of a loud trumpet is heard; the mountain is covered with smoke; the fire appears in the midst of the smoke, so that the mountain smokes as a furnace; that is, the smoke and flame commingle and ascend periodically; the whole mountain trembles—all of which causes the people to tremble in the camp. Yet Moses brings them out of the camp, to the foot of the mountain, to meet God.

5. In this dreadful perturbation of the elements and the consternation of the people, Moses speaks, probably in prayer, for protection and support for himself and the people, and to signify his readiness to hear. God answers him in a loud voice, probably assuring him and the people of protection and of his purpose to make important communications; and then he came down on the mountain in the manifestation of his glory.

6. He then calls Moses up to himself in the mount, and employs him in providing for the safety of the people by checking any undue degree of curiosity, which would have led them to approach God presumptuously.

REFLECTIONS.—What an evil thing is sin, which has caused such darkness and misery in the world for so long a period! How important is God's law, which was revealed with such displays of awful grandeur and power!

As this was the last year of Wiley's effective ministry, I shall close this chapter with a brief notice of some of the more prominent among his associates in the ministry in Indiana, who preceded him in their removal from the Church militant to the Church triumphant.

REV. WILLIAM BEAUCHAMP died, October, 1824, at



Paoli, Orange county, Ia., in the fifty-third year of his age. He was a native of Delaware. He made a profession of religion, and united with the Church when quite young. In 1794 he joined the itinerancy, and his first appointments were Alleghany circuit, Pittsburg, New York, Boston. In 1811 he located, but continued his labors with great success as a local preacher. In 1815 he removed to Chillicothe, Ohio, and took the editorial charge of the *Western Christian Monitor*, the only periodical, at that time, in our Church. He edited the *Monitor* with conspicuous ability, and preached in and about Chillicothe with eminent success. He had previously published a volume of "Essays on the Truth of the Christian Religion," a work of decided merit, in the estimation of good critics. In 1817 he removed to Mount Carmel, Illinois, and superintended the formation of a new settlement. In 1822 he re-entered the itinerant ministry, and was stationed in St. Louis, where he labored with success for one year, and commanded the esteem and respect of the community to such an extent that a number of gentlemen who were not members of the Church proposed to secure him a liberal salary if he would remain among them permanently. In 1823 he was appointed presiding elder of the Indiana district, which included eleven vast circuits. He was elected, the same year, a delegate to the General conference in Baltimore; and such was the impression produced upon that body by his remarkable talents, that he lacked but two votes of being elected to the episcopal office. Had it not been for the fact that so large a proportion of his ministerial life had been spent out of the itinerancy, his name would have unquestionably honored the history of our episcopacy. On his return to his district he was seized with an affection of the liver, and, after suffering patiently for about six weeks, fell asleep in Christ, with the full hope of immor

tality. William Beauchamp was a man of genuine greatness. He was one of nature's noblemen and God's elect. He was frequently styled, "The Demosthenes of the west." He was a ripe scholar, having studied the Greek and Hebrew languages after he entered the ministry. His manner as a public speaker was natural and easy. His voice was uniform, and remarkably soft in social conversation, but in argument energetic. In his preaching, when holding forth the promises and invitations of the Gospel, there was a soft tenderness, a sweetness in his voice, produced frequently by gentle breaks, as if the rising sympathies of his soul obstructed, in some degree, his utterance, when a gentle, thrilling sensation appeared to move the listening multitude, all bending forward to catch every sentence or word that fell from his lips. This peculiarity has frequently been admired. But when he became argumentative, and discussed doctrinal points, or when false doctrines were attacked, the tone of his voice was elevated, his whole system became nerved, and his voice assumed a deep, hollow tone, and then soon became elevated to its highest key, and fell like peals of thunder on the listening assembly.

On one occasion the force of his powerful eloquence was fully demonstrated. It was on a subject of controversy. His antagonist, who had sat and listened, for some time, to arguments too powerful for him to answer, began to look as if the voice which he now heard came from another world through the shadow of a man. He rose, apparently with a view to leave the house; but, being overcome, he staggered, caught by the railing, reeled, and fell into his seat, and there sat, overwhelmed and confounded, till the discourse was closed, when he quietly left the house.

Beauchamp's manner of preaching was plain. He seldom divided his text into different heads, but took

the natural divisions of his subject. His sermons were deep, and made a lasting impression on the minds of his hearers, because they were both doctrinal and practical. Holiness was his favorite theme. There was seldom a shout raised in the assembly under his preaching; but strict attention was always paid to his discourses. Every eye would be fixed on the speaker, and frequently the people were all bathed in tears.

BENJAMIN C. STEVENSON died in 1831. Although he had been but a few years in the ministry, he had distinguished himself as a talented, dignified, amiable, and efficient minister, and one who gave bright promise of extensive usefulness to the Church. He entered the itinerancy in 1827, and filled the following appointments: Eel River, Carlisle, Galena mission, Madison, and Indianapolis. But shortly after receiving the last appointment, he exchanged earth for heaven.

Strange, whose death occurred in 1832, has been noticed in a preceding chapter.

The year 1834 witnessed the death of three of the most energetic and efficient ministers that ever labored in Indiana—GEORGE LOCKE, NEHEMIAH B. GRIFFITH, and JAMES ARMSTRONG.

Locke was a native of Kentucky. He made a profession of religion, and united with the Church in his eighteenth year. He was admitted on trial in the Kentucky conference in 1818, and was appointed to a circuit in east Tennessee. In 1825 he was transferred to the Illinois conference, and appointed to Corydon circuit, where he remained two years. His next appointment was Charlestown circuit, where he remained about six months, and was then appointed presiding elder on the Wabash district. In 1832, the Illinois conference being divided, he was transferred to Indiana, and appointed to Corydon circuit; but, his health failing, he was compelled to retire

from the work, and, in the fall of 1833, took a superannuated relation, and on the 15th of July, 1834, was called from suffering to reward. Brother Locke labored with success in Tennessee, Kentucky, Illinois, and Indiana, and left behind him many seals to his ministry. He possessed a logical and well-disciplined mind, was an accurate and strong reasoner, and preached like a man who felt that he was moved upon by the Holy Ghost to take upon him the office of the ministry. He possessed great energy of character, and was eminently successful in his work. But a mysterious Providence removed him from earth in the midst of his usefulness, and apparently in the midst of his days, being in his thirty-eighth year. His death was most triumphant. He expired shouting, "Glory to God!" A short time previous to his death he remarked to a brother who had called to see him, "Continue to pray for me, but not for my recovery. The thought of continuing with my family is pleasing; but the thoughts of departing are triumphant." At another time he said, "I have the crown in view; I glory in the prospect;" but, checking himself, he said, "No; this is not exactly what I would say; we must glory in nothing but the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. But I may say—I will say, that I rejoice in the prospect. O, the communion of saints! How sweet the communion of saints!"

Griffith's career as a minister was comparatively brief, but brilliant. Most of the circuits on which he labored were blessed with powerful revivals of religion. He was an able and zealous defender of the doctrines and Discipline of the Church; and although eminently successful as a revivalist, he was equally distinguished as a doctrinal preacher. He was a native of New York; but was converted to God in Ohio, at about the age of twenty-one, under the instrumentality of William H. Raper.

The next year after his conversion he made a profession of sanctification, which he maintained to the day of his death. He was admitted into the traveling connection in the year 1822, and labored with great efficiency to the close of life. He died in St. Joseph county, Indiana, August 22, 1834. Nearly his last words were, "Glory, glory, glory! Sweet heaven, I am coming!"

James Armstrong was a native of Ireland, but came to America with his parents when but a child. He was converted to God, and licensed to preach as a local preacher while a young man. After his marriage he went into business in Baltimore, and kept a shoe store, and preached extensively as a local preacher. In 1821 he removed to New Albany, Indiana, and in the fall of the same year joined the Missouri conference, and was appointed to Charlestown circuit, where he remained two years, at the close of which he was ordained an elder, and, the ensuing year, was appointed to Bloomington circuit, where he had great success, as the circuit increased in membership, during the year, from four hundred and one to six hundred and five. At the close of this year he was appointed to the Indiana district as the successor of the talented Beauchamp. The district, at that time, extended from Madison, on the Ohio river, across by the way of Bloomington to the Wabash, and down the Wabash to the extreme south-western point of Indiana—an appointment which, considering the newness of the country and the state of the roads, must have given a presiding elder hard times and a plenty of them. At the close of the year his district was somewhat curtailed on the west, but still extended from the Ohio river to Crawfordsville. On this district he labored with zeal and success for four years. His next appointment was Indianapolis station, where he accomplished a good work. He was appointed, the ensuing year, to

Crawfordsville circuit, and the year following, to Indianapolis district. In 1831 he was appointed to Crawfordsville district, which then embraced all the Wabash country north of Parke county, Indiana, and Paris, Illinois, except Missisinniway and Fort Wayne. It embraced the Iroquois and South Bend missions on the north, and Indianapolis station and the contiguous circuits on the south. When the Indiana conference was separated from Illinois, in 1832, there was formed a missionary district in north Indiana, and he was placed on it. The ensuing year the district was enlarged on the south and east, and called the north-western district, and Armstrong was appointed to it. Near the close of this year he finished his labors on earth. He died at his own residence in Laporte county, Indiana, September 12, 1834, being about forty-eight years of age, and having spent thirteen years as a traveling preacher, and most of the time on extensive circuits or districts. Armstrong was neat and tidy in his personal appearance. He possessed a sprightly mind and very ready wit. He usually studied his sermons well, and their introduction and outline evinced close thought, and the intelligent hearer would promise himself an intellectual feast; but as he advanced with his subject, he would warm with his theme, and, becoming excited, would throw system and arrangement to the winds. But what the hearer lost in intellectual enjoyment, was amply made up to him in a rich flow of impassioned feeling. Most of his preaching was aimed for present effect. In social life his innocent humor and sprightly, cheerful conversation, always made him an agreeable and welcome guest. He left his impress on Indiana Methodism, and still lives in the grateful recollection of thousands.

The name of EDWIN RAY is worthy of honorable mention as a coadjutor of Wiley, and an efficient laborer in

planting and building up the Church in Indiana. He was born in Kentucky, July 26, 1803. His father, Rev. John Ray, entered the ministry about the year 1790, and after traveling ten years located. Remaining local for eighteen years, he re-entered the itinerancy, and continued to travel as long as he was able. He was transferred to the Indiana conference as superannuated preacher; but he never made any claim upon the funds of the conference. He sustained the relation of a superannuate to the conference at the time of his death. He was a man of great force of character. Although a native and a resident of a slave state, he belonged to that class of preachers who were neither ashamed nor afraid to denounce slavery as a sin against God and humanity, and a curse to both master and slave. He gave as a reason for wishing to be transferred to Indiana, that he was utterly unwilling to die and be buried in a slave state, and, like Cravens and a host of others of that day, he ardently opposed the institution of slavery all his life. His remains were buried about four miles north of Greencastle, near a country church.

Edwin embraced religion at a camp meeting in Kentucky, July 26, 1819. When his father, who was in an adjoining tent, heard that he was praying, he was deeply affected, and solemnly promised God, if he would convert him, that he would give him up to the Lord all his days. God heard his request, and answered his prayer, and Edwin, like young Samuel, was devoted to the service of the sanctuary. When his father, who was then advanced in life, heard of his death, he remarked, "The news of his death was not as afflicting to me as a location. I would willingly supply his place with another son—if I had one—only to live as long, and be as useful as Edwin was. But the Lord has taken him home. Bless the Lord!" Few men were ever more successful in the min-

istry than Edwin Ray during his brief career. Revival influence attended his labors, to a greater or less extent, in every charge to which he was ever appointed. He was admitted on trial in the Kentucky conference in 1822, and labored with diligence and success in that conference for two years, at the close of which he presented himself as a voluntary transfer to the Illinois conference, which then included the states of Illinois and Indiana. He labored with zeal and success in Vincennes, Bloomington, and Indianapolis circuits, and Madison station, successively. In 1827 and 1828, when on Indianapolis circuit, his labors were extensively blessed, and the increase on the circuit, during the year, amounted to *two hundred and eighty-five*. But the circuit was large, and his labors were beyond his strength, and during this year his constitution began to give way. His zeal knew no bounds, but his want of ability; so that, as much as in him lay, he was ready to serve the Church in any capacity. During this year the Church in Indianapolis made arrangements for building a good house of worship on Meridian-street, just south of the Governor's circle, one of the most eligible sites for a church edifice in the city. Much would have been gained to the cause of religion, if our early churches in many places had been more favorably situated. For some cause they were frequently located in the outskirts of the town or village, or on some obscure street, or out-of-the-way place, where they would be free from the noise and bustle of the people. But fortunately a better policy has been adopted by the Church, and instead of seeking obscurity and privacy, she now "utters her voice in the streets: she crieth in the chief place of concourse, in the opening of the gates; in the city she uttereth her words." The true position of the Church is aggressive. Her mission is to the people. She is to go in search of the lost sheep of the house of Israel. The Church on



earth is a militant Church, and she should plant her batteries where she can do the greatest amount of execution. Her churches should occupy the most central and commodious situations, and should be rendered attractive by their comfort and neatness.

But to resume our subject. In 1828 Ray was stationed in Madison; and, although there was a considerable secession from the Church, growing out of the Radical controversy, he sustained himself well, and labored with a single eye to the good of the Church. In the conference year of 1829 and 1830, his health having failed, he received a superannuated relation; but such was his zeal for God, that he labored about half of the year in Terre Haute, although his family was settled in the vicinity of Indianapolis; and in order to reach his station, he had to travel about eighty miles. His health having improved some during the year, he was stationed there the ensuing year. Having finished the labors of the year, he started for conference; but had proceeded but a few miles when he was taken sick, and after eleven days of extreme suffering, he closed his earthly pilgrimage in peace. He left many seals to his ministry, and a number who are now in the ministry in Indiana, were led to Christ through the instrumentality of Edwin Ray. During his illness he said to his wife, "The religion which I have professed and preached has comforted me in life, supported me in affliction, and now enables me to triumph in death."

Ray possessed a vigorous intellect, and was well versed in the doctrines of Christianity. He preached with energy and success, and was a workman that needed not to be ashamed. But, to all human appearance, Ray, and Locke, and Griffith, and Armstrong, and Beauchamp, all went down to premature graves through excess of labor. It is better to wear out than to rust out in any profession, and especially in that of the ministry. But has the

Church a right to work her ministry to death? Or is it right for ministers to abridge the period of their service by one-third for the sake of accomplishing a little more in a given period of time? In the ministry there are more men who have grown prematurely old than in any other profession in the land, and more who have died in the midst of their days, just as their faculties were matured, and their ripened experience had qualified them for increased usefulness. And when we remember that these men have given their all to the Church, and have made little or no provision for the families which they leave behind them, the thought is a gloomy one. Had they devoted their attention to secular pursuits, they might have amassed wealth, and the evening of their days been cheered by a competency of the good things of this life. But if old age should find them in comparative penury, they have a rich treasure laid up in heaven; and if death should call them in the meridian of life, they will commit their fatherless children to the care of Him who feeds the young ravens when they cry. But is it right for the Church to exact so much?—to draw so largely upon the faith and patience of her ministry?—or would it not be better, where sacrifice is needful, that it should be mutual, and that each should vie with the other in efforts to serve a common cause—the dissemination of truth and the salvation of men?

## CHAPTER XII.

Rev. Allen Wiley superannuates in 1847—Review of his life and character—Letter to his family—Letter to a criminal under sentence of death—His style as a preacher—Writes the Pastoral Address on behalf of his conference—Death of Wiley.

AT the session of the conference held in Evansville, in October, 1847, Wiley took a superannuated relation to the conference, but not because he was disqualified, either *mentally, morally, or physically*, for effective service as minister. He had served the people of his charge but one year, during his present stay among them, and served them faithfully. His pulpit labors evinced ripe scholarship, deep theological research, and an intimate acquaintance with Christian experience and the word of God. All who heard him felt that he was a master workman, able rightly to divide the word of God, and give each of his hearers a portion in due season. In pastoral labors he was abundant and faithful. He attended Sabbath school and the weekly Bible class. He visited from house to house, and was especially attentive to the sick and the poor. But, for some cause, a portion of his charge desired a *new preacher*. What a charm there is in that word *new!* The wishes of his charge were made known to the bishop, and Wiley was informed that it was thought best to remove him to a new charge. But where should he go?—why was he not wanted back? were questions that presented themselves to his mind with fearful force. He knew he had studied to show himself approved, both to God and men. He had not fallen behind the times. His intellect was vigorous, his health good, his piety and industry unquestioned. His learning

and theological attainments were confessedly of a high order. Why, then, not want him back? Simply because *a few of the people wanted something new.*

Perhaps Wiley was more sensitive than he should have been. But it would be difficult for any one similarly situated to have been less so. His amiable wife, who, for more than thirty years, had shared with him the vicissitudes of an itinerant life, had been unable for some time, in consequence of a rheumatic affection, to walk across her room. Her helpless and deeply-afflicted condition rendered the thought of removal increasingly painful to the mind of Wiley; and, after mature deliberation, he concluded that duty required him to desist from traveling for a season. He accordingly received a superannuated relation to the conference, and removed his family to Vevay, where he designed to await the openings of Providence. But on the 23d of July, 1848, he died in peace, after a few days' illness, in the 59th year of his age and the thirty-first of his itinerant ministry.

Before noticing the circumstances of his death, we will briefly review his life and character. Rev. Allen Wiley was born January 15, 1789; came to Indiana territory with his parents in 1804; joined the Church, as a seeker of religion, April 18, 1810, and made a profession of religion in the June following. He was licensed to exhort in 1811, and in 1813 to preach. Commenced traveling December 1, 1816. He was ordained a deacon by Bishop M'Kendree, in 1818, and an elder by Bishop Roberts, in 1820. Eleven years of his ministry were spent in traveling laborious and extensive circuits. Fourteen years he was presiding elder, and a portion of that time his district extended from the Ohio river to the vicinity of Lake Michigan, and required an amount of energy, sacrifice, and toil of which it is now difficult to conceive. He spent five years in our principal towns as

stationed preacher. He was elected, and served as a delegate in the General conferences of 1832, 1836, 1840, and 1844.

Indiana was the principal field of Wiley's ministerial labors; for out of thirty appointments, twenty-seven of them were exclusively in Indiana.

*Simplicity* was a leading trait in the character of Wiley. In his person and manners he was plain and free from affectation. In social intercourse he was as artless as a child, and in the execution of his plans he knew no stratagem—he practiced no duplicity. Down-right honesty characterized all his movements. While presiding elder, he never created expectations in the minds of his preachers in reference to appointments or personal accommodations that were not realized.

*Frankness* marked his intercourse with all men. It was not difficult for those who associated with Wiley to learn the estimate which he placed upon their talents or characters. His frankness was sometimes the occasion of offense; for there are not a few who would rather be flattered than listen to the truth. But such was Wiley's conscientiousness, in matters both small and great, that he said and did what he believed to be right, apparently regardless of consequences.

*Decision* was a marked trait in the character of Wiley. He formed his plans carefully, but when formed, he adhered to them with great tenacity. Entering the ministry with a very limited stock of learning, burdened with the cares of a growing family, in a new country, with few books, and poor opportunities, and little means for procuring others, nothing but an energy that bade defiance to difficulties ever enabled him to become distinguished for learning or ministerial ability. Wiley was not a brilliant genius; but he was an energetic, hard-working man. He never lagged behind in any thing. If he was walking

the street with a friend, he was usually a step in advance. His mind retained its freshness and vigor to the close of life, because he continued learning. Only the year previous to his death he was one of a large class engaged in the study of phonography, and no one of the class learned faster or more perfectly than he. He never did any thing by the halves. In his estimation, whatever was worth doing at all was worth doing well. Wiley was an industrious, time-saving man. He usually rose at four in the morning, and, for a number of years, he was in the daily habit of reading portions of the holy Scriptures in the Hebrew, Latin, Greek, and English languages. Wiley was a man of one work. The duties of the Christian ministry engrossed his whole attention. His views of ministerial duty were large and comprehensive. To his mind it did not consist in preaching *so* many sermons, or in performing a given number of specific acts, but in doing all the good within his power, both to the souls and bodies of men. He felt that it

“Was not a cause of small import  
The pastor’s care demands;  
But what might fill an angel’s heart,  
And filled a Savior’s hands.”

Wiley had many opportunities of engaging in other pursuits more lucrative and less laborious than the work of an itinerant preacher. At one time the trustees of the Indiana State University tendered him the professorship of the Latin and Greek languages in that institution. But learning that it was the wish of his brethren in the conference that he should continue in the regular work of the ministry, he declined the chair that had been tendered him in the University, and was appointed to the Madison district. In 1840 his name was frequently mentioned in connection with the office of Governor of Indiana, and at one time he feared that one of the political

parties of the state would nominate him for that honorable and responsible office; not that he believed Christianity incompatible with civil office or political life, but that he felt himself called to the work of the ministry, and believed that there were others who have no reluctance to enter the noisy arena of political strife, and who would be more competent to guide the affairs of state.

Such was Wiley's devotion and his intense application to study that he did not spend that amount of time in social intercourse with his family that most men do. But the following letter, addressed to his family, just as he was recovering from a severe attack of illness, while presiding elder on Crawfordsville district, will show that he cherished for them the tenderest affection, and that he was careful of their feelings and deeply solicitous for their temporal and spiritual welfare:

“LOGANSPOUT, *Sept.* 22, 1838.

“Once more, my very dear wife and children, I resume the pen to drop you a few lines, in great feebleness. After I wrote from Crawfordsville my health continued to ebb and flow for some time, but finally seemed to be pretty well restored, till Monday, the 3d of September, when I was suddenly taken with a slight chill in the forenoon, which was succeeded with considerable fever in the afternoon. I rode, in the afternoon, nine miles toward this place, and at night took a heavy portion of pills, and used other means, which seemed to relieve me much; but fearing the cause was not removed, I concluded to come next evening to this place, where I could have good medical advice and attendance. When I first arrived at the doctor's, with whom I have lodged, he supposed I was going to have the ague; but in this he was mistaken, as my fever proved to be continual for a number of days. My sickness increased till it was almost intolerable. On yesterday two weeks I had six or eight

hours' sickness at the stomach, which the whole of Switzerland county would not begin to tempt me to be willing to endure again for as many hours, if I could avoid it. I would have sent you word of my sickness, but the doctor thought my recovery middling sure, and I did not wish you to know of my sickness till after my recovery, so that you might not suffer useless uneasiness. On Monday I hope to leave this place for Lafayette. I was not afraid to die, but had some desire to live, that I might see the boys well harnessed in the work, and to see our younger children grown and in the Church, possessing genuine religion, so that I may have a fair prospect of seeing them all in heaven. . . . Brother Barnes, from Crawfordsville, was with me at the Covington camp meeting, and proposed to go in my place, and let me stay at Crawfordsville, if I found myself too weak for the district; but he went home on Monday, was taken sick at night, and in eighteen days was dead. I see, from the paper, that Michael S. Taylor is dead. So we go; and in the course of nature it can not be long till it is announced that Allen Wiley is dead. May he be ready! I would write you more, but I am too weak.

“ALLEN WILEY.”

The following letter, directed to the care of E. Burnside, Esq., Clerk of the Circuit Court of Union county, Indiana, and addressed to an unfortunate murderer under sentence of death, shows how anxious he was to be useful to even the most degraded. It breathes the spirit of his Master and the true sympathy of humanity:

“NEAR LAUREL, *June 13, 1845.*

“DEAR BROTHER BURNSIDES,—Will you be kind enough to see that poor Cook receives the following communication?

“Yours, respectfully,

ALLEN WILEY.



“TO HOSEA COOK,—Your deep anguish and bitter lamentation, while I tried to pray for you, took hold of my sympathies and enlisted my heart in your future welfare, and I have often prayed for you since, and feel like continuing to do so while you live. Your earnest manner in asking us to return touches me much that I can not do so. Hence, I have felt it my duty to address you in this manner. Although I had some fears that you felt some disposition to excuse, in some measure, your great crimes, yet I thought you were more penitent than I ever expected you would be, which increased my faith that the *good Lord* would yet save your soul. According to the holy Scriptures, your crimes are not of an unpardonable kind. Manassah—whose history you will find in 2 Kings xxi and 2 Chronicles xxiii—was an exceedingly wicked king, and committed many bloody crimes; David committed adultery and murder; and Saul of Tarsus excited others to put the innocent Christians to death: and they all found forgiveness; but not till they repented sorely. You will find, in the chapters to which I referred you, how Manassah humbled himself and repented; and in the fifty-first Psalm you will find how penitent David was for his sins; and the ninth chapter of Acts will show you the dreadful agony which Saul endured. The first chapter of Timothy informs you that if he had not sinned in some degree of ignorance, he would not have been forgiven. Our Lord prayed for his murderers, which shows they might be forgiven; but he apologizes for them because they had not a realizing sense of the enormity of their crime. Now, taking all these cases, we see that God will forgive all sins except blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, and that you have not committed. But, you see, they had to repent, confess, and forsake all their sins. When I say we have to confess, I mean, our sins which are only against God are to be confessed to him alone;

but where we have done an injury to our fellow-beings, we must confess to them, if we have an opportunity—and if we have not such opportunity, we should send our confession—and if we have injured them publicly, we must publicly remove the injury, if in our power. Perhaps I should be a little more explicit on what I mean by repentance. First, we must feel that we are depraved by nature, and that we have committed many sins; and we must feel this conviction so deep that we must be deeply, very deeply, grieved before God and man that we have been such vile sinners. We must weep, and mourn, and pray, and promise, and strive to break off from all our sins, and try to lead a holy life.

“But all these things will not secure pardon to our guilty souls. We must believe according to the Bible. We are not only to believe that God made us and preserves all our lives, that he gave us his laws, and that he will judge us, but we are to believe that he so loved us as to give his only-begotten Son to die for us, when he bore our sins in his own body upon the cross. Yes, Hosea, he bore your sins on the cross; for when Christ suffered and died, he suffered and died for you as much as he did for Stephen, or Paul, or any other man, and nothing but impenitency and unbelief on your part can prevent you from obtaining mercy at the hand of God. You must believe, also, that the Holy Ghost can change your heart, which change is called, in the third chapter of John, ‘being born again.’

“Now, while I write, I feel, if you will fully repent and heartily believe, God will bless you before you die, which will be, I suppose, this day two weeks. O, Hosea, try to repent and believe just now! Say,

‘And can I yet delay,  
My little all to give;  
To tear my soul from earth away,  
For Jesus to receive?’

Nay, but I yield, I yield;  
I can hold out no more;  
I sink, by dying love compelled,  
And own thee Conqueror.

Though late, I all forsake,  
My friends, my all resign;  
Gracious Redeemer, take, O take,  
And seal me ever thine.'

“ See Methodist Hymn-Book, page 68. Although you should read mostly in the Bible, yet there is one small tract which you should read, and that is, ‘ Mr. Fletcher’s address to penitent seekers ’ of salvation, where you will find almost all the promises of the Bible brought together, and so arranged as to encourage your soul. If you can not get the tract, the same thing is found in his ‘ Appeal.’ Mr. Hays will assist you in procuring this important piece. In order that you may repent, always be thinking about your sins. In order that you may believe, be always thinking of God in Christ Jesus reconciling the world to himself. On the day of your execution, I suppose, I shall be at Greensburg; and if I could know at what hour you would be turned off, I would be on my knees praying the Lord to receive your soul. But this I can not know; but I will try and pray for you on the forenoon of that day with special earnestness. I will also invite my friends to pray for you. You should try to be resigned to your fate; for your heart is now tender, and if you were to live, your heart might grow hard again, and you might become more wicked than ever. If you should make a written confession, be sure you say nothing but what is strictly true. Remember, you must forgive every body, and have bitterness in your heart against no human being; for our Lord teaches us to pray to be forgiven as we forgive others. Sleep and eat no more than nature really requires; but devote all the time you have to reading, meditation, and prayer, and if God

bleses you with a clear evidence of pardon, rejoice in the Lord; but rejoice with trembling. If you can sing, try to sing penitential and encouraging hymns. O, look up—look up, and believe in the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved even now, and forever! I must bring this letter to a close. O, how glad I would be to see you, to encourage you, and pray for you! but my other duties forbid. Encourage brother Hays to visit you, and instruct and encourage you in faith, and hope, and love. Think how short your time is, and make the best you can of it, that you may be found watching unto prayer. O, when I think of the powers of the soul, its endless duration, and its capabilities of pleasure and pain, I am astonished that we are not all more in earnest to be prepared for our final end! Eternity, eternity! that awful, incomprehensible thing! Who can tell the length of eternity? You will probably soon realize it. And shall it be to you an eternity of woe? It need not be, if you faithfully repent and Scripturally believe. Do not depend upon the old experience which you related to us; but look to God for one fresh from the throne of grace, sealed by the blood of Christ, and that will sustain you while you hang between the earth and heaven.

“Farewell, Hosea, and long farewell, till I meet you at the judgment-seat of Christ. And O, shall I see you among the redeemed? Sometimes the devil makes us believe we can obtain religion when we please and easily; but at other times he makes us believe we can not obtain it at all. Try to steer between the extremes on either hand.

“May the holy One have mercy upon your soul, and save you in the day of the Lord Jesus!

“Your well-wisher, ALLEN WILEY.”

As a preacher Wiley was always instructive. The matter of his sermons was uniformly good. His voice

was heavy and monotonous; but to all who were sufficiently intelligent to comprehend his subject, and not too lazy to *think*, he was both entertaining and profitable. During the earlier part of his ministry, his style was elaborate and highly argumentative. But in later years, when the Church became established, and the doctrines of Methodism were almost universally believed throughout his fields of labor, his style of preaching assumed a more practical cast, embracing a wider range of topics, and was rich in evangelical Christian experience. When in a station, he found it necessary to change his style of preaching, as well as greatly to abridge the sermons which he had been accustomed to preach with so much effect upon quarterly and camp meeting occasions, when crowding hundreds were present, many of whom had come a great distance to attend upon his ministry. At the conference in Evansville, in 1847, a committee, consisting of Allen Wiley, James Havens, and C. W. Ruter, was appointed to prepare a pastoral address to the Church within the bounds of the Indiana conference. At the request of the other members of the committee, Wiley wrote the address. By a vote of the conference the address was ordered to be published in the *Western Christian Advocate*, and the preachers were requested to read it to all their congregations. As this was the last conference that Wiley ever attended, and as the address is just as applicable to the Church *now* as when it was first written, I here insert it as Wiley's dying counsel and admonition to the Church:

*“To the Members of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the bounds of the Indiana conference:*

“Dearly-beloved and longed-for, our crown and our joy, permit us, your affectionate pastors, in conference assembled, to address you in this way on a few subjects of vast importance to you, and your children and friends.

“The first thing to which we would invite your attention is that of experimental religion, which consists in the pardon of sins and the regeneration of the soul by grace, in consequence of which we are brought into vital union with God, the father of our spirits. That there is a possibility of being pardoned and regenerated without the direct witness of God’s Spirit that we are in a gracious state, we will not deny; but that this witness is usually concomitant with these great blessings we most firmly believe, and it should be looked for as the blessed privilege of all who are born of God. We are persuaded that this direct witness of the Spirit may be lost by a degree of unfaithfulness far short of entire backsliding, so that the soul may be deprived of much comfort without wickedly departing from the Lord; and permit us, dear brethren, to express a fear that many of our people—perhaps the larger part of them—live a great portion of their time in this state of comparative darkness and uncertainty, and in a state of discomfort, in consequence of this uncertainty about their spiritual condition. We would exhort you, brethren, to see to this matter, and look to yourselves, that you have the daily witness of the Spirit that you are the children of God, and that you enjoy the consolation arising from this witness. We are fully persuaded that you can not long retain your religious enjoyment unless you aim at such a degree of grace as will result in your entire sanctification; for when Christ died for us, it was to redeem us from all iniquity and to purify us unto himself, a peculiar people, zealous of good works. We would most earnestly urge you to read and study much on the doctrine of holiness or entire sanctification. After having ourselves read most that has been written on this subject, we would take the liberty to recommend the writings of Mr. Wesley and Mr. Fletcher on this subject in preference to all others, as they state, and defend,

and enforce the doctrine with a clearness and energy unequalled by any writers before or since their day. Of course the inspired writers are excepted in the last assertion. In reading and studying on the doctrine named, we would advise you to do so not as merely theorizers and speculators in theology, but to do the things recommended with direct reference to personal purity of heart.

“In the next place, we would call your attention to the importance of practical religion; but in doing so, we can only notice a few prominent points. We regard family religion of vast importance to you and your posterity. The sorrowful and weeping Jeremiah says, ‘Pour out thy wrath upon the heathen, and upon the families which have not called upon thy name.’ Surely this prayer was not the result of petulance, but the sober conviction of his mind and heart, that prayerless families deserve the sore displeasure of almighty God. In most of the families of our people, where morning and evening devotion is attended to, it usually consists of reading a portion of the holy Scriptures and prayer. The old men among us can remember when singing was as uniformly a part of family worship as reading the Scriptures, or even prayer itself; and, although we regard the saying of Solomon, ‘Say not the former days were better than these,’ of general application, yet there are exceptions, and we consider this as one of them; for we are persuaded our people in general were more deeply devotional when they used to sing in their families than they are now. Another great good would grow out of the singing in the family; for then almost all would sing in the congregation, which we know is not the case now as it was once. Some of us can remember, before and after we became religious, that most Methodist congregations literally carried out Mr. Wesley’s exhortation to sing lustily, so that many times their singing was as the sound of many waters.

Another admirable feature of their singing was, that they confined themselves almost entirely to the admirable compositions contained in our standard Hymn-Book. So much were they given to singing, and to singing our hymns, that many of them could sing almost any hymn in the book, without reading it or having it lined. We would most earnestly advise you to return to the primitive Methodist usage of reading, singing, and prayer in your morning and evening family worship. The practice of instructing and catechising their children, we fear, is too much neglected by our people. We fear the excellent institution of Sunday schools has, to some extent, superseded family instruction, by inducing you to think Sunday school instruction amply sufficient to train your children in the way they should go. Brethren, no Sunday school teaching can be a substitute for parental instruction; for God has made the parents the natural and rightful instructors of their children, and you should regard Sunday schools as valuable appendages to family instruction, but not as superseding it. We would most earnestly urge you, to furnish your children with our catechisms, and other books of instruction on religious subjects.

“We, as a body of Methodist preachers, have mutually pledged ourselves to each other, by a unanimous rising vote, to be more faithful in pastoral visits, and in the exercise of the discipline of the Church in general, and in reference to the willful neglecters of class meetings in particular. To us it will be a most painful work to be under the necessity of dismembering any of you for the neglect of so useful a means of grace as our class meetings are calculated to be to the faithful soul. We fear many of you regard class meetings as a mere matter of form, to which you are urged to attend for mere form’s sake, and that, as it is a mere formal thing, you can see



no reason why we are so urgent on this subject. But in this you are mistaken; for our observation and experience have convinced us that it is a blessed means of grace, without which our Church can never flourish. Many join our Church as seekers of salvation who, if not attentive to this means of grace, soon lose their desires, and are in danger of living unconverted all their days; but if they attend the meetings named, they have the subject of religion so often and earnestly pressed upon them, that they are likely never to rest till converted to God; and he must be but a poor judge of fallen human nature, and have but a poor knowledge of Satan's devices, who thinks he can retain his piety with any less available means than were used by him in his attainment of so great a blessing. We therefore hope you will not regard attendance on class meeting as an unpleasant task, but as a great and gracious privilege, and that we shall not be under the necessity of dismembering any of you for willful neglect.

“Brethren, after careful observation, we fear there is an inferior but mischievous kind or degree of Sabbath-breaking among you, consisting of family and social visiting, which is greatly injurious to your souls. We hope you will consider this subject, and refrain from such visiting on the holy day. We say nothing to you about the gross violations of that day by doing ordinary work therein, or by buying or selling; for in such cases we should feel bound to bring you to trial for gross immorality, and expel you from the Church, according to the provisions of the Discipline.

“Having urged on you the importance and necessity of experimental and practical religion, we would urge on you, as a means of promoting these, the necessity of your becoming a reading and an intelligent people. Let others say that ‘ignorance is the mother of devotion,’ but

never let a follower of the learned Wesleys say or think such a thing. But, while we urge you to become a reading people, in these days of book-making, we would most affectionately warn you not to read indiscriminately all that is poured forth from the press; but rather let your reading be select, and such as is really calculated to improve the mind and heart; and we would say to you that our Book Concerns at New York and Cincinnati will furnish you with ample stores of varied reading suited to the purposes named.

“We think we have seen a departure, in some measure, in some of our congregations, from primitive Methodist usage, which we greatly deplore. We mean the practice of sitting, while we sing and pray in the public congregation. We think it Scriptural and rational that that sublime part of Divine worship which consists in singing should be performed, by all persons in health, in a standing position; and surely all persons should kneel in the house of God, while humble confessions are made and devout prayers are being offered to almighty God. O, friends, be sure you stand up and bless the name of God, and kneel down while you pray!

“We have not language to express our thankfulness while we witness the rapid increase in the liberality of our people in sustaining the benevolent institutions of the Church, which are intended to ameliorate the condition of suffering humanity. Your missionary collections are on the increase; but we fear they are sustained by the few, and not by the many, as is the case with our brethren of the Wesleyan connection, which, with about half our membership and with less wealth than we have, more than double us in their missionary contributions. We would be glad if every member among our thousands would resolve to do something, however small, for the benevolent institutions of the day in which we live.

“We would congratulate you, brethren, that the support of your ministers has been better the present than in any former year, and the fifth collection has also been better than at any former time; so that the worn-out men, widows and orphans, and the men on the frontiers have a prospect of being better supported than formerly; but there will still be a large deficiency in meeting their claims. We would exhort you, dear brethren, to abound more and more in your fifth collection, especially as the question is now being agitated whether it will not be expedient so to reduce the price of the books by us as to do away with any dividends from the Book Concern.

“We have been much pained to witness a decrease in our numbers for several years past, and we have been led to inquire for the cause; and we fear preachers and people have been too languid in their prayers and less ardent in their zeal than they should be. We should aim at nothing less than the conversion of the whole world, and for this we should pray day and night, and frequently join fasting with our prayers.

“In conclusion, we would say, abound in every good work, and live in the fear of God all your days. Brethren, take the meek and lowly Jesus and his primitive followers as your models in spirit and behavior, and God will bless and prosper you in every good thing. We would commend ourselves to your affections and prayers, and beseech you to sustain and encourage us while we labor for your good and the conversion of the world. May Heaven bless you!

“ALLEN WILEY.”

Immediately upon the adjournment of the conference at Evansville, Wiley removed his family to Vevay, where he designed to settle them permanently, and await the indications of Providence as to the path of duty on his part. He felt that duty required him to provide, as far

as he could, for the comfort of his afflicted companion, who had so long borne with him the privations incident to an itinerant life; and, although afflicted by the necessity which compelled him to take a superannuated relation to the conference, while, so far as he was concerned, he was as able to do effective service as any of his brethren, yet he did not become soured at the Church or the world. He knew that no earthly association ever presented a constantly-bright page in the individual history of its membership. And in a system formed with an especial view to its efficiency, even at the sacrifice of the wishes and preferences of its individual members, like that of Methodist itinerancy, there must of necessity be more or less friction. Wiley was not the man to complain of a due proportion of its burdens. He, doubtless, felt as others have and will feel again, that long and faithful services have some claim to gratitude. The strongest evidence of the efficiency and healthy condition of any is the manifest and reciprocal attachment of pastors and people. A people truly devout do not depend upon the preacher to make them happy. They do not crave a fund of crying anecdotes to enlist their attention and stir up their sympathies. They feed on nobler and purer food. They are more anxious to know that he who ministers to them in spiritual things is himself spiritual, than to know that he is a man of popular address and fascinating manners.

In the rapid and brilliant career of Methodism, there are and have been many things to admire; but as there are spots upon the sun, so there may be occasional defects in the working of the Methodist economy. But toward those men who have toiled in the itinerant field for more than a third of a century, who preached the Gospel of a free salvation to our fathers in their cabin homes, and whose lessons of wisdom and devout supplications are

among the earliest recollections of our childhood, the whole Church should exhibit a love and a veneration second only to that which they feel for the Savior. They should be venerated for their virtues, and everywhere and always "accounted worthy of double honor" for their work's sake. They are identified with the darkest struggles and the brightest glory of our beloved Methodism. The Church should reflect how often and how far they have moved—for how many years they have pursued their work from appointment to appointment, through heat and through cold. Frequently their wives and children have been located in some cabin in the country, or, it may be, in some hired house in the edge of the village. Having nothing, they have made many rich. But what shall become of them in their old age? Must they look to the grave as their only resting-place, and heaven as their only place of reward? Let it not be inferred from these remarks that Wiley had outlived the affections of the people. Far from it. Perhaps he never had a stronger hold upon the affections of the great Methodist public than at the time of his death. But, owing to affliction, his family could not be removed, as in former years; and it was perhaps owing to a combination of peculiar circumstances that the people of his charge desired a NEW preacher. In view of these facts Wiley felt it to be his duty to retire for the present, make his afflicted family as comfortable as he could, and serve the Church as he had opportunity, till such time as he could take his appropriate place among his brethren. But a mysterious providence closed his relation to the Church militant, and introduced him to the higher duties and purer associations of the Church triumphant.

During the period that elapsed between the session of the conference and the time of his death, Wiley was neither idle nor unhappy. He labored diligently during

the week, and on the Sabbath usually filled from one to three appointments. He also prepared for the press, in their present form, his Letters to Ministers, which constitute the second part of this volume. He frequently remarked that his religious employments were never greater, and his friends bear testimony to his cheerful and contented frame of mind. Having been unaccustomed to manual labor for a number of years, he could not endure as much as he himself imagined, and, while engaged in leveling a gravel floor in a new barn or stable, which had just been erected, he experienced what, for the moment, appeared to be a simple stitch in the side; but he was soon conscious that he had produced a serious internal rupture. He walked to the house, and informed his family of the injury he had received, and of his fears of the issue. He survived but four days. On Sabbath, July 23, 1848, in the fifty-ninth year of his age and the thirty-first of his itinerant ministry, he exchanged earth for heaven, suffering for rest, and labor for reward. During his affliction his mind was clear, his confidence in God unshaken, and his hopes for heaven bright. No clouds of doubt or darkness hung around the horizon of his mind. With a confidence as implicit as confiding infancy, he reposed on the bosom of his Savior, and felt that he did not trust in vain. His body reposes in the graveyard near his old family residence, in Switzerland county, a short distance back of the town of Vevay. His brethren in the ministry contributed a sum sufficient to provide suitable tombstones for his grave. By the contributions of a number of his old friends within the bounds of the Lawrenceburg district, a neat iron fence has been erected around his grave. For more than a third of a century Wiley had labored for the moral improvement of society in Indiana. He had given the entire weight of his influence to every measure of public

utility. He was a leader in all the benevolent enterprises and moral reforms of the day. The missionary, Sunday school, Bible society, and tract cause, each had his cordial support. He was an advocate of temperance, on the total-abstinence principle, from the commencement of his ministry, and to the cause of education he was a warm and consistent friend. For a number of years he was a trustee of the State University, at Bloomington, and was one of the early projectors and fast friends of the Indiana Asbury University, serving for several years as a member of the Board of Trustees, and contributing of his means toward its permanent endowment. But it was as a wise, zealous, and indefatigable minister of the Gospel that he had most effectually served his generation. As an able divine Wiley had but few superiors. The death of such a man is a public calamity. It created a vacuum not easily filled.

“O, who can speak his praise? Great, humble man!  
He in the current of destruction stood,  
And warned the sinner of his woe—led on  
Immanuel’s armies in the evil day—  
And with the Everlasting arms embraced  
Himself around—stood in the dreadful front  
Of battle high, and warred victoriously  
With death and hell. And now has come his rest—  
His triumph day.”

And O, how appropriate the day for that triumph! It was the holy Sabbath—the day on which he had so often done battle for the Lord—the day on which, for more than a third of a century, he had been wont to gird on the Gospel armor with peculiar care, and wield “the Spirit’s two-edged sword” with redoubled force. It was the day on which he had been wont to appear among the people as God’s ambassador—the day when he had been accustomed to mingle, with peculiar pleasure, in the devotions of the sanctuary. But on this memorable day,

instead of going forth to battle, as in other days, he lays his armor by, and the Christian warrior returns that trusty sword which he had wielded with so much skill and force for more than a third of a century. On that day—memorable Sabbath!—Wiley appears in the congregation of the Lord; but it is among the worshipers in *that temple not made with hands*. Faith had furnished him enrapturing views of the heavenly city; but *now* “he sees the Lamb in his own light.” The war is over; the victory is gained. He surrenders his commission, and is welcomed *home*. The crown is obtained, and the kingdom won. He has met his old companions in arms. And O, what a meeting! They had frequently met in God’s earthly temples, on the tented field, and had stood up side by side and shouted for the battle. But now they shout the victory complete. Beauchamp, Strange, Armstrong, Locke, and Wiley, with their compatriots—a noble band—are there. Could their voices come back to earth, would they not say to each minister of Christ,

“Gird on thy armor, soldier of the cross!  
Why pause to count thy earthly gain or loss?  
Is there no meed but laurels red and gory,  
To lure thee on to conquest and to glory?  
Is’t not enough to feed ambition’s flame,  
A world to win—a *lost world to reclaim?*  
Press on! the lights of heaven before thee shine—  
Press on! a wreath unfading shall be thine!”



## CHAPTER XIII.

Review of Methodism in Indiana down to 1850—Its numbers, literary institutions, etc.—Communication of Bishop Ames—Causes of the success of Methodism—Difficulties in the way of its progress—Its present position.

WHEN Wiley entered the itinerant ministry in 1817, there were but few circuits organized in Indiana. Lawrenceburg and a part of White Water circuit were in Indiana, although both were included with the Ohio conference. Silver Creek, Blue River, Patoka, and Vincennes, in the south and south-western part of the state, were included in the Missouri conference. The membership in the above circuits, according to the Minutes of 1817, was as follows: Lawrenceburg, 293; White Water, 490; Silver Creek, 500; Blue River, 260; Patoka, 140; Vincennes, 216: making a total of 1,899. There may have been a few societies in Indiana not embraced in this enumeration; but the aggregate membership in the state would not vary much from the figures here given. Methodism was introduced into the White Water country and the eastern part of the state from Ohio, and into the southern part of the state from Kentucky. The first entire pastoral charge formed in Indiana was Silver Creek circuit, in Clarke's Grant, opposite the Falls of the Ohio. It appears on the Minutes for the first time in 1807, and Moses Ashworth was the preacher. Preaching-places had been established, and a number of classes formed at several points in what is now Clarke county, some years previous; but they were included in Salt River circuit. Benjamin Lakin and Samuel Parker paid a transient visit

to the Grant as early as 1801. A local preacher from Kentucky, by the name of John Bates, is said to have organized the first societies in Clarke's Grant. The first society was formed on the east side of Fourteen Mile creek in what was formerly known as Gassaway's settlement; but is now known as the neighborhood of Salem meeting-house. The second society was formed in Robertson's settlement, where the first Methodist meeting-house in Indiana was built, in 1807, and the second meeting-house built in that part of the state was in Gassaway's settlement, the present site of Salem meeting-house. The third society was formed a short distance back of the present town of Utica, in what was called Jacob's settlement. The fourth society was formed in the town of Jeffersonville. These four societies were all that were on the north side of the Ohio river, and constituted a part of Salt River circuit, Kentucky conference, till 1807. The preachers crossed the Ohio river in the vicinity of the Falls, to attend their appointments on the Indiana side. Rev. William Burke, who was then presiding elder on the Kentucky district, held in Clarke's Grant the first camp meeting that was ever held in Indiana, which was in the fall of 1806 or 1807.

Benjamin Lakin and Ralph Lotspeich were the first to establish regular preaching in Clarke's Grant. This they did while traveling Salt circuit in 1803. Consequently, we may date the commencement of regular itinerant preaching, in this part of Indiana, from 1803, which was two or three years prior to the regular introduction of the Gospel into the settlements on the eastern border of the state. William M'Kendree preached occasionally in Clark's Grant in 1803. The first society formed in Harrison county was organized by Moses Ashworth in 1807 or 1808, and consisted of Dennis Pennington and wife, and George Critchfield and wife. Pennington and

Critchfield are yet living, and are noble specimens of western character. Critchfield was one of the company that went to meet Bishop Asbury, and conducted him to the third Kentucky conference, in 1793, which was held five miles north-west of Lexington, at Richard Masterdon's. It was deemed necessary to furnish the Bishop with an escort through the wilderness between the settled parts of Kentucky and Tennessee; and, accordingly, Critchfield and others met the Bishop at Bean's station, in Tennessee, and piloted him to the seat of the conference.

The first revival in Harrison county was in 1810, under the labors of Celah Paine, who, that year, was traveling Silver Creek circuit, and occasionally went down into Harrison county.

Having furnished a brief view of the first introduction and early progress of Methodism in Indiana, and its position in the state at the time that Wiley entered the ministry, we shall now present the reader with as correct a view as we are able of the condition of Methodism as it was in Indiana at the time of Wiley's death. The following exhibit is taken from the Indiana Gazetteer for 1849, page 69:

“The Methodist Episcopal Church is the most numerous religious denomination in the state, and there are but few parts of it in which their traveling or local preachers do not, with more or less frequency, preach the Gospel. The Indiana conference embraces that part of the state lying south of the National Road, but including the central and western charges at Indianapolis, and has 115 traveling and 290 local preachers, 400 meeting-houses, 33,262 Church members, 319 Sabbath schools, 3,030 officers and teachers, and 14,901 scholars. The North Indiana conference, embracing the remainder of the state, has 108 traveling and 258 local preachers, 26,302 Church

members, 293 Sabbath schools, 2,260 officers and teachers, and 12,744 scholars. The whole number of Church members is now over 60,000."

The Indiana conference was organized in 1832, being set off from the Illinois conference, by the General conference of that year. Its sessions have been as follows:

|                                |                                 |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| New Albany.....Oct. 17, 1832   | Centerville.....Oct. 19, 1842   |
| Madison.....Oct. 16, 1833      | Crawfordsville....Oct. 18, 1843 |
| Centerville.....Oct. 22, 1834  | Bloomington.....Oct. 25, 1844   |
| Lafayette.....Oct. 14, 1835    | Madison.....Oct. 8, 1845        |
| Indianapolis.....Oct. 26, 1836 | Connersville.....Oct. 7, 1846   |
| New Albany.....Oct. 25, 1837   | Evansville.....Oct. 6, 1847     |
| Rockville.....Oct. 17, 1838    | New Albany.....Oct. 4, 1848     |
| Lawrenceburg.....Oct. 23, 1839 | Rising Sun.....Oct. 10, 1849    |
| Indianapolis.....Oct. 21, 1840 | Jeffersonville.....Oct. 9, 1850 |
| Terre Haute.....Oct. 6, 1841   | Indianapolis.....Oct. 8, 1851   |

The following table presents the number of members, traveling preachers, and local preachers, each year, since the organization of the conference, down to 1851:

| Year.      | Members.    | Traveling preachers. | Local. |
|------------|-------------|----------------------|--------|
| 1832 ..... | 20,035..... | 65.....              | —      |
| 1833 ..... | 23,617..... | 71.....              | —      |
| 1834 ..... | 25,213..... | 73.....              | —      |
| 1835 ..... | 25,476..... | 92.....              | —      |
| 1836 ..... | 28,000..... | 99.....              | 333    |
| 1837 ..... | 31,058..... | 120.....             | 351    |
| 1838 ..... | 35,258..... | 139.....             | 366    |
| 1839 ..... | 43,953..... | 161.....             | 412    |
| 1840 ..... | 53,033..... | 167.....             | 418    |
| 1841 ..... | 53,381..... | 177.....             | 459    |
| 1842 ..... | 62,942..... | 192.....             | 473    |
| 1843 ..... | 67,219..... | 216.....             | 488    |
| 1844 ..... | 35,686..... | 110.....             | 285    |
| 1845 ..... | 33,673..... | 112.....             | 305    |
| 1846 ..... | 32,530..... | 119.....             | 309    |
| 1847 ..... | 30,745..... | 122.....             | 309    |
| 1848 ..... | 33,262..... | 121.....             | 290    |
| 1849 ..... | 35,481..... | 137.....             | 290    |
| 1850 ..... | 37,798..... | 148.....             | 290    |
| 1851 ..... | 39,271..... | 159.....             | 302    |

It will be observed that in 1844 the conference was divided into Indiana and North Indiana conferences. At the General conference of 1852 the state of Indiana was divided into four annual conferences. The following numbers relate to the North Indiana conference, previous

to the action of this General conference, and, being taken from the published Minutes, are in every sense reliable :

| Year.      | Members.    | Traveling preachers. | Local. |
|------------|-------------|----------------------|--------|
| 1844 ..... | 27,343..... | 105.....             | 220    |
| 1845 ..... | 27,383..... | 110.....             | 222    |
| 1846 ..... | 27,336..... | 114.....             | 267    |
| 1847 ..... | 26,302..... | 120.....             | 258    |
| 1848 ..... | 27,337..... | 120.....             | 282    |
| 1849 ..... | 28,083..... | 134.....             | 269    |
| 1850 ..... | 30,397..... | 149.....             | 279    |
| 1851 ..... | 32,234..... | 170.....             | 288    |

From an inspection of these tables, it will appear that the growth of the Church was constant from 1832 to 1843. From 1838 to 1843 its increase was almost unparalleled, being in five years more than 32,000. From 1843 to 1847 there was a decrease, amounting in the four years in both conferences to about 10,000. This was, doubtless, principally the natural result of the astonishing ingathering of the few previous years. From 1847 to 1851 the increase has been regular and constant, amounting in the Indiana conference to 8,526 members, and in the North Indiana conference to 5,932 members. The membership in the state in 1851 was 71,505, traveling preachers 327, and local preachers 590, giving a total, as presented in the Minutes for that year, of 72,322.

My object in bringing down these statistics to the close of 1850—for the Minutes of 1851 exhibit the state of the Church the year preceding—is to present the numerical condition of the Church at the close of the first half of the present century, but chiefly to show that the decrease which took place from 1843 to 1847 was not the result of any defect in the economy of Methodism, or because the system had fallen into decay, or that the Church had come under any permanent law of decline, but that it was altogether incidental and temporary.

Through the Divine blessing, Methodism has been constantly on the increase in Indiana in all that is essential to its true prosperity, ever since its introduction to the

southern part of the state, under the labors of such men as Lakin, Lotspeich, Burke, M'Kendree, and Ashworth, and, in the eastern part of the state, by such men as Bigelow, Crume, Strange, and Wiley. From 1843 to 1847, while the Church was decreasing in numbers, it was increasing the amount of its annual contributions to the various enterprises under its care. A greater amount of attention was bestowed upon Sabbath schools and upon the cause of education in general. A large number of churches and parsonages were built in different parts of the state, and the annual contributions of the Church to the cause of missions were greatly increased. When Wiley entered the ministry there were but few meeting-houses of any kind in Indiana, most of the preaching being done either in the grove, the private house, or the fort. But in 1850 the Indiana conference alone, which included the southern half of the state, contained 437 church edifices and 61 parsonages, valued at \$299,350. Allowing the same amount to the North Indiana conference, the Methodists in Indiana had invested, in churches and parsonages alone, the sum of \$598,700.

The Methodists in Indiana have taken the lead in the cause of general education. In 1835 the Indiana conference projected the founding of the Indiana Asbury University. In 1837 an act of incorporation was obtained from the Legislature of the state, and the same year a preparatory school was opened. In 1850 the University had a permanent endowment fund of over *one hundred thousand dollars*. In addition to this, they had established the Fort Wayne Female College, at Fort Wayne, and the Indiana Asbury Female College, at New Albany. Both of these institutions are of a high grade, established on a permanent basis, possessing costly and commodious buildings; and under the supervision of able instructors, they present every necessary facility for the attainment

of a thorough education. The Church had also, under its patronage and control, the White Water Male and Female College and Academy, at Centerville, and was projecting the establishment of a Central Female College at Indianapolis. These institutions are now in a highly-prosperous condition. And, besides these, there are a number of Methodist schools in the state that have been projected and sustained by private enterprise. This property has been secured and these institutions have been built up without any foreign aid, scarcely a dollar having been contributed to any of them beyond the limits of Indiana.

This is emphatically a working age, and it is pleasing to contemplate the rapid progress of society, especially in this western portion of the world. In the language of Bishop Ames, in a communication to the author, "The last fifty years have witnessed greater and more beneficial changes throughout the world than any equal period of time since the commencement of the Christian era. And in no part of Christendom has the progress in wisdom and knowledge been greater than in the United States, and in no part of the Union so great as in the west. We are forced to admit that 'fact is stranger than fiction,' when we contrast the present condition of things here with what it was fifty years ago. The forest has given place to the farm, the hunting-grounds of the Indian to the gardens, orchards, grain-fields, and pastures of the husbandman. The bark wigwam and rude cabin are replaced by the ample farm-house and the stately mansion; and crowded cities, filled with the busy hum of active life, have sprung forth, as by enchantment, from the wilderness. Where the death-song and the war-whoop of the wild savage then waked the echoes of the old woods, now the sound of lofty anthems and fervent prayers goes up from sacred temples dedicated to the

worship of the Lord of hosts. These changes and the agencies that have produced them are themes for the historian, the annalist, and the biographer. A large and valuable amount of material for the civil and ecclesiastical history of the west is already irrevocably lost. It perished with the actors. Men of action make history; men of leisure write it. Cæsar acted and recorded his actions; but this is seldom done. Some pains have been taken, by several persons, to perpetuate the memory of those who distinguished themselves in border warfare with Indian tribes. But up to the present time, little or no effort has been made to rescue from oblivion the memory of those moral heroes, who, as *spiritual leaders of the forlorn hope*, under the command of the 'great Captain of our salvation,' guided the Church to battle and to victory. Though comparatively unknown and unhonored on earth, their 'record is on high.' But they ought not to remain unknown and unhonored among men. It is a work both of *piety* and *patriotism* to embalm their virtues in history, and thus hand over their example for the respect and imitation of posterity."

Methodism in Indiana is indebted for much of its success to the daring enterprise, the indefatigable zeal, and self-sacrificing devotion of its early ministry. We have faith in the economy of Methodism. Her system of free seats and her method of extempore preaching were admirably adapted to the state of society and the tastes of the people. Her camp, quarterly, and protracted meetings were well calculated to arrest public attention, and her system of itinerancy to reach the sparsest settlements. But these only constituted a rule to work by, and the best system is of no avail unless carried into execution. *But our fathers did the work.* They carried into practical operation the entire machinery of agencies and means at their disposal. They did not wait for the



erection of a church, and a call from the people; they went out in search of "the lost sheep of the house of Israel;" and as they went they cried, "Behold the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world!" Their message was from God, and they delivered it as such, whether the people would hear or whether they would forbear. We have faith in the truth and purity of the Methodist doctrines; but the "sword of the Spirit" will do no execution unless wielded by skill and force. Our fathers brought the doctrines of the Gospel home to the understandings and consciences of their hearers with a directness and a force which said to each, "*Thou art the man!*" They were *workmen*, and not idlers. The Master had sent them to *labor* in his vineyard, and they obeyed his instructions.

The peculiar doctrines of Methodism were violently assailed, for a number of years, from different quarters. In the eastern part of the state the Newlights opposed the doctrine of the Deity of Jesus Christ, and of the innate depravity of human nature. Some of Wiley's ablest sermons were delivered in the White Water country upon these subjects, and they left a lasting impression on the public mind. Rev. John P. Durbin, although then quite a young man, delivered sermons to the early settlers in eastern Indiana in defense of the divinity of Jesus Christ, which are yet remembered and spoken of as masterly efforts. A few years sufficed to vanquish Arianism, and that pernicious heresy has been long since numbered, in this country, among the things that were.

Calvinism fought a harder battle. Its advocates were intelligent and educated men. Many of them had come from sections of the country where theirs was the dominant sect and the prevailing creed. They looked upon Arminianism as heresy, and many of them regarded the "circuit riders," as they were wont to term the early

Methodist preachers, as mere pretenders in theology. In their estimation, the mission of Methodism was exclusively to the ignorant and the poor; while to them belonged the guidance of the cultivated intellect of the state, the management of educational interests, and the control of the literary funds of the state. But the Methodist preachers were abroad upon their Heaven-appointed mission, proclaiming, in trumpet tones, the leading doctrines of the Gospel, urging repentance and faith as duties of present obligation. They represented all as concluded under sin, and proclaimed that God had mercy for all who would accept it. Thus, while they taught the total depravity of man's nature, and his utter inability to save himself, they taught that the offering of Christ once made, was a "perfect redemption, propitiation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world, both original and actual," so that a possible salvation was purchased for every child of man.

Man's free agency, and his gracious ability to repent and be converted, were strongly insisted upon in nearly every sermon. These doctrines commended themselves to the understanding and consciences of the educated and the illiterate. Methodist doctrines did not have to be instilled into the minds of the people by the slow process of education; but they commended themselves to the common mind, and were readily linked on to their ordinary modes of reasoning and thinking; and hence the extraordinary success which has attended them whenever and wherever faithfully preached. And while extensive contributions have been received from abroad, to aid in planting and sustaining Calvinistic Churches in Indiana, Methodism has relied upon its own resources; and without foreign patronage, and without any legacy from a previous generation, it has secured property, position, and numbers far in advance of any other denomination. Al-

though she has taken her ministry from the different avocations of life—a Peter from his fishing, a Matthew from the receipt of customs, a Luke from the practice of medicine, and a Saul from the feet of Gamaliel—without requiring a collegiate education as a prerequisite to an entrance in the ministry, yet they have, in general, been men of respectable learning, and, as a class, distinguished for their practical sense; and there are at present more men of liberal education in the Methodist ministry, in Indiana, than in the ministry of any other denomination in the state.

Calvinism still has its adherents, but they no longer assail Arminian doctrines nor Methodist economy: these are generally believed and approved, and are strongly entrenched in the affections of the great mass of the people. The greatest difficulties in the way of the progress of Methodism in Indiana, arose from the heterogeneous nature of the society. The population was made up of emigrants from many of the older states of the Union, and from the different countries of Europe, all bringing with them their preconceived opinions and prejudices; and when we add to this the newness of the country, the wonder is, that Methodism has succeeded so well, both in her educational plans and her numerical progress.

If we infer her *future* from the *past*, a bright career awaits the Church in Indiana. Her University and her male and female seminaries, are already educating many hundreds of the youth of the state.

She has in her Sabbath schools upward of *forty thousand children and youth*; and in her communion, upward of *seventy thousand* Church members. “The little one has become a thousand, and a small one a strong nation.” “May the Lord God of our fathers make them a thousand times so many as they are, and bless them as he hath promised!” Already the Church includes within

her pale much of both the intellect and the wealth of the state. Her social position is a commanding one. The progress of society will modify, to some extent, her modes of operation, but should never be suffered to affect any organic feature of an economy that has worked out such grand results. Larger and wealthier societies, and a denser population, have already broken up the extensive circuits of a former day, and the same demand an increased amount of pastoral labor. The increasing intelligence of the people, and the numerous enterprises that are now being carried forward under the patronage of the Church, widen the range of pulpit discussion; presenting new themes for the ministry, and demanding a larger amount of intelligence on their part.

But the leading traits of Methodist preaching should never be given up. *Preaching* should never be exchanged for *pulpit reading*. The free colloquial style of extempore preaching certainly has the sanction of the *Great Teacher*, is sustained by apostolic example, and has been adopted by the most distinguished and effective public speakers, both in the *pulpit* and at the *bar*. The importance which our fathers have been wont to attach to the saving elementary truths of the Gospel, should never be lessened. The leading doctrines of the Gospel should have a place in every sermon. There should be the same aim at immediate results which has so signally marked the labors of our fathers in the ministry. A faithfully-preached Gospel will be "the power of God unto salvation," till the world is converted. The *thousands* of our Israel should be trained as *workers together in the great* moral vineyard. The gold and the silver which God has placed at our command, should be employed for the extension of his kingdom.

The standard of Christian experience and the duty of Christian effort should never be diminished. We should

profit by the example of those who have gone before us, "considering the end of their conversation, Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and *forever.*"

## CHAPTER XIV.

Outlines of ten sermons by Rev. A. Wiley, furnished as specimens of his style of pulpit preparation.

THE following outlines of sermons were not designed for the public eye, but are merely fragments of pulpit preparations found scattered among Wiley's, and must necessarily fall far short of conveying an adequate idea of his pulpit efforts. But meager as they are, they will serve, to some extent, to show his modes of thought and manner of investigation, and furnish some idea of his style as a preacher. To those who were accustomed to hear him, they will not fail to recall many pleasant associations and profitable hours when they sat under his public ministry, and felt that his word was to edification, ministering grace to the hearers. But apart from their authorship, they possess an intrinsic merit sufficient to warrant their publication, and which will make them both acceptable and profitable to the attentive reader.

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"The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree: him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. And we are his witnesses of these things; and so is also the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him," Acts v, 30-32.

INTRODUCTION.—The carnal mind is enmity to God, and by consequence opposed to all his means of reformation: witness the persecution of the good in all ages; especially of the prophets of Jesus Christ, whom the Jews crucified, and of the apostles, whom they endeavored to force not to preach. The apostles, in their defense, unfolded the wisdom and benevolence of God to benefit our world.

## I. THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST.

## II. THE DESIGN OF HIS EXALTATION.

## III. THE EVIDENCES OF THESE THINGS.

## I. THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST.

1. The person exalted was of a twofold nature. He was fellow to the Almighty—Zech. xiii, 7—the brightness of the Father's glory, and express image of his person—Hebrews i, 3—the form of God; that is, possessed of all divine perfections. Phil. i, 6. 2. But he humbled himself by becoming incarnate, and taking upon him the form of a servant, so that he was truly God and really man, and, therefore, suitable to be a mediator between God and man. 3. Being found in fashion as a man, he became obedient unto death, and died a painful, vicarious, and meritorious death for the redemption of the world. 4. He was raised from the dead, and exalted with or at the right hand of God, and constituted the prime minister of state, to administer the affairs of the Divine government throughout the *universe*. Matt. xxviii, 18. All the high orders of Heaven are willingly obedient to him, and he restrains the powers of earth and hell. He is exalted as a Savior, in which capacity he has all things under his control, which are necessary to the salvation of human souls. As the plans of the Divine government extend to the universe of matter and of mind, no finite capacity can comprehend them, and no finite power can carry them into effect; hence the importance of the doctrine of the deity of the Son of God. As human suffering and helplessness need a sympathizing and interposing friend, we see the importance of the doctrine concerning the humanity of our Lord and Savior. In view of his capability to govern wisely and in power, and of his willingness to govern with goodness, and to save by mercy and power, we should confide in and expect salvation from him.

## II. THE DESIGN OF CHRIST'S EXALTATION.

1. Christ gives repentance, by conveying instruction to the mind by his word, providence, and Spirit, so that man becomes acquainted with his moral character and his state of guilt and condemnation. 2. By his grace softening the heart, man feels himself wretched and undone; but at the same time feels some sweet hope that he shall be saved. Without this hope, despair would harden the heart, and resentment would prompt man to blaspheme God and bid him defiance. When the human heart is sufficiently humbled to feel its wickedness, wretchedness, and danger, God is willing to pardon or justify the sinner, and thereby release him from the pains and penalties of sin in this world, so far as it can be done consistently with the probationary state of fallen creatures. By an entire release from the consequences of sin in the world to come; by man's release from all misery and the enjoyment of paradise after death; by the resurrection of the body, and the glorification of the body and the soul after the general judgment, we learn that the plan of human salvation was worthy the wisdom, and goodness, and power of the omnipotent God, and we will say, "*Halleluiah, for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth!*"

### III. THE EVIDENCE OF THESE THINGS.

The apostles were witnesses that Christ was raised from the dead; for three of their senses were employed in ascertaining the identity of his person: they saw him, they heard him, they felt him. They also recognized the sameness of his teachings before and after his resurrection. They saw him, without any intervening agency, ascend till he became invisible, and the angels informed them that he was gone to heaven, there to remain till, in like manner, he should come again.

The Holy Ghost was witness to the verity of the declarations of the apostles—by the gift of tongues, and by the power to work miracles. This evidence is external, but it



is the privilege of all to have an internal witness of the truth of our holy religion.

The text declares that the Holy Ghost is given to them that obey him, for the express purpose of testifying to or with their spirits that their sins are forgiven. The acts of obedience which God requires as conditional of the reception of the Holy Ghost, are repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. The Holy Ghost not only testifies to the forgiveness of our sins, but purifies the heart and gives assurance of a fitness for heaven.

CONCLUSION.—In view of the abundance and variety of evidence afforded us, how unreasonable is it to live in a state of uncertainty! This state of uncertainty is the result of sinful skepticism or of disobedience to God. A life of general obedience to God is required as a condition of retaining the witness of the Spirit.

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“Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain,”  
JOHN xv, 16.

I. YE HAVE NOT CHOSEN ME. 1. As a Teacher; 2. As a Leader; 3. As a Savior.

II. BUT I HAVE CHOSEN YOU. 1. To be my disciples; 2. To be my followers; 3. To be my witnesses.

III. I HAVE APPOINTED, CONSTITUTED, OR DESIGNATED YOU TO BE MY ACCREDITED WITNESSES, to promulgate my Gospel and reform the world.

IV. HEAVEN'S ENTIRE ECONOMY IS A GOING ECONOMY, whether we consider the universe of matter or of mind. Consequently, an itinerant ministry is of Divine appointment as the primary plan, and a settled ministry is only an appendix. Witness Christ and his apostles, the reformers, Wesley and his coadjutors. They were to go into all the world *with speed and energy*.

V. THE SUCCESS OF THE APOSTLES. The reformers, the

Wesleys, and their successors, by whose instrumentality Christianity was planted, and has been nourished from age to age, and will fill the whole world; and their fruit will remain forever in the world of glory.

APPLICATION.—As death leaves you judgment will find you. Death is at the door. Up and be doing, that you may shun perdition!

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“But he said, Yea, rather blessed are they that hear the word of God, and keep it,” LUKE xi, 28.

It is an honor to be the mother of a great and good man, because it is circumstantial evidence of the greatness and goodness of the mother; for we are more indebted to our mothers than to our fathers for our intelligence and moral worth. A man's being remembered favorably will perpetuate a favorable remembrance of his mother. We have numerous instances of this, as Washington, Wesley, and especially JESUS, the SON of MARY. In rich variety of matter, in simplicity of diction, in dignity of manner, the *Son of Mary* remains an unrivaled Teacher. Hence, the admiration and exclamation which gave rise to our text. We shall consider,

I. THE WORD OF GOD.

II. THE HEARING AND KEEPING THAT WORD.

III. THE BLESSEDNESS OF SUCH AS HEAR AND KEEP IT.

I. THE BIBLE. 1. It was Divinely inspired, as the prophecies delivered and the miracles wrought by its writers prove satisfactorily. 2. Notice its internal evidence—*sixty-six tracts* written by more than forty different writers, and extending through a space of more than sixteen hundred years. Their views and representations of God all harmonize. The essence of God and his perfections, natural, intellectual, and moral, are revealed in the Bible with a clearness which inconceivably transcends all the views of the Pagan world. The account of the

creation of the universe is clear and satisfactory; also the account that is given of Jehovah's natural and moral government. 3. The preaching of a living ministry, which is the word of God so far as it harmonizes with the written word.

II. To HEAR signifies, 1. To give attention; 2. To understand what we hear or read; 3. To receive cordially the truth presented. To KEEP THE WORD OF GOD signifies, 1. To remember distinctly; 2. To retain it in the affections; 3. To perform all the things enjoined in what is heard or read, such as ceasing to do evil, and learning to do well, etc.

III. 1. The people who are favored with the Bible and a living ministry are greatly superior to the rest of mankind in the development of their intellectual powers. 2. They have a better knowledge of and higher motives to the practice of correct morality. 3. They have all the means requisite to secure their present and future salvation, so that they are abundantly blessed above any blessing which a relation to Christ in the flesh could bestow.

CONCLUSION.—Happy are you if you know and improve your privileges, by walking in the light, and thereby enjoy the favor of God in this world, and his salvation in the world to come. But if you slight the Bible and the ministry of the word, how dreadful will be your crime and punishment! Think of this, ye careless hearers and readers; ye who do not understand, because you do not try to do so; ye who do not receive the truth in the love of it; you who will not cease from the ways of sin and folly, and pursue the ways of delightful obedience to God, your Maker, Preserver, Redeemer, and final Judge.

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“And I saw a great white throne, and him that sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away; and there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the

books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works," *REV. xx, 11, 12.*

INTRODUCTION.—The sublimity of the Scriptures.

I. THE OBJECTS OF THE VISION. These were, 1. A throne, emblematic of regal and judicial authority. Its greatness indicates the extended dominion and universal judicial authority of its occupant. Its color is emblematic of the holiness of Jehovah's administrations and decisions. 2. The dead, standing before the Judge, from the smallest infant to the man of gigantic stature—from the most obscure beggar or hermit to the wealthiest and mightiest monarch that ever lived. 3. The occupant of the throne, whose face was once gazed on with malicious eyes, without consternation, was spit on, was smitten—but now so glorious that its rays of pure light caused the heavens and the earth to ignite and to fall away; that is, their present form to be destroyed by conflagration.

II. THE PROCESSES OF THE JUDGMENT. The Judge being seated, and the subject to be judged being arraigned, the books were opened. 1. The books of law, which were the books of natural law, written in the conscience; the books of the Patriarchal, Mosaic, Prophetic, and Christian dispensations. 2. The books of evidence; the book of human recollection of the dispensations of Divine providence; the book of human conscience; and the book of the Divine omniscience. From these will be ascertained all the thoughts which have flitted through the mind; the desires which have a place in the heart; the words spoken; the actions performed and their results. Moral actions are to decide the destiny of all moral agents; they were judged according to their works. Works acceptable to God and promotive of salvation are repentance, faith, love, obedience to every precept, ritual and

moral. Works which endanger the soul are impiety, unbelief, alienation from God and holiness, non-compliance with precepts, ritual and moral.

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“I will therefore that men pray every-where, lifting up holy hands without wrath and doubting,” 1 TIMOTHY ii, 8.

INTRODUCTION.—Observe the awful imprecation contained in Jeremiah x, 25: “Pour out thy fury upon the heathen that know thee not, and upon the families that call not upon thy name.” Observe, also, the propriety of these imprecations. Men and families neglect to pray, either because they are Atheists or because they are too proud to acknowledge their dependence on God.

I. Prayer is a statement of wants and an expression of wishes. As wants and wishes exist in every place, so should prayer be performed in every place.

II. Prayer should be accompanied with the lifting up of the hands, and placing them by faith upon the head of Christ, the victim. The hands are to be purified from all unrighteous acts.

III. While we implore mercy and grace on our own souls, we must banish all unkindness toward others from our hearts.

IV. All evil surmisings and unbelieving doubts should be banished from our minds.

CONCLUSION.—1. Prayer cultivates devout and fraternal feelings. 2. It detaches us from earth, and draws us toward heaven. 3. It prepares us for the devotions of another world.

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“For I have received of the Lord, that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus, the same night in which he was betrayed, took bread: and when he had given thanks, he brake it, and said, Take, eat: this is my body, which is broken for you: this do in remembrance of me. After the same manner also he took the cup, when he had supped, saying, This cup is the new testament in my blood: this do ye, as oft as ye drink

it, in remembrance of me. For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come," 1 CORINTHIANS xi, 23-26.

INTRODUCTION.—The propriety of significant institutions to perpetuate the memory of important events, such as the feast of the Passover, and other divinely-instituted feasts; fourth of July celebrations, if properly conducted; the sacrament of the Lord's supper.

I. WE NOTICE THE TIME AND MANNER OF THE INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. The solemn night—the night upon which he was baptized—at the close of the Paschal supper, which brought to mind the bondage of their fathers in Egypt—the stubbornness of Pharaoh—the ten signal judgments of heaven, the last of which caused universal wailing among the Egyptians. 2. He gave thanks to God for the bread and wine, which was given, (1.) To nourish man. (2.) On that occasion to be a suitable emblem of his body and blood.

II. THE GIFT OF THE BODY AND BLOOD OF THE LORD, WITH THE OBJECTS IN VIEW.

1. Christ gave his body and blood a sacrificial offering to meet the claims of violated law—of insulted justice. 2. The object. That man might obtain pardoning mercy, regenerating mercy, sanctifying grace, and eternal glory.

III. THE DESIGNATED PERPETUITY OF THE SACRAMENT.

1. To perpetuate the memory of Christ's atonement. 2. To remind us of our perpetual need of his merit and grace. 3. To remind us of our constant duty to believe in, love, and obey him. 4. To remind us of his second coming. From all which it is manifest that the Church should observe this institution till the end of the world.

CONCLUSION.—1. All who are penitent expectants of salvation by Christ, should be regular in their observance of communion seasons. 2. They should be thankful for

the exalted privilege of being guests at the table of the Lord. 3. They should resolve to be more than ever diligent to adorn the Christian profession.

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“Righteousness exalteth a nation, but sin is a reproach to any people,”  
 PROV. xiv, 34.

INTRODUCTION.—It is a received opinion, that general intelligence will exalt and sustain a free government. The thing, however, is impossible, because the mass have neither the time nor the means of acquiring general intelligence. Intelligence is relative; so that if the general community were intelligent the few would still be in advance of them, and as capable of intrigue as ever. Something more is needed. We notice,

I. THE MEANS OF NATIONAL EXALTATION.

II. THE NATURE OF THAT EXALTATION.

III. THE CAUSE OF NATIONAL DEGRADATION.

I. THE MEANS OF NATIONAL EXALTATION.

1. Equal and wholesome laws. 2. An intelligent and faithful judiciary. 3. A wise and upright administration. 4. Fidelity in making treaties. These are national concerns, in an official point of view, and are but a part of the righteousness which is requisite. As nations are composed of individuals, there must be individual uprightness founded on correct moral principles.

II. THE NATURE OF THAT EXALTATION.

Such righteousness as I have endeavored to describe, will exalt or give an elevated standing to a nation. 1. In the estimation of other nations. 2. In the estimation of the moral Governor of the universe. 3. Such a nation will have a becoming respect for itself. Other nations will fear to commit acts of aggression toward such a nation; but should they commit such acts, Jehovah will protect the righteous nation; and a consciousness of upright-

ness will inspire such a degree of confidence and courage as would defy the world. Witness the Israelites, while they were upright and enjoyed the favor of God. One could chase a thousand, and two put ten thousand to flight. Witness our own country's memorable Revolutionary struggle.

### III. THE CAUSE OF NATIONAL DEGRADATION.

Trick and selfishness in making laws, ignorance and servility in the judiciary, and party purposes in the executive departments; a breach of party stipulations, drunkenness, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, knavery: these are the causes of one nation's dishonor in the vision of sister nations, and of abhorrence by holy Heaven, and cause the people to be so base and cowardly that they have not the courage to maintain their dignity and independence.

CONCLUSION.—Let it not be supposed that these remarks are designed to censure one political party and justify the other. Both parties must do better or God will curse us all; and so sure as there is a just God in heaven, unless our hasty rancor shall cease; our liberty, our honor, and our happiness will depart from us, and we will become an execration in all the earth. Let each one examine his own heart and life and resolve upon personal reform, and then use the means to reform others. This course will be the means of lengthening our prosperity and happiness.

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“When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: and before him shall be gathered all nations: and he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an



hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee? And the King shall answer and say unto them, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels: for I was an hungered, and ye gave me no meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me not in: naked, and ye clothed me not: sick, and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer him, saying, Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister unto thee? Then shall he answer them, saying, Verily I say unto you, Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment: but the righteous into life eternal," MATTHEW XXV, 31-46.

INTRODUCTION.—The uniformity of nature inspires the infidel and the wicked with a confidence that the present state of things will continue. How delusive are appearances! Witness earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, the deluge, etc. So will it be in the coming of the Son of man to judgment.

I. THE AUGUST SCENE INTRODUCTORY TO THE JUDGMENT.

II. THE PROCESS OF JUDGMENT.

III. THE ISSUES OF THE JUDGMENT.

I. THE AUGUST SCENE INTRODUCTORY TO THE JUDGMENT.

1. The glorified appearance of the Son of man. 2. The attendance of all the holy angels. 3. The majestic throne from which he will manifest his glorious dignity.

II. THE PROCESS OF JUDGMENT.

1. The assembling of all nations before him. 2. The separation of all mankind according to their characters. 3. Their position on the right hand and on the left. 4. The sentence of each class. The first is, Come, ye blessed of my Father; blessed with a day and means of grace, which were improved by you, as your conduct proves; for ye were kind to the pious, who were my brethren and my representatives in the earth. Come, and possess a

kingdom prepared for holy characters from the foundation of the world. The second is, Depart, ye cursed; cursed because you neglected your day and means of grace, as your conduct proves; for ye were unkind to my disciples.

### III. THE ISSUES OF THE JUDGMENT.

1. The righteous shall enjoy eternal life in a glorious and eternal kingdom. 2. The wicked shall be punished with the loss of all mental and corporal pleasures—with the infliction of mental and corporal sufferings to all eternity. Because there is wrath, beware!

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“Let us not be weary in well-doing: for in due season we shall reap if we faint not,” GALATIANS vi, 9.

INTRODUCTION.—Man is created with active powers and a propensity to use them. He is furnished with means, and commanded to apply them. In using these means, he is pursuing Heaven’s order, which is to help man by man and means, instead of a reiterated performance of miracles, unnecessarily.

I. THE GOOD WE SHOULD AND MAY DO. We are to operate on bodies and on mind, in seeking the needy and oppressed—in relieving them, if we have the means; if not, in using our influence with those that have. If we fail in such influences, they are still to have our sympathies: by instructing the ignorant; by admonishing and exhorting the wicked; by encouraging the weak and the wavering.

II. THE INDUCEMENTS PRESENTED IN THE TEXT. We shall have a harvest of consolations in our own hearts when we have diminished human suffering; we shall have a harvest of souls converted, directly or remotely, through our instrumentality; we shall have a harvest of glory, when we arrive at home, with the fruits of our labors. But all these things are on the condition that we

do not despond. Despondency would cramp our energies and defeat our success. What an honor God confers on us in making us his instruments in doing good, temporal, spiritual, and eternal! With what alacrity should we exert all our powers and use all our means, for the time for action with us will soon be over!

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“Acquaint now thyself with Him, and be at peace; thereby good shall come unto thee,” JOB xxii, 21.

INTRODUCTION.—God’s administration is not vindictive, but disciplinary or exemplary. In those ages and countries destitute of a knowledge of future retribution, sin was more signally punished in this life. The friends of Job supposed his numerous afflictions were punishments of sin. Consequently, with a fair exterior, he must have been a miserable hypocrite, who had no correct knowledge of God. Notice the propriety of the exhortation, if the views of the man had been correct; and how proper it is now, in this and all other congregations where there are irreligious people. Observe,

I. DUTIES ENJOINED. 1. Study the perfections of God. 2. Study the character of his administration. 3. Seek a removal of his wrath from you. 4. Seek that grace which will destroy the enmity of your hearts against him. 5. So live that He may remain reconciled with you, and you delighted in him.

II. ADVANTAGES TO BE DERIVED. 1. An acquaintance with great and good men expands the views, elevates the moral feelings, and corrects the life. How much more an acquaintance with the great God, the fountain of all perfection! 2. A knowledge that our conduct has justly offended a friend, gives pain; and a feeling of enmity toward a benefactor is still more tormenting; consequently, more so when God is offended, and is the object of our enmity. How consoling, then, to know

that he is reconciled, and ourselves at amity with him!

3. The prospect of future felicity is most consoling.

CONCLUSION.—How unwise to delay this advantageous acquaintance! Delays are dangerous. Where present and future happiness are hazarded, how awfully dangerous! How proper the exhortation, “Acquaint now thyself with him!”

Part Second.

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A HELP TO THE PERFORMANCE OF MINISTERIAL DUTIES.



## PREFACE.

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IN 1834, when Thomas A. Morris—now Bishop Morris—was editor of the *Western Christian Advocate*, I was invited, by the editor, to contribute articles for the paper. Shortly after this request, there appeared a request in the paper which induced me to commence a series of numbers, which were introduced in the following manner:

“MR. EDITOR,—I saw, in the fourteenth number of your paper, a communication signed W. C., dated at Logansport, Indiana, which I think ought to be answered in a satisfactory manner; and as no person of age and experience has made the attempt, I will try, in my imperfect manner, to say something on the subject on which information is earnestly asked. As you desire short articles, I will pursue the subject in a series of numbers, of which this shall be the first—observing, such is the number and variety of my duties, that I may not be able to furnish one number per week.”

I took several parts of our excellent *Discipline* as the foundation of my numbers, and, in amplifying these, the numbers swelled to twenty. These have been laying by me ever since, without any revision or any determination to publish them in a more permanent form, as I have not had time or inclination to revise them. By providential family affliction

being out of the regular itinerant service, I have concluded to revise my numbers, and prepare them for publication in book form. I am aware that we have many excellent books on the pastoral office, containing the duties of pastors; but most of these are written for the use of ministers who are settled in stated congregations: such as Baxter's Reformed Pastor, Smith on the Sacred Office, Fletcher's Portrait of St. Paul, and many other kindred works. We have an excellent work, by Bishop Hedding, on the administration of Discipline; but none of these take that extended view of the varied duties of a Methodist traveling preacher which seems desirable; and, so far as I know, there is no work which occupies the ground of mine. Were it desirable, I could have enlarged my work to a large and, I trust, a useful volume; but it was not my wish to make a large book.

If I mistake not, my junior brethren, and some others farther advanced, will find their duties, as laid down in the Discipline, here amplified and illustrated so as to impress their minds advantageously.

Although this little treatise is intended mostly for the preachers, yet our people may derive some benefit from its perusal, as they will see that the duties of the preachers and the people are reciprocal. I now submit it to the care of Divine providence, hoping that it will do good when the days of the writer's usefulness shall close, and he have no more a share in all that is transacted in this world. He feels that his sun is now declining, and that the night of death will soon be here.



It will be seen that he has said little or nothing on the Divine call to the ministry; and the reason is, he addresses himself to those who are already ministers, and are doubtless satisfied of their call from on high, or they would never have entered the work. To run before a man is sent, in this case, is an alarming thing. I trust none of my brethren have done so. If any have run unsent, they have no valuable tidings, and they had better stop.

ALLEN WILEY.

*Vevay, Ia., January 15, 1848.*



A HELP TO THE PERFORMANCE  
OF  
MINISTERIAL DUTIES.

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CHAPTER I.

The importance of general information to a Gospel minister.

MAN is naturally a proud being, and, consequently, disdains to be considered as ignorant and needing instruction; but if he should become willing to acknowledge his want of information, he will scorn to receive instruction from such as he may deem incompetent to instruct him. Many years ago, and long before I made a profession of religion, I heard the following conversation, which I then thought, and yet think, reasonable:

*A.* Will you go to meeting to-day?

*B.* No; when I go to hear a man preach, I want him to tell me something which I do not know, or reason rationally on what I think I do know, and Mr. — can do neither.

The preceding statements will suggest to every man that it is important that the public should be persuaded that the minister is capable of performing the work of a public teacher, or he will fall into contempt and consequent reproach. But the impression of his capacity can never be made, if he does not possess that capacity, without holding forth false pretenses to information, which a

conscientious man dare not do; and if any man be so destitute of honor as to use deception, his imposition on the public will, sooner or later, be discovered, when he must sink into deserved infamy as a hypocritical pretender to what he does not possess. From the considerations preceding, we are led to the conclusion that it is very important, and almost indispensably necessary, for the minister to be a learned man in the present improved state of society. I wish not, however, to be misunderstood when I say the minister should be a learned man, as if I meant that knowledge of languages which some suppose constitutes the chief if not the whole of literature—which is far from being my meaning. I would observe, however, if the acquisition of the dead languages—the Hebrew and Greek especially—is in his power, the minister should not neglect it, unless it would cause him to neglect something of more importance; but the literature I have in view is quite another thing; it is a knowledge of those things which will expand the mind, and render him more apt to teach. The limits which I propose to this work will not permit me to enter into a long view of knowledge, but only a few items in brief detail.

We are so connected with the earth which we inhabit that it seems to me every man, and especially the public teacher, should be acquainted with its structure, its nature, its relations to other parts of the visible creation. A knowledge of the earth, to be complete, would require a knowledge of geography, geology, and botany, together with astronomy, as our world is only a part of the solar system, and this a part of the vast system of the universe. But knowledge is so vast and life so short, and there is so much to do in so short a time, that the active servant of the Church, and of the world, must content himself with a partial knowledge of these things; but a

knowledge of these things, to some extent, he should regard as his duty. The next branch of information should be an acquaintance with the inhabitants of the earth, embracing the fish of the water, the fowls of the air, the beasts of the field, and the insects of the earth and air, together with man, the lord of all the lower world. But when we consider the extent and variety of animated nature, we must despair of a critical knowledge thereof, and be content with some general information. The maxim, "Know thyself," should more particularly claim the attention of the man of God; and he should study his whole nature, his body, his mind, his moral powers, in doing which he may have the aid of many valuable authors in natural, intellectual, and moral philosophy. When he has studied his own constitution, he should then consider himself but as an individual of an immense race, with which he is connected by the ties of a common nature. Consequently, he will be led to acquaint himself with the history of his race in all ages and nations, which will open to him a great variety of bodily habits, intellectual capacities, and civil and religious manners and customs, as existing and practiced by an order of beings essentially the same. In tracing the history of man in all its parts, it will be manifest that literature has ever tended to raise the human mind far, very far above the common level of the untaught savage. But it will still be evident that the world by wisdom knew not God, and that revelation has alone unfolded the nature, perfections, government, and variegated economy of God, as Creator and Preserver of all things and Redeemer and Savior of men.

I am perfectly at a loss to know how any public teacher can neglect a close consideration of and an intimate acquaintance with the means which Heaven has furnished us to communicate our ideas to our fellows in

an intelligent manner. As the public labor of a preacher is to convey instruction to human minds, it must be obvious to all that he should have a philosophical knowledge of the vehicle by which he transmits his thoughts to others, in order that he may know its capability of performing the service which he expects from it. I take it for granted every man called of God, prior to the meridian of life—and there are few called after that period—to preach, has the capacity of becoming acquainted with the grammar of his mother tongue, and that it should be a matter of conscience with him to become a grammarian, so as to analyze what he reads, or hears, or speaks, or writes himself, that he may clearly understand its meaning. I know it may be said that many men, by mixing with good company, and reading good authors, have contracted the habit of tolerably-correct speaking, without the knowledge of grammar; to which I would reply, there have been a few, and only a few, such cases; and the fewness of the number should forever deter others from presuming on so unwarranted a course as that practiced by the parrot in her imitation, or supposed imitation, of human speech. I am aware that many excellent young men are desirous of learning the science of language, but are deterred for want of an opportunity to realize the aid of a competent teacher. But let such remember, if they had five hundred able teachers they must themselves be the principal laborers in this thing. Many have thought the time devoted to grammar lost, as it might be employed in reading and collecting information that might be of more benefit for present practical use; but let such remember that whatever tends to expand the mind and train it in modes of correct thinking is calculated to facilitate the acquisition of knowledge. The close application of the thinking powers, which is necessary to acquire a good knowledge of language, will

prepare the mind for close thinking and that laborious research which are requisite to enable man to make advancements in any intellectual pursuit. Perhaps some will say our fathers in the Gospel were successful far beyond any of their sons, without the various information now urged upon us.\* There is no man who feels more reverence for them than I do, and who rejoices more in

\* That God rules and adapts means to ends, in the moral as well as in the natural world, is obvious to every observing mind. Is a downtrodden nation to be led from the land of oppression? Divine providence prepares the instrument. A cast-out babe is taken up from a watery grave by a member of the royal family, in consequence of which he receives a thorough education, which expands his mind. But this alone will not do; for he must spend forty years in a pastoral life, mostly in a wilderness, so as to invigorate his body and give firmness to his mind, that he may endure hardness for a long time, as God foresaw he would have to do in leading an ignorant and stubborn people. Is Judaism to be superseded, and is Paganism to be subverted, and Christianity to take the place of both, and be firmly planted in the world? The instruments are to be provided, and this is to be done by selecting, for the most part, hardy, sea-faring fishermen, who had good but illiterate minds. The want of languages was supplied by miracle, so that they might be prepared to preach to all nations in the varied languages of earth. We, however, find among them an officer of the Roman government in the person of Levi, and a thoroughbred scholar and a Roman citizen in the person of Paul. Is a corrupt and vitiated Christianity to be reformed? God provides the instruments. We see a resolute Luther, who fears neither men nor devils. But will not his rash and dogmatic manner disgust and alienate every body from him? Behold the wise, the mild, the good Melancthon, to counteract the rashness of Luther! Is languid Christianity to be roused to energy and diligence? See the fit instruments in the Wesleys, and Whitefield, and others suited to the work! Is the same work to be done in the wide-spread colonies, afterward United States of America? Behold the instruments in the first and some succeeding races of Methodist preachers! Many of them were men of uncommon bodies to endure the fatigues incident to their extended travels and intense labors. Were we of the present day accurately informed of the number of miles which they rode, and the number of sermons which they preached, and the vehemence with which they preached them, we would be astonished above measure, and be ready to say, Can these things be so? Can we behold so many bodies able to endure so much labor for so long a time, without believing there was a

the success that attended them; but we should ever bear in mind that their hearers, like many of themselves, were illiterate and could not discover their defects; but this is not the case in our day. They did not possess the facilities to acquire information which we do, and of course it was not expected of them. But now if a young man, with the variety of means in his power, passes on from

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special providence in the call of these men to the work? It is true the indomitable resolution of their souls tended to invigorate and sustain their bodies; but this resolution was the gift of God. If we turn from their bodies to their minds, we shall see the same adaptation of means to ends. As I said in the chapter to which this note is appended, they were not generally learned men; but as it regards natural intellect, they were generally men superior to the people of their age and country; and, so far as time would permit and they had means to do so, they improved their minds so that many of them became, to some extent, scholars and pretty general readers, and in the science of saving souls they were the best-informed men in the land. Take their number and the number of the population on which they operated, and it will be seen that they were successful far beyond the success of their successors. The secret of their success will be found in the fact that they labored alone for success; for such was the general odium attached to them in the public mind that they made no calculation on being admired as men of talents, and they preached only to turn men from Satan to God; and great was their success in winning souls. Viewing all the circumstances, we may say they were God's own men, fitted for his own work, and adapted to the times and circumstances as they then were.

If there are any men whom I venerate, they are the first Methodist preachers on this continent. Their immediate successors also share largely in my veneration. I respect all my brethren in the ministry, but not as I do these primitive men of God. Those who have the means should hasten to rescue their memory and work from oblivion. I have tried to do so, in a few cases, of those who were of an early day; but not the first preachers, for they were mostly gone before my time. I meant not to speak disparagingly of the fathers. Had I the means of information, there is nothing in which I would take more delight than in presenting to the world the faithful portraits of those most excellent men to whom, under God, we are indebted for the privileges which we, as a people, now enjoy. Peace to their memories, while I indulge a hope to see them, and hear them recount their labors and success, when all their sons and daughters shall meet them in Abraham's bosom.



year to year without literary improvement, he is looked upon—and that justly—as wanting capacity or as criminally indolent. If he is supposed to want capacity, doubts arise as to the reality of his call to the ministry. If he is thought to be criminally indolent, he is despised as a “locum tenens,” holding the place but not doing the duties of a minister.

The minister, having acquired the knowledge partially specified, should remember that his acquirements are not to be used, primarily, to make himself shine, but to enable him the better to understand and more forcibly present the religion of the Bible before the people in all its dimensions, that he may be a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

## CHAPTER II.

The importance of Biblical knowledge and pulpit preparation to a minister, and the prudent and earnest manner of his delivery.

IF a man would accomplish any thing of importance, the first grand concern is, to acquire the capacity for doing the thing he undertakes. That the duties of the ministry are important, no man can deny or doubt, who considers the bearing they have on the glory of God and the happiness of man in this world and that which is to come. Therefore, our first business will be to point out the qualifications proper for the minister of the Gospel. An intimate knowledge of the Gospel is, beyond doubt, necessary to that man who would preach it, so as to have that extended success that will make men wise unto eternal salvation. And as the days of plenary inspiration have passed by, this knowledge can only be acquired by the means which Heaven has ordained to so desirable an end. To acquire a proper knowledge of the Gospel, an intimate acquaintance with the book containing it must be obtained; and this can be gained only by the aid of the means which are in our reach.

The minister should consider the Gospel as diffused in every part of the Bible. In the Old Testament it is presented in types and shadows, prophecies and promises; in the New, by historic accounts and inspired doctrines: consequently, the man of God must study the Bible with an intensity as much superior to the study bestowed on arts and sciences, as salvation is superior in importance to arts and sciences. Perhaps the best method to study the Bible is to read it in a consecutive order, frequently

comparing the types and shadows with the historical details and doctrines, so as to have a clear view of the gradual developments of truth as the world was able to bear. Another great help in reading the Bible is, to analyze it in its strict grammatical meaning, especially in the etymology of its words, that their ideal meanings may be obtained; and to this end aid should be sought from the labors of wise and good men, who have made the Bible their principal study during their whole lifetime. Care, however, should be exercised not to substitute the thinking powers of others, for that laborious scrutiny that the man's own mind should exercise, in forming his own judgment of the matter he may be investigating.

The foregoing remarks regard the general course of study to be pursued by the minister, in acquiring a general knowledge of the holy Scriptures; but I will now suppose he is about preparing a subject for the pulpit, which is to be a savor of life unto life, or of death unto death: I need not say he feels an anxiety known only to the conscientious and faithful minister. He now retires, if possible, from every thing that would divert his thoughts from the subject which he wishes to discuss; he reads it with trembling care and prayerful attention; he weighs every sentence, every clause, every word; its context with parallel passages; its connection with the whole subject-matter of divine revelation. After which he forms his plans or divisions. He next considers the important matter to be placed under each head; he now considers the relation one part has to another, and then the bearing the whole may have on the congregation, which will be edified and blessed, or disgusted and stumbled by his performance. If it be in his power, he then examines some able commentator, so as to form an estimate of the correctness or incorrectness of his own views, that he may alter and amend it if it be deemed necessary, before his

sermon is delivered as a message from God to dying man. All this labor is performed with frequent prayer for Heaven's light, to direct him into all the truth that may be proper on that occasion. He then goes to the people with a humble mind and a dependent spirit, to declare to them the holy truths of the Most High.

Having thus prepared his subject, he should next consider the character and capacity of his congregation, that he may adapt his manner and style so as to accomplish the object in view; namely, to win their souls. He should now remember that simple nature is to be his guide in the manner of his delivery, and that he should keep himself at the utmost distance from every thing affected or borrowed; for all men despise affectation in the minister of the Gospel, however they may tolerate it in themselves or others; and, indeed, it should not be tolerated in the minister, as it is a species of hypocrisy which should never tarnish the man of God. He should now consider what must be accomplished in winning the souls of his audience. He will regard his congregation as intelligent beings, whose judgments are to be informed, and, consequently, his language will be perspicuous and strong, that it may reach the understanding and make an indelible impression on the mind, that his matter may be well understood and lastingly remembered. He should next recollect that his audience are beings possessed of passions, which must be operated on, or they will consent to all that may be said, but remain careless as heretofore. But in moving the passions, he will discriminate between those passions that may be moved without any beneficial result, and those, the moving of which will produce lasting good. The sympathies of a man may be operated on, and no good result, as is evident from the effect produced, without any beneficial result, by the novels and tales with which our land is flooded; but when the fears, the hopes, the

desires, the anxieties of a congregation are roused, good must result. The Bible is replete with matter calculated to produce the end intended. In this book we are presented with man as an offender against God; in consequence of which he is exposed to an eternity of woe; and his exposure is continual, as he knows not the time when he shall sink to rise no more forever. Who can avoid fear under a lively impression of this his danger? which ought to be laid open and pressed home on the sinner with much earnestness by the feeling minister, whose whole soul should be in this work of awakening the fears, which are calculated to deter the sinner from a further pursuit of a criminal and dangerous course of conduct. The Bible also presents views and considerations which are calculated to excite the hopes of the poor, dismayed criminal; for there we behold the God of love giving his Son for the chief of sinners, that they may be saved from going down to the pit of everlasting destruction. If God so loved the world as to give his Son for it, he surely will give the penitent sinner a full pardon of sin, and effect a change in his heart by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and also give an evidence of adoption which will satisfy the anxious mind that Heaven's favor is obtained.

To be successful in the awakening, and conversion, and salvation of souls, the most important thing is for the minister to feel that he is an ambassador for Christ, and that he, in the name and place of Christ, is beseeching men to be reconciled to God. In order that any man may so feel, he must be fully persuaded that God has called him to the office and work of the ministry. That a man may be successful, he must not only feel that he *was* called to be an ambassador for Christ, but that he *is still such*. It is very possible for a man to be moral and attend to the forms of religion, and preach in a formal way when his unction is gone. In this state he may preach with good

ability, and be admired for his talents, but the seals to his ministry are few and far between. Then, my brethren, if you would save souls, you must so live and believe, that God may live in you, and beseech men, by his pleading Spirit in you, to repent, and turn and believe, and live a life of holiness on earth and of glory hereafter. In a word, we should feel, in every sense and in the whole of every sermon, that we are a savor of life unto life, or a savor of death unto death; and surely the man of sensibility, who feels, in every sermon, that he will be the instrument of salvation or of the augmented damnation of his hearers, will preach in view of the judgment-seat of Christ and of the realities of eternity. And did we all preach in this way, we would see more fruit of our labor in the ministry. I know this intensity of feeling is painful to human nature, and will be calculated to abridge our days; but so preached Christ and his primitive ministers, and so preached the ministers in all extensive revivals of religion since the apostolic age.

If we read the lives of Whitefield, Bramwell, Smith, and others, and the journals of Abbott, Garrettson, and others, we will find that they so felt and preached in the days of their great prosperity and success; and if we look back to the days of our own greatest success, we will remember that we ourselves used to preach in a similar state of feeling. Can we not remember how we sometimes felt a sense of the all-pervading presence of God? We seemed to realize that God was all around and in us, and that he spoke by our lips, our tongues, eyes, cheeks, hands, feet, and, in a word, by our whole bodies and souls. Can we ever remember preaching with such feelings without fruit? Were not sinners awakened and converted, and believers built up on their most holy faith? Now, if we could only get into the same frame of mind and fervor of feeling and spirit, we would see similar fruits of our labor; for

human hearts are the same, and will feel under similar circumstances. It is true, we might not live so long in this world, but we would do more good while we do live.

O let us pray, my brethren, for this holy unction, that we may make full proof of our ministry, and do the work of evangelists, that God may give us many seals to our ministry, and many stars in our crown in the day of our rejoicing.

## CHAPTER III.

The necessity of system and diligence in study to acquire the information necessary to a minister.

IN the two former chapters I confined myself chiefly to the information necessary to a preacher, that he may be qualified to perform profitably the public duties of his office. It is my purpose, in this chapter, to be a little more particular in pointing out the methods to be pursued in the acquisition of the requisite knowledge. As my object is, principally, the benefit of inexperienced young men of the Methodist Episcopal Church, I shall adapt my remarks to their situation especially, as they need aid. The number and diversity of their employments and duties are, to some extent, calculated to confuse and perplex the mind, and thereby discourage it in the pursuit of valuable information. All must acknowledge the itinerant life has many inconveniences, especially in breaking in upon that regular arrangement of time that may be desirable, in order to pursue study satisfactorily; but these inconveniences are not so many nor so great as to retard improvement, if the man be economical of his time. Let us take one day and consider the time to be used, and the manner of using the same. I hope I shall not be considered severe, when I allow only seven hours for sleep, which will be enough for the man who makes it a matter of conscience not to sleep more than nature needs: and if he does not, I at once despair of his usefulness, and would advise him to go home and follow some business that will not bring him before the public as a reproach to his pro-



fession.\* On an average he will need two hours to ride to his appointments, and two more to hold meeting; fifteen minutes in the morning, and the same in the evening, to attend family worship, where he may stay, will make half an hour; twenty minutes, three times each day, for private devotion, will make one hour; thirty minutes, three times per diem, for eating, will be one hour and a half; and to the foregoing may be added two hours employed in profitable conversation with the children and others, where he may be; all of which will make sixteen hours out of twenty-four, leaving eight to be employed in mental culture, which will be as much time as most constitutions can endure close mental application, without endangering the health of the body. I have allowed two hours for riding, which, however, in fair weather, I consider the best time for learning grammar, or logic, or any similar study, or in preparation for the pulpit; and if thus employed, may be added to the eight, which will make ten to be used in every twenty-four, in gaining a good store of general knowledge. Now, we behold the young man, with eight hours or more on his hands for valuable use, or the most criminal abuse; the latter of which will take place unless he remember what he is styled—a *Methodist*; that is, one who has *method* in all his pursuits, a want of which has been the cause of failure to hundreds who might have been eminent, but who have wasted their energies to no purpose. Every young man who enters the traveling connection, in the annual conferences, has an excellent course of theological study pointed out to him

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\* When this was written most of the circuits were large, and had nearly as many appointments as there were days in the round, and some of them more, so that the people did not then expect as much pastoral visiting as they do now. The industrious preacher now can use the time in visiting that was used by his predecessors in riding, and thereby be a blessing to his charge.

by the bishops, as they are required to do. But I have found many young men of good understanding, who have, somehow, strangely overlooked the course of study, and have fixed their minds entirely on the catalogue of books connected with the course, and suppose they are bound to read so many books, which is all that is required of them; in consequence of which they read, and read, and do not use the information contained in the books to enable them properly to understand the things recommended to their attention, or they would pass a better examination than many of them do. When a young man is presented with the course of study, he should regard a knowledge of the same as in his power, and he should firmly resolve in his mind that he will not be found deficient when he shall pass his examination; and should he so resolve, and firmly pursue the steps necessary, he will not be found greatly deficient. Some branches of knowledge are recommended in the preceding chapters of this work, which are not directly embraced in the course of study recommended by the bishops; but it is evident that they regard the things which I have noticed as useful to the preacher, that he may clearly understand, and properly teach, the wholesome doctrines of the Bible. In the catalogue of books recommended, there is one work which should be greatly prized and closely studied, for the great diversity and extent of information it contains on almost every part of the Creator's works: I mean Wesley's *Philosophy*. There is another work not included in the catalogue, which I regard as almost invaluable: I mean Beattie's *Elements of Moral Science*, which is perspicuous and interesting, and ought to be read by every young minister, as there is nothing in it calculated to mislead the unwary, if I have a correct recollection of its contents. I will now suggest what may be considered, in a general point of view, a profitable division of time, in the pursuit of information.

At least two hours in each day ought to be spent in a close attention to Biblical studies; and more, if it be found necessary, to enable the young preacher to bring out of his treasury things new and old. Two hours may be employed, beside the time in riding, for the study of grammar, till that science be acquired. Two hours may be spent in reading doctrinal, and two in historical and scientific works.

Although I have laid down a division of time to be appropriated to the different kinds of reading specified, I do not suppose it will be invariably pursued all the time, so as to preclude all miscellaneous reading; for, did I suppose this would be the case, I would rearrange the time and assign a portion to reading our periodical publications and most or all our valuable biographies, that the preacher may know what is going on in the world and the Church, and how good men have lived, and labored, and died, that he may be encouraged to do as they have done before him. He will find many casualties breaking into his arrangements, when he will have it in his power to improve, in this miscellaneous reading, the shreds of time that would otherwise be lost forever. My dear young brethren, I know your embarrassments in pursuing the path to knowledge. Many of our truly-good people are very fond of conversing with the preachers, and their fondness for pleasant conversation makes them forget the tax they are imposing on your time; and there is another class which, although not very bad, is not so good as it might be. This class embraces those persons who read but little and think less, but will talk all day, and much of the night, without any definite end in view. Therefore, you must be resolute, or all is gone. I would advise you to be courteous to all, according to their age and standing; but at the same time, modestly and mildly, let all know that you have your rules for the improvement of your minds,

which are with you a matter of conscience that you can not, dare not violate. If you pursue this course with reasonable people, they will see the propriety of your declining long conversations when you have so much to learn, and they will admire and approve your course. The ignorant and troublesome you will have to get along with as well as you can; but shun an austere and morose behavior while intent on study, or you will bring yourselves and your studies, too, into contempt with the people that do not weigh these matters as they should. In this matter, "be ye wise as serpents and harmless as doves."

## CHAPTER IV.

Of the matter and manner of preaching.

THE ninth section, chapter first, of the Methodist Discipline, and answer to the second and third questions, contain an excellent summary of ministerial duties and proprieties. When we consider the number of human beings in the world, and the number of things of which they are ignorant, and which it is important for them to know, and when we further consider the fewness of men that can be spared from the ordinary avocations of life, and also the want of means to support a great multitude of public teachers, we shall see the wisdom and goodness of God in appointing public oral instruction as the means by which the condition of the human race shall be meliorated. From the foregoing observations we can discover the framers of our economy as a Church acted according to the order of Heaven, in placing preaching as the first duty of those whose office makes them the teachers of religion. Here I might say much on the matter, method, and manner of preaching; but a few remarks on the present occasion must answer our purpose; and these remarks shall be chiefly founded on the answer to the first question in section twelfth of the Discipline.

While man is in health and prosperity he realizes such a buoyant state of feeling that he does not apprehend much to be amiss with him, so that he lives in a careless and inconsiderate manner, not perceiving or fearing the danger to which he is exposed every hour. Consequently, the first important work of the minister is to

convince him of certain important facts that are to have a beneficial influence on his mind and manners. He must be convinced, in the first place, that God is the moral governor of intelligent and, consequently, accountable creatures, who are bound, by the nature of the Divine claims, to love Jehovah with all their powers, and to evince this love by a regular conformity to the precepts in the Bible. Next, he must be convinced that he has failed in exercising the affections required, and also in performing the external duties demanded of him. It will follow, as a matter of course, that he should be convinced that he has incurred the displeasure of a holy and just God, who is the Governor and Judge of all men, and that, in incurring his displeasure, he has subjected himself to all the pains and penalties annexed to a violation of Heaven's laws. It will also be expedient to convince him that such is the demerit of sin, and such the imbecility of fallen man, that he is unable, by works of righteousness which he can perform, to recommend himself to the favor of God, and that if he ever is rescued from the wretchedness in which he is involved and the danger to which he is exposed, it must be by an interposition of Heaven, altogether gracious in its nature. Having succeeded in this important work of convincing, the next thing is to present a sufficient remedy against the ills arising from sin; and this remedy is to be found alone in the vicarious sufferings and death, the triumphant resurrection, the glorious ascension, and the available intercession of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is to be offered in all the fullness of his merit, virtue, and power, to save sinners from condemnation, impurity, and wretchedness, which they feel while laboring under a sense of condemnation and a fear of future punishment. Man is prone to run from one extreme to another, and this proneness is no where more manifest than in the opposite states of the

careless sinner and the truly-awakened man; for he who, a little while ago, was careless to such an extent that he was an astonishment to angels and men, is now ready to fall into a state of utter despair, so that all the understanding and affections of the man of God will now be needed to invite the sinner so affectionately to come to Christ that he may take encouragement to come and obtain life through his name. Should the minister be so successful in convincing, in offering Christ, in inviting, as to be the happy instrument of the man's genuine conversion to God, his work is comparatively but just begun. We should pity the ignorance and mistaken calculations of parents who, on embracing a lovely babe, should suppose all their care and labor for their offspring were now over, and we should be apt to remind them that their care, and labor, and anxiety, were just beginning. This ease may fitly represent the case now under consideration; for a new convert is as helplessly and dangerously circumstanced, in reference to his spiritual state and life, as the most tender infant is, as it regards his situation and life in a natural sense. Hence the importance of the fourth item in the answer before named. If nothing were known in the world but orthodox Christianity, under the Christian name, there would still be much need of guarding the young disciple against the wiles of the devil and the machinations of the elements of the world, which are always opposed to God and that vital religion which is needful to save the soul; but, unfortunately for the minister and his young converts, this is not the case; for the world is flooded in our day, and especially in this western country, with a spurious Christianity that is erroneous in doctrines and defective in experience, and which will deceive and forever destroy many souls, and which renders the labor of building up peculiarly difficult but imperiously necessary, or all our former work will be entirely

fruitless in the final issue. In this work of building up, every truth calculated to enlighten the mind and warm and refine the heart should be unfolded and applied so far as the capacity and opportunity of the minister will serve, that a building of knowledge and holiness may be reared on a permanent foundation, which is Christ Jesus, the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. All erroneous and strange doctrines ought to be driven away from among the people belonging to every man's charge, so far as it is in his power to drive them away; but, in opposing error, great caution is needful, that the minister may not indulge in an improper spirit in doing a good work; for if he be actuated by the feelings of human ambition only—which is a possible case—he will produce similar feelings in his opponents, and then he will avail but little in his endeavors. Pure zeal for the glory of God and the good of immortal souls should be the feeling that should govern him, and then he will invariably have success to some extent.

Having said so much about the method and matter of preaching in this chapter, I can not, if I were so inclined, say much as to the manner of preaching; and, indeed, I do not deem it necessary, as I said all, or nearly all, I have to say on this subject in the second chapter, though it was there said in an incidental way. The preacher's manner should be free from every thing calculated to disgust persons of a truly-refined taste—by which I do not mean that fastidious squeamishness that will be displeased with truth itself unless it is dressed in garlands and flowers, which, in my opinion, as well become the gravity of the pulpit as gaudy decorations would the putrid corpse in the coffin and the tomb. But I do not mean that either language or sentiment should be undignified, but that both should be bold and manly, such as become the most dignified subject in the whole compass



of human or angelic thought, as the Gospel undoubtedly is. In the next place, it should be so modest, so grave, so affectionate, and so earnest as to convince the hearers that he is an honest man who is endeavoring to recommend his Master and his religion, and not himself. "We preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake." The young man considers these important matters attentively, and he exclaims, "Who is sufficient for these things?" Ah! my brother, no man who is not, to some extent, mighty in the Scriptures and apt to teach, and who is not guided by the Holy Ghost into all the truth, is calculated to make men wise unto salvation, "that he may save himself and those that hear him." It will readily occur to all that the method of preaching recommended by our fathers, and which forms the substance of this chapter, is designed particularly for the preacher on the circuit, who has the opportunity only once a month—if so often—to address the same persons; for if a man preach to a regular congregation in a station, he may confine himself more to one topic in each sermon; but even then he may, to some extent, embrace the four important items named, and still have a variety in his matter. If any man, in the honesty of his soul and in conformity to a call from God, preach according to the plan imperfectly sketched in this chapter, he may rest assured he will not "run in vain, neither labor in vain," and that the world and the Church will have reason to bless God that they were favored with the ministry of a useful man. But, on the other hand, should he prove to be an ignorant and an *unfaithful* teacher, he will be a curse to the world, the Church, and the conference of which he is an unworthy member, but more especially to the stationing power, which will not know what to do with him, as no circuit, station, or district will be willing to have him when his char-

acter shall come to be known. Now, I ask my young brethren, who among you is willing to be considered as merely "*creatus consumere fruges:*" "created to consume the fruits of the earth?" Surely *none, none*. Then let all arise and endeavor to better the condition of human society, remembering that God is not unrighteous to forget their work of faith and labor of love, and that all the souls won by them will be stars in their crown in the day of the Lord Jesus. Then "preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort, with all long-suffering and doctrine;" "Watch thou in all things; endure afflictions; do the work of an evangelist; make full proof of the ministry." Amen.

## CHAPTER V.

The duties of meeting the classes and visiting the sick.

It is frequently objected to the economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, that the number and variety of duties devolving upon the traveling preachers are such, that they can not pay that particular attention to the personal piety of each member of the Church, which the economy of those denominations that have a settled ministry will permit. Although there may be some truth in this objection, it is far from being an objection to the extent that many suppose; for our plan of religious economy has provided for personal pastoral care by the adoption of class meetings, which are designed especially for personal inspection and oversight. Whoever will consider the manner in which a class is to be examined, according to the plan laid down in our general rules, will be convinced—if his mind be free from prejudice—that there never was a better plan devised to promote deep, experimental religion. The first grand object is to become truly acquainted with the spiritual state of the members of society; and this is to be done by a close examination of each one in particular in reference to his prosperity in the divine life. In the next place, suitable admonition is to be given, consisting of advice, reproof, comfort, and exhortation, as the case may demand.

The nature of this religious examination is admirably calculated to lead him who examines, and those who are examined, to inquire into the state of their own hearts, that they may perform this work, as in the immediate

presence of a heart-searching God. I know it has been said our class meetings are places where our people are led to depart from the truth, in giving an account of their gracious experience. But if this is the fact, it is a singular fact that men should act contrary to the whole design of class meetings, and also contrary to the natural tendency of the exercises of the meeting. It may not be uncharitable to suppose that they who thus judge their brethren are inclined to do as they suppose others do. From the foregoing views it is evidently an important duty of an itinerant preacher of our order to be punctual in his attention to society or class meetings, which are an important part of Methodism; and our experience and observation prove that these can not long be neglected by the preacher without ruining his usefulness among our people; and, indeed, it should be so; for every preacher who neglects to meet his classes is guilty of violating a solemn obligation, which he took upon himself tacitly when he commenced traveling, and in a formal manner when he was received into full connection; for he then promised to observe every part of the Methodist Discipline. I am aware many preachers preach so long and so loud that they are not well able to meet class after they are done preaching. But one criminal act can never be an excuse for another. A violation of the solemn promise not to speak too long nor too loud, is not a justifiable excuse for neglecting class meetings, which are indispensable to a growth in grace among our people. Perhaps some will say, You lay too much stress on class meeting; for if it be of so great necessity, those denominations who have not adopted it can not be deeply pious. To which I reply, Moral honesty requires every denomination to be consistent, and to observe that system of rules and regulations which it has adopted, and promised to observe, and which it has proclaimed to the world as

the system by which it is regulated in its operations: so that whether class meetings be necessary or not necessary, to other denominations, to our own it is indispensable to a healthy state in religion; therefore, that preacher who habitually neglects to meet his classes, is, to a great extent, guilty of the languor that may prevail in his circuit or station; for, although languor might possibly have prevailed among his people, the possibility is, it would not; and if it had, not to the same extent that it does in consequence of his neglect. Considering the account every preacher has to give for all the souls committed to his watch-care, to the Head of the Church, it appears mysterious, how any *Methodist* preacher can, with a clear conscience, neglect the important duty we have been considering, especially as this duty is to answer principally in the place of pastoral visits, paid by many ministers of other denominations to the people of their own communion. But mysterious as it is, we have reason to fear this neglect is on the increase, and that it will continue to increase, unless the conferences are rigid in requiring their graduates and members to meet their classes regularly.

The third item of duty belonging to a preacher, as laid down in the Discipline, is to visit the sick. Our Creator made us social beings, so that our happiness, to some extent, depends upon our fellow-beings, when we are placed in circumstances the most favorable for enjoyment; consequently, we greatly need the advantages of social intercourse, in those seasons of privation when health is gone, and we are the subjects of suffering by the hand of an afflicting providence. But it is a melancholy fact, that many who are the most ready to visit the sick, are not calculated to do them that kind of good which they most need; for, to minister comfort to the body, and to divert the mind from things of a serious nature, for fear it will

become gloomy, are supposed by many to be acts of the greatest kindness that can be performed for the afflicted. That the ministration of relief to the body of the sick is an act of kindness, none will deny; but to divert the mind from serious things, for fear it will become melancholy, is, in most cases, an act of the most diabolical cruelty, because it defeats the benevolent design of a gracious God, who sends affliction that man may be led to remember his latter end, and timely prepare to enter into that state of enjoyment which awaits the pious in another world. The intrusive visits of the light, the trifling, the skeptical, to the sick, are greatly to be deplored, and make the visits of the sober, godly minister the more necessary, to undo the mischief that may be done by the heedless. There is another class of visitors, more to be dreaded than even the most trifling that can be found: I mean those persons who believe so firmly in what I choose to call fatality, as to embrace *ex animo*—from the soul—either the monstrous doctrine of eternal, unconditional election and reprobation, or the more pleasing, but equally-dangerous doctrine, of the absolute and unconditional salvation of all men. There is yet another class, that it is a great misfortune for any man to have about him when he is in danger of death: I mean those heartless and unreasonable physicians, who would rather their patients should die in their sins and go to hell, than be disturbed in their feelings on account of their danger; but, thank Heaven! we have some physicians who are of a better mind, who will honestly let the sick know their danger, that they may have some opportunity to prepare for death and judgment.

When we consider how backward man is to remember his latter end, and the classes of visitors that have been named, it must appear very desirable that a humble, holy man should have an opportunity of improving the visita-

tions of Providence, in promoting the spiritual good of the sick; and the office of the minister is calculated to give him access to the mind of the man who is low with disease. Every minister, therefore, should consider it his duty to visit the sick, so far as circumstances will permit, that he may be the means, in the hands of God, of saving souls, though it may be at the eleventh hour. In visiting those who are ill, we should take great pains with our own hearts, that they may be deeply impressed with the importance and difficulty of the work we have to perform; so that our minds may be led to a suitable dependence upon God, who alone can make our endeavors successful. If a minister visit a man who has never made any pretensions to religion, he should endeavor to convince his understanding that there is a necessity of the new birth, and to enkindle his desires for the same; but, in accomplishing this important and necessary work, he should be very cautious not to be too easy and indifferent on the one hand, and too severe on the other; for if he be indifferent, it will have a bad effect on the sick man, in making him doubt whether the minister himself really believes in the solemn realities of spiritual and eternal things; and if he be very severe, it may make the sufferer impatient, and thereby cause him to repel all that may be said to him on the subject of his salvation. If any class of visitors before named, should have improperly biased the judgment of the sick, great prudence must be used to undeceive the man; which will be best accomplished by a plain application of God's word to his understanding and heart, in such a way as to show the nature, importance, necessity, and possibility of the new birth, without which the kingdom of glory can never be possessed by any child of apostate and degenerate man. If the preacher have a voice for singing, a suitable hymn, sung with pious gravity, will usually be attended with good; for grave melody

has a powerful tendency to soften the heart, and the matter of a sensible hymn will inform the understanding. Let the minister now remember, that the prayer of *faith* will save the sick; for the *effectual*, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much; and if any thing in the world is calculated to make a man earnest in prayer, and in pleading the promises of God, it must be to behold a sick man struggling for the pardon of his sins, and a preparation to live a holy life, if he should be spared, or for heaven, should he die. But the preacher will more frequently be called to visit the sick of his own charge, that he may worship with them, and comfort them, in time of affliction and temptation; and, if in his power, he should always attend such calls as a matter of conscience; for, notwithstanding the uprightness of their deportment in general, the enemy of their souls will endeavor to darken their minds and depress their spirits, in time of affliction; therefore, he should go with a mind and heart imbued with much devotion and religion, that he may be the means of relieving the tempted and sorrowful. Hitherto, we have been considering the good the preacher is to do in visiting the sick; but let him remember he will *realize* great good himself, for he must have a singular class of feeling, who can see a sick sinner struggling for salvation, and not have an increased discovery of the importance of religion, and not be stirred up to greater earnestness in warning men to flee from the wrath to come; and notwithstanding we may be well grounded in the truth of our holy religion, from the variety and abundance of evidence in the Bible, and other books, which we may have read in defense of Christianity, yet there is no evidence which comes home to our hearts, as does that which arises from beholding the triumphs of the humble Christian in sickness and *death*; therefore, be diligent in visiting the sick.



## CHAPTER VI.

The gravity of a minister, and his prudence in female society, and the propriety of delay in getting married.

IN answer to the third question in the section on which we are now making remarks, we have many things of importance, on which volumes might be written; but a few passing remarks will be all that can be permitted in this work. For what might be said on the first answer, the reader is referred to my third chapter, and I will here say a few words on one thing which I there forgot: I mean the habit of writing our thoughts, that we may learn to express ourselves with precision and ease; for I presume no man is aware, who is not in the habit of writing, how loosely and inaccurately he uses words and ideas in conversation and in his public extemporaneous discourses. If any man have occasion to write on any subject, who is not accustomed to write, he will find a stiffness and dullness in his style, at which he will be mortified, as the writer of these numbers does; for he never wrote more than two duodecimo pages for publication, prior to the work which he is now writing; and that you may not neglect the full improvement of your minds, I beseech you, my young brethren, to accustom yourselves to write on important subjects daily, if you have opportunity, and if you have not, do so as often as circumstances will permit, that you may acquire a facility of writing as readily as to speak on any important subject.

The second answer contains many things of vast importance, that greatly demands the attention of the young

minister; for man is so much the creature of habit that the course which he pursues in youth will probably be pursued by him through life. It is said of General Washington that he was never seen to smile during the whole time of the Revolutionary war; and, indeed, when we consider the state of affairs between Great Britain and the United States—then struggling for political existence—and the doubtfulness of the struggle, and the painful consequences of a failure, and the relation of Washington to the state, and the responsibility under which he was placed, his gravity is not to be wondered at. If the gravity of the great man just named was proper, while his mind was deeply impressed with the important concerns of his country, how much more does seriousness become that man who deeply considers the situation of a whole world that lies in the wicked one, and is in danger of perishing everlastingly, and who also considers the important part he is required to act and the results of his acts, on which the glory of God, the happiness of men, and his own happiness in this world and in that which is to come are suspended in some degree! What is the political bondage of a nation compared with the loss of thousands of immortal souls forever, and the failure and consequent disgrace of a great general with the failure and consequent ruin of a minister of Jesus Christ?

Few men have that even balance of their minds which they ought to have. Consequently, they are in great danger of being injured by the want of seriousness in the minister. One class has a gravity tinged with melancholy; and persons of this class will be hurt and prejudiced at the minister whom they may deem to be wanting in seriousness. Another class is prone to levity; and persons of this class will take encouragement from the example of the minister to indulge their proneness,

to the great injury of their own souls and to the stumbling of others, and thereby piety will be wounded in the house of its professed friends. While I contend for seriousness, I do not mean that moping, melancholy thing that seems to shut up the soul from every pleasurable emotion that it is our privilege to enjoy and our duty to express, while we are receiving the blessings of Providence and grace—which afford us the pleasures of sense and peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, and a hope full of immortality, but that clear serenity of mind that will fit us for all the duties that we may have to perform, whether in the Church, the family, or the closet, and for all company which it may be lawful, and innocent, and safe for us to visit.

The Bible uses a very emphatic expression, in designating a minister, by calling him a man of God—the peculiar property of God, and one who is to be employed in promoting the benevolent purposes of his Divine owner. Therefore, with the utmost propriety, his motto is, “*Holiness to the Lord.*” If this be his motto, his whole person and possessions ought to be so given up and presented to the Lord that there may not be any cause of offense found in him by any, whether friends or foes. In the first place, his outward man should be so circumstanced that it may make an impression on the minds of beholders favorable to the religion of the minister; and it will be a matter of important inquiry to every conscientious preacher what appearance will be most likely to make that favorable impression that ought to be made; and it will readily occur to him that a dirty, slovenly, and clownish aspect will not accomplish the design he has in view. He will also as readily perceive that a gaudy, foppish appearance will be more unfavorable; for it might be supposed that the aspect first named might be the result of great mental application,

but the other the result of a vain and foolish fondness for show. Therefore, he will adopt the proper medium between the clown and the fop. All the exhibitions of his mind, whether by words or actions, should be of such a nature as to show his whole mind devoted to God. Therefore, there will be nothing light in his words or actions, which would indicate a vacant mind; but as his mind is furnished with useful knowledge and under proper discipline, his whole conduct will declare the inward man to be in such a state as he ought to be, to be acceptable to God.

How a minister of the blessed Jesus can repeatedly indulge in those jests which are the fruit of his own mind, or in retailing those of other men, I do not know; and, truly, I do not want to know. What is the design of a jest? Doubtless to make the company present indulge in laughter. Let showmen learn their monkeys how to make fools laugh, as they are paid for this very purpose; but never, no, never, let a man bearing the title of God's minister and the servant of the Church, indulge in such a preposterous course of conduct. Think, my brethren, what are jests in general, whether oral or in books? Nothing but downright lies. And can a man of truth and holiness deal in lies, for the purpose of making immortal souls, on the brink of damnation, laugh? Shame, shame! But do not good people laugh at these things? Not often; for they are mortified to see the minister desecrate himself, so that none but the giddy are pleased at his absurd course. I suppose foolish talking is that kind of talk which fools talk; and fools talk about such things and in such a manner as is calculated to do no good to themselves or others. Hence, that minister who neither edifies himself nor those who hear him, by his conversation, is guilty of foolish talking, however innocent it may appear to himself or others.

The third answer is one of great importance to all men, but especially to young preachers; for where there is great danger there great caution is necessary; and he must have a very imperfect knowledge of his own weakness who dares indulge in frequent conversation with females. In the first place, every young preacher should keep his affections from being entangled, unless he seriously intends matrimony; and I hope our young men do not intend this till they have established their characters in their conferences and among the people, as stable and devoted ministers; and this they can not do till they have traveled at least four years. I know, to some, this will be a hard saying; but I can not help it; for I declare, in the sincerity of my heart, that I have not known three cases in my life, where the preacher has married prior to the time named, but what it has been an injury to him or the work, and most commonly to both. That he should keep himself free in his affections will be admitted by all who consider the situation of a preacher, who is liable every year to be removed from one end of the conference to the other. There is another consideration of more importance than the freedom of the man's own affections: I mean the danger of entangling the affections of an innocent female. When a young man goes on a circuit, he goes virtually recommended by a whole conference as a man of character, of worth, of respectability, so that he has a passport to the good opinion, at least, of every young and worthy female on the circuit; and this good opinion gives him an opportunity to use his efforts to gain the affections of the unsuspecting, even where there are no *direct* proposals of honorable matrimony; and the consequences, in many cases, may be that very suitable alliances may be rejected with the hope of obtaining him, who may be recommended by the conference, although the conference only recommended him as a man supposed

to have religion, and calculated to do good as a preacher, and not as possessing all the natural and acquired qualifications to make a good husband. It should also be remembered that our Lord declares that crime may be committed, where no law of God or man is actually violated. Therefore, "flee youthful lusts." Much more might be said on this important subject, to show the great injury that may be done where none is intended; but I trust enough has been said to show young men of sense, of virtue, of honor, and religion the propriety of the admonition in the Discipline, and also to guard them, in some degree, from danger to themselves and others. "Can a man take fire into his bosom and his clothes not be burned?"

"Marriage is honorable in all." Why, then, advise the young men not to marry? I do not—but only to defer it till a suitable time. If, then, marriage be honorable and of great importance, as all will admit—for our weal or woe, in this world and the next, much depends upon a happy or an unhappy matrimonial connection—it should not be lightly taken in hand by any, and particularly by a minister of the Gospel, but with much prayer, deliberation, and counsel. Therefore, we see the propriety of the counsel, Take no step toward marriage without first consulting with your brethren. To what extent this counsel was regarded in former days I know not; but with many in our day it is a dead letter, and the consequences, in many cases, are truly disastrous to the parties, their friends, and the Church. Sometimes a young man will pay his addresses to a young lady; they are received, his affections reciprocated, arrangements for a union made, and then, forsooth, for form's sake, he will consult with his brethren whether he shall or shall not perjure himself by breaking his solemn vow. If there

may be reasons why it should be improper for him to marry the young lady whom he has chosen, he has put it out of his power now to receive proper counsel, as no man would meddle when things are carried so far. If the course just named manifests the wisdom of the serpent or the harmlessness of the dove, I think it is hard to be perceived. My brethren, do you deem matrimony so mean and dishonorable that you are ashamed to consult with wise and good men about it? If this be your view, I beseech you never marry; but if you have the honor and dignity of a Christian and Christian minister, observe the Discipline of your Church in this thing. That a man ought not to marry a woman on whom he can not place his affections and in whom he can not repose entire confidence, is a truth which none will deny who are competent to judge in this matter. But judgment should lead the affections and confidence of a wise man, and not his fancy run away with his judgment, as is the case with many, to their final ruin. Therefore, my young brethren, if you wish to see many and happy days, be not precipitate in choosing a companion for life, and remember, a traveling preacher should choose a wife not merely for his own good, but also for the good of the people where he may live and labor from time to time. I would be glad if our young men would read the marriage of Mr. Fletcher and the introduction of his wife to the people of his parish; and also the views of Dr. Clarke, exhibited when he solemnly ordained his son's wife by the imposition of his hands, that she might assist her husband in the work of evangelizing the people of his charge. It is true, it was not such an ordination as usually takes place in a religious assembly; but a more interesting ordination has seldom occurred in either ancient or modern days. O, my brethren, have an eye single to the glory of God, and then

you may expect the blessing of Heaven on your marriage; but if you are altogether selfish in your choice of companions, you have no reason to expect happiness in the married life.



## CHAPTER VII.

A minister should not be hasty in forming and expressing his opinions—He should admonish faithfully—He should be a modest, humble man, who should not be ashamed to wait on himself.

A CENSORIOUS spirit is calculated to make its possessor unhappy, and cause him to do serious injury to others; and the frequent instances of duplicity, which will be manifest to the man who has much intercourse with men, will be calculated to make him suspicious; therefore, with the utmost propriety the framers of our Discipline caution the preachers of our order against believing evil of any one, without that kind and degree of evidence which will leave the mind without any reason to doubt. That man who is so credulous as to believe all the rumors which he may hear, prejudicial to the characters of his brethren, will be always in danger of doing injury to the work of God, by taking a stand against the innocent, who may be misrepresented by the tongue of slander. How unhappy must that minister feel, who has been made the tool of base design, in depressing the innocent and exalting the guilty, although his motives may have been pure! Man, in his present state, is operated on by a great variety of causes, to such a degree, that he is, many times, the creature of violent impulses and sudden excitements, for which great allowances should be made by us. In forming our estimate of men's moral characters, there are many things which we should know and attentively consider, that we may judge correctly. We should consider the peculiar constitutional temperament of the man, together with the strength and culture of his mind; also, the manner of his

rearing, the nature and extent of his early education, the modes of thinking and acting, of the persons in whose society circumstances may place him, the nature and strength of the temptations with which he may be assailed. After considering all these things, we shall see that many an erring man is more an object of pity than severe blame, and that there is much propriety in the direction, "Put the best construction on every thing." The maxim, that every man is to be presumed innocent till he is proved guilty, is the foundation of the other, that the judge is always supposed to be on the prisoner's side. But how many times do we see these maxims entirely forgotten by preachers, whose minds seem to be biased by the first statements made to them by persons who first complain of their brethren, and the consequences are lamentable in the extreme; for such preachers almost always violate the sixth direction given to them in the Discipline!

For a private Christian to indulge in evil-speaking is a crime of no small magnitude; because such a course is calculated to breed disturbances in neighborhoods, and Churches, and to make the religion of the evil-speaker suspected; but for a minister of the Gospel to stoop so low, as to speak evil of men, is a crime beyond calculation or endurance.

The sacred office of the minister is calculated to give him weight in the minds of the community; and this weight would add a deleterious influence to his evil-speaking, which would not be attached to that of a private professor of religion; therefore, he should shun the evil under consideration as he would shun the plague. But while he avoids a course of conduct destructive to the peace of society and his own usefulness, he should not be blind to the real faults and improprieties of the persons to whom he ministers in holy things; for this would be cal-

culated to make him betray his trust, by refusing to reprove a brother as the Bible requires. Fidelity in telling our people what we think wrong in their conduct and temper, is a virtue of sterling worth, and which it is feared is possessed and exercised by us too little in these days, when flattery abounds in all classes in society to an alarming extent. When it is considered how difficult it is to tell a man of his faults and not incur his present displeasure and future ill-will, it is not to be wondered at, that it is a great cross to a good and faithful man to do his duty in this thing; for much of our comfortable feelings and pecuniary support depend on the good-will of our people; for many of them are actuated by their feelings, and not a conscientious discharge of duty, in their respect for and kindness to their ministers. But our responsibility to God and his cause requires a faithful discharge of this duty, let the consequences be as they may. That we may not offend by our admonitions, and consequently do no good, requires much knowledge of human nature, and a prudent observance of times and circumstances. To tell a man of his faults when he is in a hurry, or perplexed, or in company, will be likely to irritate him, and defeat the object in view; for, instead of reforming, he will be more apt to continue and increase in any wrong that may be mentioned to him, for irritation will produce a degree of ambition that will be unyielding. If a minister find the mind of a brother in a calm state, and if his own also be calm, and his heart full of love, he may then use great plainness, and not be in much danger of offending; and should faithfulness produce unpleasant feelings at the present, when the spirit and manner of him who, in love, tells a brother of his faults, are afterward considered, the consequences will be favorable on the mind of a wise man, for he will love him who is honest in his work of reproof.

A minister of the Gospel is supposed to have renounced this world in every sense which Christianity requires, and to be in possession of the meek and lowly mind by which his divine Master was characterized; consequently, a haughty appearance and magisterial manners are altogether unbecoming his profession. To see a man who professes to be the servant of all, appear as if he thought himself superior to the rest of mankind, and evince a great desire to be waited on by the people where he goes, and with whom he stays, is a sight painful to man and displeasing to God; for the Bible says, a proud look is abhorred by him. It is a popular opinion, that all professional men are proud men. How far this opinion is true or false we need not inquire; but let it be remembered, that pride and its appearance will receive much more toleration in any other profession than the clerical, because the Christian religion requires her ministers to be humble men. Affectation, or a haughty appearance, is calculated to do much more harm than is generally supposed; for the mass of men form their estimate of religion from the appearance and conduct of its professors, and more particularly its ministers, who are to many the only book of divinity which they read. If they read in ministers a spirit contrary to the spirit of Christianity, the conclusion is, that the religion of Christ is of small value, or that the professed teachers thereof are destitute of religion; and if so, men will be unwilling to yield to their persuasions to embrace religion; therefore, let all ministers shun all affectation.

That preacher who is ashamed to wait on himself, or his animal, which carries him through his field of labor, is a proud or a lazy man, and, at the same time, a cruel man, who permits his animal to suffer, as it will do, by the willful neglect or forgetfulness of boys, to whose care it may be intrusted; and even if they were very careful,

most of them have to work hard, and are not willing at all times to run and wait on the preacher and his animal, when it would be no more trouble to him than to them. Many boys, by having to wait on preachers whom they have supposed to be proud men, have become so soured in their feelings, at the ministry in general, that they have been seriously injured for life. Neither should the minister be ashamed to chop the wood and make the fire in his own room; for in so doing he will be taking that exercise which will be for the good of his mind and body, and will cause himself to be respected by the young people where he stays; but in making his fire early in the morning, let him be careful not to make a noise so as to disturb all the persons in the house. If he will place the wood in front of the fire, before he lies down at night, it will be so dry when he rises, that he can quickly have a fire with ease, and without noise. By pursuing this course, he will find it in his power to rise early and apply himself to his prayers and books, without interruption to others, and to so great advantage, that his profiting in piety and gifts will be manifest to all.

## CHAPTER VIII.

A minister should be a punctual man—He should observe the Discipline of the Church without fear of punishment, and execute it without unkind feelings to others.

THE man who lives at random can hardly be said to live, but merely to exist; for he will accomplish but few, if any, of the ends of living. A survey of the Creator's works, whether of nature, providence, or grace, will convince us that order is Heaven's first law, and that without it we can do nothing that will please him; for design or intention must be in all our acts to meet with his approbation. Every man, therefore, should resolve to avoid a random course of life, and adopt a course of precision in all he does, in performing his multiform duties; and such, in a particular manner, are those of a minister of God and his Church. Punctuality may be understood in a twofold sense: first, in a full performance of a duty; secondly, in a performance at the proper time. A non-performance of duty evinces a want of moral principle, or so much violence done to that principle that its voice is hardly heard any more. But, says one, I am providentially hindered from doing my duty. This can never be; but you may be providentially hindered from doing what would have been your duty had not Providence interposed; but such interposition relieves you from your obligation. But we are speaking of cases in which obligation does really exist. I will suppose you have an appointment to preach to-day; but the weather is unfavorable, and the ride is ten miles, and your sufferings will be considerable on your journey, and the probability

s, the congregation will be small. What a temptation not to go! Now, unless you are an honest man, you will be apt to decline going, and will try to quiet your conscience in the best way you can. Let us now take a general view of this case. Suppose ten persons come to meeting, living one mile each, on an average, from the place of meeting. Some of them, it may be, are feeble women, who carry their children in their arms. Here you see as much, or more, suffering in these ten persons, in going to meeting, than you would have to suffer in attending your appointment. We are not done yet.\* Your appointment is in a private house. The family must cease from business, and put the house in order for the reception of the congregation; and now all wait two hours in painful suspense, much to the injury of devotional feelings, and at last conclude the preacher will not come, and then resolve to go home, and that, too, often without any worship, as their disappointment makes them more peevish than prayerful. Now, the suffering is to be endured again which was realized in coming, making double what you would have had to endure; for, generally, you stay at the preaching-place. We are not yet done with this thing. Ten persons prepared themselves for a decent appearance at meeting, as they should do—went, staid, returned, and prepared again for the business of life, at an expense of at least four hours each, which, with the time lost by the family, will make, at a moderate computation, forty-eight hours—making four laboring days, worth two dollars. (Is it wrong that such preachers generally receive but little quarterage?) Now, my brother, do you think these persons will come to hear

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\* When this was written—in 1834—we had comparatively few meeting-houses in country places, so that most of the week-day and some of the Sabbath preaching was done in private houses.

you again this year, if they learn that you were deterred, by a little unpleasantness in the weather, from attending your work? If they do, it will be because they are better and more faithful than you have been. There is yet another view to take of this case. For aught you know to the contrary, there might be a sinner in attendance, for the last time that might be permitted him to hear the Gospel, and who might have been awakened and converted had you attended. But, alas! he goes home, sickens, dies, and in hell lifts up his eyes to behold devils and lost souls for his companions, in a world of everlasting woe. And now his blood is required at your hand. O, what wilt thou do, thou unfaithful minister? Wilt thou endeavor to soothe him in hell whom thou mightest have been the means of saving on earth? Alas! thy own torments will not permit thee to make the vain attempt; for all is upper, nether, and surrounding fire, which will never be quenched or die away; and all this misery of him and thee is owing to a want of resolution to be punctual in doing thy duty. We will suppose another case, which is a possible and even a probable one. A member of Church, that was once a faithful man, has declined in a diligent use of the means of grace till he has lost that religious enjoyment which he once had, and is now on the eve of entire apostasy, but has not yet fully resolved to leave the good way. He goes to meeting with a determination to come to a final decision, intending, unless he receive more enjoyment at this meeting, to give the struggle over. No preacher comes. He resolves, goes home, becomes wicked externally, brings a reproach on himself, his family, the Church, Christianity itself; dies a backslider, is damned; and to all these things the preacher is accessory by one neglect; for had he gone and preached as he should, in all probability the man would have been



blessed, reclaimed, and saved from the snare of the devil, who was leading him captive at his will. O, how wilt thou answer for that member of Church who has fallen from grace and comes short of glory by thy neglect? I have taken an example from an appointment for preaching to show the dreadful consequences arising from a want of promptness, in the first sense in which we understood the word. Examples might have been taken from the neglect of any other religious duty which we have engaged to perform in our numerous ministerial relations. Yonder lies a sick man in much agitation of mind. You have promised to visit him; but some small difficulty arises, and you fail to go. He dies, and it may be in his sins, because you did not point him to the Lamb of God who died for him. Thus you are guilty of the loss of a soul. But I must decline presenting examples, or I shall never finish. Punctuality properly means doing a thing in the proper time. For the want of this many men who perform what they are bound to do fail to accomplish the good which they might. There are some men who seem to have been born an hour or two after the proper time to accomplish the work assigned them; for they generally seem to be thus far behind their work. Has one such an appointment to preach at a given hour, he concludes it is time enough yet to prepare for a start. At length the time of starting has arrived; but there are sundry little matters to arrange which cause delay. At last the man starts, finds he will be late, whips, spurs, and scolds; but the roads are bad, and his animal, with all his cruelty, can not perform the service required in due time. Now he has arrived, fatigued in body, confused in mind, troubled in conscience—if he have any—and wholly unfit for sober, deep, solid, and powerful preaching. The congregation has waited till patience is well-nigh exhausted, and is as badly prepared to hear as he is to preach. One

man is thinking about his farm, which he left with reluctance in a busy time; another about his shop, which needs his presence, as his customers will want work done. One woman is uneasy about her babe, which she has left; another is concerned about a member of the family, left rather unwell, with a promise not to stay long. The man, being confused, is tedious in entering on his subject, and the ordinary length of a sermon seems to the impatient hearers as if it were half a day, and they would rather hear him say *amen* than any thing else. At length he is done preaching; and now he must meet the class—which he should do, if he had not already tired the people. But many of the members retire, and all wish to do the same; but regard for the feeling of the man—who seems to have none for theirs—detains them to drag out a dull, insipid class meeting, which is a mockery of the institution. The man has an appointment to dine with brother C. D. at a given hour, and spend a little time in social and religious conversation and in devotional exercises with the family and a few friends; but unfortunately the good-natured soul has met with some friend on the way, who has, or appears to have, nothing to do. He talks, and talks; but time rolls. The dinner is cooked, the table set, and all things are ready; but the principal visitor has not yet arrived. Much anxiety prevails; it is feared he is sick, or his family afflicted, if he have one. But after the dinner is well-nigh spoiled, he arrives full of apologies; but these can never make his visit the pleasant thing which it might have been had he attended promptly. My brother, these are not over-colored pictures, but fall far short of the reality; but take them as they are, do you not feel ashamed of them in your sober, thinking moments? If you do, resolve, while you read these lines, never to act these scenes over again so long as you are called a *Methodist* preacher.

In all you do you should remember that, as you are a Methodist preacher, you are bound to act in conformity to the rules of the Discipline without endeavoring to mend them, which you will find much more difficult than you may at first imagine; for, as these rules are drawn directly from the Bible, it will be a hard undertaking to mend them. But many do attempt this, by construing them to meet their views of expediency or conveniency, and thereby virtually destroy the Methodist Discipline, which has withstood all the rude assaults of its enemies without sustaining any injury. Some of the rules are intended as a directory for yourself; and you should observe them, not so much from a fear of ecclesiastical censure or punishment, which will be the result of disobedience, as from a conviction of their excellency, which will have an influence on your conscience. If you keep the rules for fear of wrath or punishment, and not for conscience' sake, you will be a poor eye-servant, influenced by slavish fear, wishing merely to please men. But if you are conscientious in your observance of the rules, you will act nobly; for the glory of God and the good of man will be the motives by which you will be actuated. A part of the rules are intended for the government of our people, and it is the duty of the ministers to see that they are observed by the people. But, in our endeavors to enforce the rules, we may become wrathful and despotic in our feeling, and be actuated more by human ambition than a conscientious regard for the glory of God and the good of the Church. Many a deed which was right in the abstract has been done in such a spirit and manner as to do irreparable injury to the souls of men and general interests of the Church of Christ. Therefore, let us take heed to our spirit and manner, that we may not defeat our aim in our endeavors to do good.

## CHAPTER IX.

Several directions in section nine, chapter one, of the Discipline, to which a preacher of the Methodist Episcopal Church should be submissive, as he has promised so to be.

THE eleventh direction to a preacher declares, that the minister has nothing to do but save souls; on which declaration the exhortations which follow it are founded. When it is considered that God wills all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth, and that he has called and separated an order of men from worldly pursuits, that they might devote themselves to the ministry of the word, we shall see that our fathers, in the above declaration, have stated a solemn truth, that ought to make a lasting impression on the mind of a minister; especially an itinerant minister of the Methodist Episcopal Church. It must, however, be acknowledged, that such is the smallness of the support which traveling preachers receive, that duty to their families requires them to pay some attention to worldly matters; but, as far as possible, they should be men of one work, whose care should be the salvation of souls, which cost the sweat, and blood, and life of Jesus Christ, the Savior. If the saving of souls is the proper work of ministers, it is evident they should spend their all in accomplishing the end of their ministerial vocation. All the energies of their minds and bodies, together with their time and acquirements, should be employed in their all-important work; and such should be their earnestness in labor for souls, that they should be literally spent or exhausted in this glorious employ; for

although no man ought to commit suicide, yet every minister should wear out his constitution in trying to save souls. The whole life of a man of God is a cross-bearing one, in which he must do violence to the partialities of his friends and himself; for if he were to indulge his feelings, he would gladly go to certain congregations and families which are partial to him, and which are his favorites; but his duty requires him to go to those who need him most. And which are the congregations and families that stand most in need of the particular attention of a minister? Not the most intelligent, wealthy, and accomplished, that would be to him the most agreeable, and that could make him most comfortable; but the ignorant, the poor, the uncouth, whose minds are an unclosed and uncultivated waste, and that will so remain, unless the humble, faithful, orthodox preacher attend to their case; for infidelity, with all its boasted good-will; Unitarianism, with its pretended superior illumination; Socinianism, with its vainglorying; Arianism, with all its caviling at orthodoxy; and Universalism, with its pretended philanthropy, will never hunt up the outcasts of men and better their condition. No, no, my brethren, these can do no real good, if they would try, because they are fundamentally wrong; but they do not try among the classes of men named—therefore, unless you hunt the obscure, they will remain in obscurity; yea, in the valley and shadow of death. If to preach a given number of sermons, and take care of certain societies, were all he had to do, the work of a preacher would have its meets and bounds, for which a moderate degree of exertion would be sufficient; but this is not the case; for these are only a part of his work: for it is his duty to bring as many souls to repentance as he can, by public and private labors; and then to build them up in holiness, which alone can prepare the soul to dwell with God and the inhabitants of heaven.

Although a man may instruct his people, and prevail on them to be moral, and have the form of godliness, yet if they come short of holiness, or entire sanctification, they will fail in the final issue of obtaining the rest which remains for the people of God. All the moral rules in the Methodist Discipline are intended to have a proper influence on the hearts as well as the lives of the members of Church; and the prudential rules are admirable in conducting to the use of those which are moral; so that we see the propriety of the solemn manner in which it is said a Methodist preacher is to observe every point, great and small, in the Methodist Discipline. Many of these points have come under our notice in the course of this work, and many more will be considered when we come to notice the duties of those who have the charge of circuits, and the duties of the presiding elders.

I shall notice but one more part of this ninth section, and that is the twelfth direction to a preacher. In the time of youth, human nature is bold, and confident, and impatient of restraints; but without restraint, youthful vivacity will hurry its possessor into many indiscretions; but if properly directed, it will accomplish much that will be valuable; therefore, docility is of admirable use to a young man; and I challenge the world to produce one eminently-consistent and useful man in after life, who was greatly headstrong in the days of his youth. Do not misunderstand me here; for I do not mean that a young man should become base in his spirit, and have no mind of his own; but that he should not be rash and unteachable. When you see a child self-conceited, and insolent, and insubordinate, you are sure that child will never excel. In like manner, when you see a young preacher who has a very good opinion of himself and his performances, and ready to treat his superiors in age and standing with contempt, you may safely say he has passed his zenith in

respectability and usefulness. The time of a minister may be regarded as the property of the Church; consequently, it should be employed according to the will of the Church; and that will is expressed by those whom she has willingly received as her superintendents: consisting, first, of the General conference, which revises the Discipline in those parts which are merely prudential; for, so far as it contains the moral discipline of the Bible, the General conference dare not meddle; for it claims not the power to legislate for the Church, as it regards moral duties, but merely declares its understanding of these, as contained in the book of God. Secondly, the episcopacy and annual conferences, which may be considered as the executive department, and which perform the will of the people as expressed by the General conference. I know it has been said our government is independent of the will of the people, and, of course, must be arbitrary. This is not the place to discuss this subject, and I will only remark, the people, by their voice, recommended the men who, from time to time, compose the General conference, or they could never have been preachers according to our economy. And I would further remark, that the great body of our people joined the Church with its present constitution; therefore, they can not complain with any consistency. There are five things named in this twelfth direction, of great importance, on all of which specific directions are to be found in the twelfth and thirteenth sections of the Discipline, which should be read frequently by the preachers. The work in the Methodist Episcopal Church is divided into conferences, districts, circuits, and stations. The conferences are arranged by the General conference in session, or by delegating authority to the bishops in the intervals of the General conference. As the population of the country is fluctuating, and circumstances changing, it is found better to leave the arrange-

ment of districts, circuits, and stations wholly to the bishops, who travel through the work at large, and who do the best they can in this matter; but it will so happen that there will be great disparity in the fields of labor; and, consequently, if every preacher were permitted to choose his own field of labor, many would select the same district, circuit, or station, and many others would be without a preacher. It is, therefore, manifest, that such would be the confusion, if the preachers were permitted to choose for themselves, that itinerancy would be ended. Again: were the people permitted to make choice of their preachers, many districts, circuits, or stations would select the same popular preacher, so that some must be disappointed, and, in the end, the traveling plan would be destroyed, which is not desirable to preachers or people. A traveling ministry can only exist where the people are willing to relinquish the right of choosing their own ministers, and the preachers the right of choosing their own congregations. Now, as these rights are relinquished, voluntarily, by the preachers and people, there is nothing despotic in the appointment of the preachers by the episcopacy, as some of our enemies have affirmed. The bishops uniformly consult with the presiding elders, who go four times a year through their several districts, and thereby learn the wants of the people, and the talents of the preachers: so that information as full as can be expected, is obtained. This information regards the wants and wishes of the people and preachers. But from some preceding remarks, it must be obvious that all parties can not be accommodated as they may wish; but the matters are adjusted on the grounds of equality, as far as this can be done in the present imperfect state of human society. If any brother is tempted to think he has a hard field of labor, let him consider all the circumstances of the case: his body, mind, condition in life, contrasted or compared



with the mind, body, family, and condition of others, and he will discover that some judgment was exercised in his appointment. Some are tempted to think hard that certain men always have good appointments, while they are not so highly favored. This may be so; but why? Brethren, I do not wish to hurt any brother's feelings; but, perhaps, if those who are disposed to complain would read more, pray more, preach more, and learn to be discreet in all their intercourse among the people, they too might have better appointments. Now, if a good man, with very moderate talents, were placed in a station in which the people greatly abound in general information, could he hope to retain an intelligent congregation, and sustain himself and the work? Surely his own judgment says no. Why, then, want such an appointment? I hope brethren will think on these things, and consider those the best appointments where they can be useful, and believe the motives are pure in those who assign them their respective fields of labor. I would advise every preacher to read carefully this twelfth advice, particularly the latter part; and if he can not feel willing to comply with it, he would do well to retire quietly from the traveling connection, and enjoy himself in local life; where he can make his own appointments, when and where he may please. My junior brethren, I have now passed through those parts of our economy which more especially concern you, and am about turning my attention to the good of brethren who have advanced further in the work of the ministry. Of one thing I am sure—for I have the evidence of my own consciousness—and that is, that my views and feeling have been upright, and that I have aimed at your good in all that I have written. My work has been written in the midst of many labors, and cares, and perplexities, and with many temptations to desist; but a faint hope of doing you some good, has urged me on thus far.

And now, shall my well-meant endeavors be lost for the want of application on your part? O let them not be lost; but strive with all your powers so to use the means with which you are favored on every hand, that you may be able and successful ministers of the new covenant. O be not unfaithful to yourselves, the world, the Church, and the great Head of the Church.

## CHAPTER X.

The duties of those who have charge of circuits.

THE duties of those who have charge of circuits will now claim our attention in a few succeeding chapters, in reading which section ten of the Discipline should be kept in view. When this section was drawn up, many circuits, particularly in England, had three, and sometimes more, preachers, one of whom had charge not only of the members of the circuit, but also of his colleagues, who were generally young men who greatly needed the parental care of a senior minister, who was expected to overlook their behavior and attend to all their necessities. At the present day, in our country, there are usually not more than two preachers in one circuit, one of whom is in charge, and the other a helper. The station of the senior preacher in office is one of great responsibility and difficulty, as he has the formation of the habits and modes of thinking of his colleagues in after life greatly under his power; for young preachers, like other young persons, are prone to imitate the persons they admire; and habits formed in the days of youth will be apt to remain in after life. From the preceding remarks we see the great importance of placing before a young man a correct model in spirit and manners, that he may not learn vicious or improper habits that will render him less useful to the Church and the world than he might have been if he had made a happy commencement under favorable circumstances. When a preacher has a young man appointed to labor with him he should consider him-

self accountable to God and the conference for his helper's conduct, and should use all the means in his power to render him useful. His own conduct should be so entirely in accordance with the Bible and the Methodist Discipline, that he may say without boasting, but in humble confidence, follow me as I also follow Christ. He should also use all the prudence in his power to gain the entire confidence and warm affection of the young man, that his admonitions may be well received, and have their proper weight and influence. A sensible and pious young man will receive, in a friendly manner, the admonitions and reproofs of his senior, if it is evident that they proceed from an ardent wish to do him good; but the conceited and self-willed will regard the faithful admonisher as an enemy who is actuated by bad feelings toward him, in consequence of which efforts are made to keep him down. If a young preacher be very zealous and have some readiness of utterance, the mass of the people will make allowance for his defects, considering his want of opportunity, and they will admire him, and many of them will not have discretion to conceal their admiration from him; and the consequence will be, in many cases, he will become vain, forward, and imperious, so as greatly to grieve the more judicious, whose society will be shunned and instructions rejected by him, and he will seek that kind of society which will praise and flatter him. When such a case as this occurs, the preacher in charge will need all the wisdom, prudence, and grace that he can possess and exercise; for if he caution the people against spoiling the young man by flattery and him against being spoiled thereby, his motives will be liable to improper construction; for the man and his flatterers will be ready to conclude that his cautions have their foundation in jealousy and envy, and, therefore, will be disregarded, and himself made the sub-

ject of animadversion. Now, let him pursue such a judicious course as will convince the youth that he is not so wise and weighty as he and his injudicious friends fondly imagine; and this may frequently be done by a close examination into his religious experience and sundry important branches of knowledge; for by such a course he will be led to know more of himself and his great deficiencies, so that he will be humbled, and thereby be prevented from falling into the condemnation of the devil, of which there was great danger. Sometimes a young man is not very buoyant in his feelings, and is rather inclined to surmise things unfavorable to himself and to speak diminutively of himself and his performances in such a way as is calculated to disgust many, by making them believe he is courting praise. If he be really depressed in spirit his superior ought to encourage him in a proper manner, but at the same time caution him against such an injudicious course as will bring him into contempt with the people; for although some will sympathize with him, most will despise the man who is always running himself down; and, indeed, he deserves to be lightly esteemed; for he should never voluntarily occupy a station for which he is not, in some tolerable degree, prepared. The preacher in charge should not make it his business to hunt for the indiscretions of his helper; but when he either sees them or hears of them from good authority, he should never connive at them, but do his duty in the name and fear of God; for many young men are indiscreet for the want of better information, which ought to be given them by that man whose duty it is made by the Church to give it.

Although the duty we now have under consideration is a painfully-delicate one, yet let it be remembered that it is one which is to have an influence on the welfare of thousands yet unborn; for every man, to some extent,

lives for posterity, but especially the minister of the Gospel, whose conduct will be acted over, from imitation, by his successors, when he is dead and generally forgotten. It should always be remembered that the young man, who is now a junior preacher and who needs so much care, will, in a few years, be a senior and have young men under his care, as he is now under the care of another; and if he now be neglected and take an improper direction, he will neglect others, who, in their turn, will also take an improper direction: and thus the neglect of one man may be the means of doing the Church incalculable injury in her ministry, and, consequently, in her membership, for years and ages to come.

There seems to be great fitness in our economy; for as the junior preachers are expected to submit to the *reasonable* dictation of their superiors in office, it becomes the reasonable duty of the superiors to see that their young brethren want for nothing; and he who stands in immediate pastoral relation to the stewards, leaders, and members of the Church is supposed to have the best opportunity to influence them to supply the want of his helpers. It would appear very unbecoming in a young man who has not been long in the work to say much about his support, as his motives for traveling would be suspected; for there are some people in the Church, and many out of it, who will insinuate, and sometimes say, we are after gain, notwithstanding the very limited supplies which Methodist traveling preachers generally receive. The wants of a single man are not generally numerous; for if he can comfortably clothe himself and procure the books that are necessary to help him on in his pursuit of knowledge, and keep up all things requisite for traveling, he is generally contented. But all men of sense know that he ought to be able to lay by him something for the wants of coming life; for our holy religion does not require celib-

acy in the ministry, any more than in the membership of the Church; therefore, he may be expected to marry at a suitable time—I would that none did otherwise—when his wants will be greatly increased, and he ought to have the means of meeting them.

Many of our preachers are men with young, but rising families, whose wants are greater than the people generally suppose; for that family which moves from place to place, year after year, must sustain losses and undergo privations unknown to the people in general; but which are well understood by the man who has been long in the work, and who is prepared to present the necessities of his brethren to those who have the means, in sufficient abundance, to supply the wants of their preachers and not realize any diminution of their own comfortable support. To a man of great sensibility, it is mortifying to be under the necessity of proclaiming his own wants; and which he need not do, if he have a noble-minded and loving superior. But while I consider it the duty of those who have charge of circuits, to see that their young brethren want for nothing, I regard it their duty, only when the young are teachable, obedient, and industrious; for if they are captious, insubordinate, and indolent, I consider their superiors released from the obligation that they would have been under; for duties are reciprocal. Should the preacher in charge strive to raise supplies for an unfaithful colleague, he will find himself crippled in his efforts, for he will be met by the complaints of the people, who will justly conclude that his claims are very small, who has not done his work. If the preacher's family manifest a great desire to be indulged, and waited on, and then be ungrateful—as most persons who want waiting on are—I pity the man who interests himself in their behalf; for he will hear doleful and well-founded complaints. The people should never consider the families of their preachers

as undeserving their attention ; neither should the families of preachers think themselves more deserving, merely because they are the families of preachers. A word to the wise is sufficient. But you may bray certain characters in a mortar and they will remain as they are, only they will be so bruised as to make them suffer for a season.



## CHAPTER XI.

Duties of those who have charge of circuits—The distribution and renewal of the tickets—Advantages of—Band meetings—The importance of circuit stewards, and the manner in which the preacher should treat them and the leaders.

PROBABLY there never lived a more systematic or methodical man than Mr. Wesley; but his plans of operation were not the result of previously-devised and politic schemes, but they arose from his following the Bible, and the openings of Providence, which he always acknowledged as his guides through life; and the consequences of his plans will show that he did not materially misinterpret the instructions which he received. When he had been led to imitate, in spirit, the primitive and some modern Churches, in holding love-feasts, he saw such was the peculiarity and sacredness of the exercises which took place, that it would be utterly improper to admit the giddy multitude, indiscriminately, into love feast; therefore, some means were wanting to distinguish the precious from the vile. This might be done, in some measure, by placing proper persons at the door, to converse with the persons making application for admittance; but all must see that many inconveniences must attend this plan, as it would be much labor to the keepers of the door to converse with all who were strangers to them; and after conversing in a necessarily-hurried manner, with the hundreds that might apply for admittance, they would be imposed on. To obviate those difficulties, the plan was adopted of giving to each approved member of society a ticket, consisting of a

small piece of paper with an important text of Scripture printed on it, which entitled the bearer to go into love-feast without any questions. But disorderly and disowned members might retain their tickets, by which they might impose on the members and societies where they were strangers; to prevent which, it was found necessary to renew or give other tickets quarterly. The tickets being numbered, first, second, third, and fourth quarter, prevented all imposition, as tickets were given to none but approved members of society. The renewing the tickets accomplished other valuable ends; for the round when the tickets were to be given out, would be the most important round for that quarter; consequently, there would be a more general attendance of the members, which would give the preacher an opportunity of conversing more pointedly with all the members concerning the state of their souls on the eve of a love-feast. In the circuits money is collected once a quarter for the support of the traveling preachers—therefore, the round for giving out the tickets would be a good time to collect quarterage. To me it has been a great grief, for many years, that the giving of tickets has been so little attended to in the circuits in the western conferences; and I firmly believe we shall never do as well in the regular administration of Discipline, and in our financial matters, as we might do, till we revive the ancient custom of renewing the tickets quarterly. Many of the preachers and people do nothing methodically; and any thing that would give them a habit of being methodical would be of incalculable advantage to the Church and the interests of religion in general; for religion does not advance when things are done at random. A revival of this practice would diminish the numbers of delinquent members who seldom go to class meeting; and let it once be generally known, that regular quarterly tickets are necessary to give evidence of approved stand-

ing in the Church, then the members will be anxious to receive and preserve their tickets.

Were the practice of renewing the tickets properly understood and attended to, it would increase the support of the preachers at least fifty per centum, in many circuits; for if the members become desirous of receiving their tickets as they would do, and if it were known that although a ticket would not be withheld for the want of money, yet all who are in circumstances to pay quarterage when the tickets are received, are expected to do so, the present embarrassments, which drive many from the work, would measurably be removed, and many valuable men would continue to travel who are now driven from the work by poverty, bordering on starvation, or that which is worse, compelling them to neglect the education of their children. I am willing to acknowledge, that the consequences which I have named would not be realized immediately, because our people would not see the propriety and utility of the plan till time would show it. If you want evidence of the truth of what I say, you can have it by learning from our brethren from England how much tickets are prized in their country.\* There have been a few attempts to revive the rule, which has done no good, either for want of judgment in the persons making the effort, or because they were not countenanced by their brethren in the ministry generally; but these failures should not discourage us, but lead to a simultaneous exertion in all the western country. Band meetings, so far as my personal knowledge extends, are wholly neglected in this part of our work; and whether it would be advantageous in the present state of mixed society in the west

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\* When this was written very few of the preachers on the circuits were in the habit of distributing tickets, but since then the practice has been revived and the good effects mentioned have been realized. All that is now wanting is to hold on and keep up the practice.

to revive them, I know not, and indeed I stand in doubt. That they have been a great blessing to many sincere souls I believe, but I fear the Church is not prepared for them in this day and in this country; but I wish to touch this theme lightly. But so long as the General conference make the band rules a part of the Discipline, and the second answer, on which I am writing, stands in its present form, and in direction the fifth remains a part of the duty of those in charge of circuits, to be consistent, we ought to attend to the band societies. But what shall I say? I know not. As an individual, I would be willing the band rules were no part of the Discipline; all their moral rules are in other parts of our rules of Discipline, and what is prudential in them might be found in Mr. Wesley's works; and those who approve of them, would be at liberty to conform to them. To me it is painful to see any part of our excellent economy a dead letter, as this is, because the principle is dangerous; for if one part may be neglected with impunity, why not another? I am well convinced that the band rules should be stricken out of the Discipline, or we should strictly attend to them, and put all the believers into bands, and regulate them according to the rules. Which will we do? ask the General conference to expunge them? or neglect them as heretofore? or unite as one man and revive band societies? At the present we are all guilty, and likely so to remain, for I see no prospect of a revival of band meetings. Were there union in effort, this part of our economy might be revived, and with it, probably, a deeper work of grace in the hearts of our people.

The stewards of our Church are an order of men of much more importance than is generally supposed. Let any man turn to the second part, and section third of the Discipline, and consider attentively the qualifications and duties of circuit stewards, and he will see that attention

to mere money matters, is a small part of their duties. The importance of the leadership I shall consider when I come to the fourth answer. In stations there is a steward's and leader's meeting, which is to be met once a week by the preacher; but this is not the case in the circuits, and it is to be feared the preachers do not pay that attention to the stewards which they ought. That preacher who wants that aid from the stewards in temporal and spiritual things which he needs, must meet them often.

Many stewards seldom or never read what is required of them in the Discipline, or they would either resign their office or be more faithful in the discharge of its duties. But were all, who feel like shrinking from responsibility, to resign, we would soon have no stewards; therefore, they need much counsel and encouragement, and with these they will prove valuable auxiliaries to the preacher, in his difficult but needful labors. If the preachers had respect only to the good things of this life, they ought to keep up a good understanding and friendly intercourse between themselves and the stewards; for good feelings on the part of the stewards toward the preacher of their circuit, would incline them to exert themselves to make the preacher comfortable, and his family, if he have one. But a conscientious preacher will have much more anxiety to derive aid from the stewards in carrying on a work of religion, than in temporal support. O, when will our stewards be convinced that they are not mere servants of tables? When the preachers take pains to meet them as often as possible, in a friendly and religious manner, and explain to them their duties, and exhort them earnestly to a full performance of the same. Chapter second, and section second, and answer first, shows that it is the duty of the preacher to meet the leaders at least once a quarter, for the purpose of a regular official examination; but a mere official performance of duty ought not to satisfy

a zealous preacher, who is anxious to do all the good in his power. He will endeavor frequently to spend a little time in a friendly, social, and religious manner, with the class-leaders, that he may encourage them to a faithful discharge of their most perplexing and difficult duties. On examination it will be found, that the man who takes most pains to cultivate a spirit of cordial union between himself and the official members of the circuit, in which he labors, almost always has good times, because he does not labor alone; while he who moves on in a cool reservedness, without any apparent wish to gain the aid of his brethren, has dull and discouraging times, notwithstanding he may be a talented and zealous man in the discharge of his public ministerial labors. If it be manifest to the stewards and leaders that their aid is gladly received by their pastor, they will take encouragement and greatly extend their sphere of usefulness; when, if they think their services are received with cold indifference, they will be discouraged and their energies paralyzed. But the evil will not end here, for the feelings of discouragement which press them down, will extend to the membership of the Church, and all zealous effort for a revival of religion will cease entirely, and the circuit will decline instead of improve. Now, I would ask how any man can answer to his Master, who, by a little indifference or neglect, permits the Church to be languid and destitute of influence, when she might be the means of saving hundreds of souls, for whom Christ died, but who will be lost through the unfaithfulness of the preacher! O, my brother, think on these things and rouse thyself to duty, that thou mayest be a blessing to hundreds in and out of the Church.

## CHAPTER XII.

The preacher's duty to appoint, remove, change, and instruct class-leaders.

JESUS CHRIST is the Shepherd and Bishop of the Church, which consists of all the souls that are in a state of gracious acceptance with God, or who are earnestly seeking to be accepted with him. Christ walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks, which emblematically represent the individual Churches of which the general Church is composed. But his inspection is unperceived by sense, as he is invisible. Our nature and condition are such that we need a visible guide in the way of truth. Therefore, he has ordained a living, visible ministry, to teach and direct the Church in subserviency to his will. Consequently, every pastor of a branch of Christ's Church should remember that he is acting, in some degree, as the representative of his Master, and that he is bound to do the work of his Master. If the preceding view be correct—and that it is I think none will deny who believe the Bible—it will follow that there is an inconceivably-great responsibility resting on every minister to whom is committed a body of men constituted into a branch of Christ's Church. The Savior, in his parabolic manner of teaching, informs us that a good shepherd is so intimately acquainted with his flock, that he can designate each member thereof by its appropriate name, which implies a special knowledge of the condition of each individual under his care. The plan of itinerant ministerial service in the Methodist Episcopal Church will not admit of that intimate, personal oversight which the

wants of the people require. Therefore, the minister must substitute such means as will enable him to acquit his conscience in the discharge of duty; and this is done by appointing the class-leaders. It will be perceived that I consider class-leaders in the light of deputized ministers who are to perform, in the absence of ministers, that service which they would perform personally if they were present. If the view taken of this matter be a correct one, it will follow that the clamor raised against us on account of this arrangement in our Discipline, is wholly without foundation. We never hear any complaint against the clerk of the court or sheriff of the county for choosing his own deputy; for every man knows the clerk or sheriff is accountable for the performance of the duties of his office. Just so, in this case, the minister is accountable for the souls committed to his care, as many passages in the Bible declare. Therefore, he ought to have the choice of the men to whom he confides an important part of his ministerial watch-care. If the leaders be the minister's substitutes, it will follow that the appointing and removing power ought to be with him; for how can he confide his awfully-responsible duties to men in whom he can not confide? And if he find he has been mistaken in his confidence, how can he continue men as his substitute who can not or will not do his duties? It is believed that no man can fairly answer these questions without admitting the propriety of our Discipline in the provision made for appointing and changing leaders. But it may be said the preacher has the power to force on the class an obnoxious leader or of forcibly removing from office one that may be well approved of by his brethren. I know that this is the fact. He has the power, also, to burn down your house, to get drunk, to steal, to swear, to murder; but will a sensible and pious man do any of these things? No. Then why apprehend



he will act as if beside himself in other cases? For he well knows that were he to appoint a leader that is not respected by the class, he would be worse than useless; and, also, if the man has grace and sense sufficient to be a class-leader he would not accept the appointment against the will of his brethren. He must be deranged in feeling or judgment who would remove a good, acceptable, and useful leader against the wish of the class and appoint another who is not, in all respects, his equal or superior; and if the preacher be thus deranged, he will not long remain an itinerant among us. Preachers in the exercise of the appointing power ought to be discreet men and do nothing in an overbearing manner; for although the preacher may have confidence in the man of his own choice, yet the feelings of his brethren are to be regarded; for unless they are treated with respect, prejudices will be excited that will destroy the usefulness of the preacher himself.

But why not let the people choose their own leader in a popular election? This question has been partly answered already, by showing that the leader is a deputized minister, who ought to be appointed by him whose place he is to fill and whose duties he is to perform. I would further remark that popular elections can never exist without their adjuncts—a warm spirit of competition and electioneering management—which would soon destroy the peace and harmony of religious society. But, says one, we have popular elections in the political world without destroying the integrity of the nation or the state. So we have. But how would you be pleased to see the candidates and their friends go to class meeting, a love-feast, the sacrament table, on the eve and subsequent to a general election? O, but they are not religious people! Many of them are not; but some are; and they will tell you that they often lose ground in

religious feeling about the time of elections; for it is hard to be calm in the midst of a tornado of political excitement, and if popular ecclesiastical elections were to become numerous, religious people, who are members of Church, would have a double share of exciting causes, which would soon banish the love of God and the brethren from the Church. Well, but in the Church there is nothing of interest at stake; therefore, there would not be the same warmth. But honor, or supposed honor, will produce more excitement than interest; for many men spend more money in an electioneering campaign than they afterward receive for their services. Now, let two men be proposed to the class for the leadership, and, although they might not have desired the office heretofore, yet each will think himself degraded if he should fail in his election, and, consequently, he will become desirous of success. But this is not the worst. The special friends of each will contrast their defects and excellences, so as to produce unpleasant feelings, and in the end the fellowship of the class would be destroyed. A prudent man will be able, in most cases, to find out and accommodate the feelings of a class without jeopardizing the peace and safety of society, as a popular election would do. If he find a class-leader defective in some things, who is in most things acceptable and useful, he should endeavor to cure his defects rather than produce excitement by a hasty removal, which may be an injury to the leader and society both; for notwithstanding many leaders would be glad to be released, and the classes willing for a change, yet they are unwilling for things to be done in a hurried and stern manner.

If the position which I have taken be correct, that the leader is the minister by proxy, it will follow that the minister should take much pains to give the leader such friendly directions as will enable him to discharge the

duties pertaining to his office. Hence the propriety of what was said, in the preceding chapter, on the frequent meeting of the leaders by those who have charge of circuits. There are grounds to fear that great remissness abounds in the ministry in this particular. The want of aged and experienced preachers compels the superintendents to place young men in charge of circuits, who feel a delicacy in conversing with aged and experienced class-leaders concerning those duties which they are supposed to understand better than the young man himself; and thus, through modesty, a habit of neglecting this duty is formed in early life, which is too often pursued as long as the preacher lives.

I hope that modesty, amiable as it is, will not cause you, my brethren, to form a bad habit; and remember that a sensible class-leader, who knows your timidity, but who also knows your duty, will gladly converse with you concerning his method of meeting class; and if you can not teach him much, you may learn many valuable things from him. Use every exertion in your power to have a good leadership in your circuits, and you will have comparatively few Church trials, and your societies will not languish under your ministry. Take up your Discipline, turn to the section on class meetings, read it over and over, study its contents, and then resolve that you will practice all the directions contained in it on the subject on which I have written in this chapter, and which you are now reading, that you may have the testimony of a good conscience that you, as a Methodist preacher in charge of a circuit, are daily discharging those duties which you have solemnly promised to perform. Sorry shall I be if you neglect your duties, after they have been presented so specifically as has been attempted in these humble but, I trust, plain chapters. Try, my brethren, to be more faithful than we, your

predecessors have been, that you may be more useful than we; for we must decrease; but you may increase. Will you do so? The Lord help you!

## CHAPTER XIII.

The duties of the preacher in the reception of members.

THE relation existing between a minister and his people, is an intimate and an endearing one; being the relation of a father and his own or adopted children; in our day mostly the latter, but in the primitive Church the former. In the order of Providence, and the economy of grace, the ministry was prior to the membership of the Church; and had there been no ministry, there would never have been a Church, unless God had operated contrary to his usual plan, which is to accomplish his work by instruments. When, therefore, the first preachers went forth to preach the Gospel, they presented themselves as pastors, who were ready to receive under their care such persons as were willing to comply with the terms of membership which they proposed. They held themselves measurably accountable for the welfare of all who placed themselves under their watch-care. But it would not be supposed, that they would be willing to be accountable for the refractory, who would not submit to that moral discipline which was adopted for the welfare of the whole flock. From the preceding views, it must be obvious to all, that the power of receiving and disowning Church members naturally belongs to the ministry; and were the ministry as intelligent and upright as it ought to be, there would be no danger of an abuse of authority. But such is the want of a knowledge of men and things, and of integrity in some that pertain to the ministry, that the safety of the Church requires a restriction of the authority

naturally belonging to them. According to the constitution of the Methodist Episcopal Church, the right of receiving and excluding members belongs exclusively to the preacher in charge; but this right is so guarded by the Discipline, that the safety of the Church is secured against any long-continued abuse of power, by any of her ministry. The first danger to which the Church is liable, is that of having improper members imposed on her by a preacher that may be overzealous in proselyting; the second, of having worthy members disowned by the caprice of the preacher, who may be constitutionally arbitrary, and who may imbibe, and be governed by his prejudices and passions; for such men may, occasionally, creep into the ministry, and others may become such by their inward backslidings, which will sour their tempers so as to make them peevish and overbearing. If the Methodist preachers observe the Discipline of their own Church, which they have promised to do, both the dangers named will be entirely avoided. The first thing to be done in the admission of members, is to present the applicant with a note, stating that the bearer is admitted as a probationer for membership in the Church; which note entitles the bearer to all the means of grace, but not to any official act or station in the Church. But even this incipient process is strictly guarded; for the preacher dare not give this note unless the applicant for Church privileges is recommended by some person known to the preacher, or till meeting three or four times in class, so as to give the preacher and members an opportunity of judging of the sincerity and real awakenings of the person. The preacher is also required to read the General Rules to the applicant, on his offering to attach himself to the society, that he may know what manner of life he is expected to lead, if he come under our watch-care; and if he be unwilling to be so strict, as some call the requisition of our General

Rules, he can decline at once.\* This giving of notes properly belongs to the preacher in charge; but, as a matter of courtesy, and from custom, the junior preacher frequently receives persons on trial; but even then the preacher in charge is responsible, as the junior acts by a delegated authority, and his doing may be overruled by his senior, if improper persons are admitted to the privileges of the Church. The preacher is required to give tickets once a quarter to all persons of approved standing, as members of Church, but not to a probationer; who is, in reality, not a member, but only a candidate for membership in the Church, whose means of grace he has been permitted to enjoy, that he might obtain that state in grace which would make him a worthy member. (Query—ought any man to be received into full membership, who does not profess religion?) After six months have elapsed, from the date of the note of admission, the preacher should inquire into the experience, views, and wishes of the probationer, so as to ascertain whether he be a suitable person to be admitted to full membership, and whether it be his wish to be so admitted; and notwithstanding the preacher may be satisfied, in his own mind, from the examination had, yet his power is restricted; for he must not give a ticket, which is evidence of full membership, unless the leader, with whom the probationer has met at least six months, recommend him; and as many country classes are scattered over extensive sections of country, it may be some of the members may know some objections to his admission, unknown to the leader; therefore, as a matter of prudent caution, it would be well to ask openly in the class, if there are any objections, and if there be

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\*When this was written the Discipline required a note to be given, but in later editions this requisition is left out; but the very nature of the case shows the propriety of giving a note. Now the Discipline requires the strange applicant to meet two or three times instead of three or four.

none, and the leader recommend, the preacher may announce him a member, and give him a ticket, at the time of renewing the tickets.\* It may sometimes happen that there are objections to a probationer, in which case, if there be no prospect of reforming and saving the person, the preacher should discontinue him as a probationer; but if there be ground for a reasonable hope that he may be saved, let him still be continued on trial; for the expression, "at least six months on trial," implies, that he may be kept till all parties are satisfied. The prudent framers of our Discipline have done yet more to prevent all imposition; for they require the preacher in charge to read at the quarterly meeting the names of all persons, who, during the last quarter, may have become members in full standing. The object of this thing is, that the persons may be introduced to the whole circuit, as persons worthy of fellowship; and as there are usually persons present at quarterly meetings from all parts of the circuit, the standing of those admitted becomes generally known. The reading the names usually takes place at the end of love-feast, when the members are much cheered, and in a state to rejoice on hearing that the Church is increasing in members, who have given evidence of firmness, by having passed through the ordeal prescribed for their regular admission into that branch of Christ's Church, of which they have become members. Now, who does not see that the preceding course, if strictly attended to, will save the Church from all imposition; and to me it is mysterious, how any conscientious Methodist preacher can neglect it, as it is so clearly laid down in the Discipline, which he has promised to observe,

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\*The course here recommended was made law by the General conference of 1840. Now none can be admitted into full connection till they have been baptized, and give satisfaction, before the Church, concerning their faith and willingness to keep the rules of the Church.



and which he can never neglect, without being an inconsistent man, who disregards his vows solemnly made. In order that the preacher may attend to his duty in this orderly way, he should keep a book, in which should be entered the names of all persons to whom he gave notes, with the dates when such notes were given; and when he prepares to leave his circuit, and give his successor an account of the circuit, a list containing the names of all persons on trial, should be drawn up, giving the names of the several preaching-places, where there are probationers, together with the dates of their joining on trial, that their cases may be attended to in proper order and time. When any person on trial moves from one circuit to another, a certificate of the real standing of the probationer may be given, by which means, all persons seeking membership in our Church, can be dealt with in the same manner, as the same practice in the Church should obtain in all our connection. Some preachers complain that they have not time to attend to all these matters in detail; but who are they that thus complain? Generally, the lovers of their bed, and tobacco; the laughing, the talkative; in a word, those that have time for almost every thing but their duty.

Some say they can see no good to be accomplished by so much precision; and thus set up their own judgment in opposition to the General conference, which has said that members shall be received according to the routine presented in the present chapter. If no other good were accomplished, as I said in another place, it will accustom the preacher to habits of doing business in a proper manner, which would be of great service to him and the Church; for the people are often tempted to think, if the preacher can get their names on the class papers, they have accomplished all that was aimed at; and, indeed, the loose manner in which we often attend to the regular

reception of members, is calculated to strengthen their temptation; but let all the preachers attend to this thing as it should be done, and our people will see that we wish to methodize them in reality, and they will regard us as careful pastors. Other denominations have frequently made complaints against us, for the hurried manner in which we introduce—as they suppose—irreligious persons into our Church; but notwithstanding many of them may be sincere in thinking we are wrong in our operations, their opinion is founded in ignorance of our economy, which they have not examined for themselves. When they see us taking names at camp meetings, and other popular meetings, they suppose that all these are enrolled in our Church books as regular members; whereas, they are not admitted even to a state of trial, but regarded as applicants for such a state, whose cases are attended to by the proper officer, when he comes round in their respective neighborhoods. My brethren, although we are not bound to do our business in such a way as to court the good-will and approbation of other denominations, yet we are bound to remove every cause of evil surmising from all men, so far as we can, that our good may not be evil spoken of. If we strictly observe the landmarks of Methodism, as laid down in the Discipline of the Church, we defy the world to produce a Church that uses as much caution in the reception of members as we do.\* But alas! alas! how do we neglect our own prudent economy, and thereby bring ourselves into reproach with others, who may say the Methodist preachers are very unmethodical in doing their business, in the reception of members. My brethren, shall we remain a reproach to the Church, by our careless habits of doing our duty? O, let it not

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\* Since this was written there has been a very great improvement in the manner of receiving members into Church, and in many other parts of our work; and it is to be hoped we will still improve in our doings.

be, but, one and all, let us arise and be Methodist preachers, and pastors of the most numerous Protestant flock in the world!

## CHAPTER XIV.

The duties of the preacher in expelling members from the Church.

IN the preceding chapter I endeavored to show that the right of receiving members into and excluding them from the Church naturally belongs to the minister, who is accountable to the Head of the Church for the persons committed to his care; and that if the ministry were sufficiently wise and holy, there would be no danger to the Church, or any member thereof, from an injudicious exercise of power. It was, however, stated that the present imperfect state of the ministry requires checks upon its power, that the rights of all may be guarded. The manner in which the Church has been secured from the introduction of improper members has been considered, and we will now see how the members are secured from improper expulsions. Our form of trial is very similar to that of a court of law in criminal cases; for the preacher is the judge, the society, or select number thereof, the jury, the complainant the prosecutor, and the Bible the statute-book. In the first place, the accused member should be presented with a written exhibition of the charges against him, stating the time or times when, the place or places where they were committed. The preacher should then give him notice of the time and place of trial, allowing him sufficient opportunity to prepare for his defense. In the section organizing a delegated General conference, it is stated that the General conference shall not do away the right of our members of trial before the society or by a committee—from which I infer that, in ordinary cases, the accused should have

the privilege of choosing whether he will be tried by the whole society or a select number. But to this privilege I think there may be good and valid objections in many cases, because it would give a captious man the power of evading a trial altogether, or nearly so. In some stations the members amount to a thousand, and it would be unreasonable, if not impossible, to convene them to try a member. If the preacher were to summons old men and matrons, young men and maidens—all of whom constitute the society—for the purpose of trying him, he would refuse to come to trial unless the majority, at least, attended, which it is not likely they would do in a busy city; and should they attend, how would such a multitude, unacquainted with such business, enter into a critical investigation of a difficult case, which often perplexes the best judges of right and wrong, to decide satisfactorily to their own minds? All that a reasonable man would desire, when called to answer for his conduct, would be the privilege of objecting to men manifestly prejudiced against him, or who had formed or expressed an opinion unfavorable to his case; and a prudent preacher would decline placing such in the number to try him; and if the preacher were headstrong or pertinacious, discreet men, who were objected to, would decline acting in the case. The societies in country places are sometimes small, and if a man be contrary, and refuse to be tried by the whole society, and then objects to the persons chosen by the preacher to try him, he might evade a trial entirely, if the preacher have no discretionary power of determining, in these difficult cases, whether the man shall be tried by the society or a select number. Some preachers are in the habit of selecting persons from neighboring societies to try members of another society, which would be a very good course, in many cases, were it not for the dangerous consequences

which it involves; for it would give a preacher of strong prejudices the power of expelling, for a season, at least, almost any man with whom he might become displeased, by selecting such men as he could sway, to subserve his purpose.\* It may be said that a society may be so partial to, or so prejudiced against, an accused member that justice will not be done. This I believe to be the fact, in many instances; and if the society trial were final, it would be a desperate state of things; for a wicked man might continue to enjoy Church privileges, or a holy man be deprived of them; but the Discipline guards against danger in this case; for if the society be so partial as to clear the manifestly guilty, the preacher can refer the case to the quarterly meeting conference, consisting of all the official members of the circuit who may be supposed to be free from partiality; and if an innocent man be condemned by the prejudices of his class, he may appeal to the same body, where he can have justice done him. When a man is brought to trial before an intelligent society that will not be in danger of getting into confusion, after the case has passed through a thorough examination, and the accuser and accused been heard, I would advise the preacher to retire, and let the jury—to use a law term—deliberate, and form their opinion independently, without any dictation from him.† I consider the facts of the case and the law both with the jury or society; for they are to say whether he is guilty, and, also, whether the crime is expressly forbidden in the word of

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\* Bishop Hedding says a whole charge is the society. If so, the practice which I disapprove is lawful.

† Bishop Hedding, in his sermon on Discipline, takes a different view, and says the preacher should remain with the society or select number. I am of the same opinion I was when I wrote this; but as the Bishop's views are of authority in those conferences which adopt them, I would not advise a departure from them.

God and sufficient to exclude the perpetrator from the kingdom of grace and glory, or not guilty. If he is found guilty of a crime sufficient to deprive him of the favor of God in this world and the next, it is the duty of the preacher to expel him from the Church which he has disgraced and whose privileges he has forfeited, and which he can enjoy only by readmission in the same manner in which he was admitted at first. The society may acquit him of such immoral acts as would require his expulsion; but it may be manifest he has been guilty of imprudent conduct, such as requires reproof from a preacher or leader, which should now be administered, and which should have been performed in the first instance, if it had not been supposed that the crimes with which he was charged would be proved to be of greater enormity than merely to require reproof. When reproof for indulging in improper tempers or words is administered, if there be real signs of penitence manifested, by a humble confession and a hearty promise of amendment, he is to be borne with. Some have supposed that he is to be put back on trial, which, I think, is not the fact; for it is not till the third offense that the matter is to be brought before the society; and I do not suppose the preacher or leader has the power to put back on trial independent of the society, which would be the case if we are to understand the rule as some have done. I consider the caption of the rule for bringing to trial, etc., calculated to mislead the preachers; and it is a pity the General conference of 1828, when it struck out the words *shall remain on trial*, and inserted the words *shall be borne with*, had not amended the caption also. Indulgence in sinful words or tempers, or disobedience to the orders and Discipline of the Church, may forfeit a man's standing, if he should be stubborn, and refuse to confess his wrong, and penitently promise to amend; but he can not be expelled

without the verdict of the society, convicting him of wrong and of impenitency. There is a rule in our Discipline which is intended to guard the peace and harmony of the Church, by prohibiting the members from speaking what may be called treasonous words, in inveighing against the doctrine or Discipline of the Church, so as to sow, or manifest an endeavor to sow, discord or dissension in society. On a charge of violating this wholesome rule, the man should be brought before the society or a select number, and, if found guilty, he is to be reprovved by his senior minister; after which, if he still persist in his pernicious course of conduct, he is to be expelled by the preacher in charge. Some have complained of this rule and its enforcement; but as every man joins the Church voluntarily, if he become dissatisfied with her doctrines or Discipline, reason and propriety say he should retire in quietness, and not endeavor to disturb her harmony by his turbulent conduct; and if he will not do so, it is a good thing that she has the means by which she can free herself from such men as cause her trouble.

The Discipline requires all the members of society to be regular in their attendance to class meeting, which is regarded by us as an important means of grace; and, in case of a failure to do so, it points out the course to be pursued by the preacher. He, or one of his colleagues, is required to wait on every delinquent member, and inform him, if he do not amend, his case will be brought before the society, and he will be finally expelled from the Church. After waiting a reasonable time to see whether his visit has had the desired effect, and no amendment in attendance takes place, the case is to be brought before the society at such time and place as are known to the party concerned. The fact of habitual neglect is proved by the class paper—if it has been kept as it should be—and by the testimony of the leader and others; so that



the question for the vote of the society is, Has this neglect been willful? As the class is supposed to be acquainted with the circumstances of the case, it is the best judge in this case. If the class decide that the neglect has been willful, the preacher is then to lay the member aside for a breach of our rules, and, I may say, for neglecting the Scriptural duty of assembling with the people of God; but not for outwardly-immoral conduct. The Bible forbids the members of the Church to litigate their difficulties in the civil courts; and in this particular, as in all others, the Methodist Discipline is founded on the Bible. Any member, therefore, who commences a suit at law against another without endeavoring to adjust matters in an amicable way, forfeits his standing, unless, in the judgment of the class or a select number, the case was of such a nature as to justify a process at law. The man who refuses to use amicable measures to adjust difficulties with his brother, on the recommendation of his pastor, subjects himself to expulsion, unless the class decide that the peculiarities of the case justified him in refusing to arbitrate the matter. If a man has failed in business and becomes insolvent, a judicious committee, which, in reality, is the jury in the case, is to decide whether he has or has not been guilty of fraud; and if he be found guilty, the preacher in charge is to expel him from the Church.

On reviewing all the cases that have been noticed, in which men become liable to expulsion, it is evident the people are protected against all tyranny in the ministry, if there be any in it; and, moreover, in all cases of expulsion, an appeal is allowed to the quarterly meeting conference, where justice may be had. It is to be hoped that all who consider the views—which are believed to be correct—contained in this and the preceding chapter, will not again think the Methodist Episcopal Church to be

that arbitrary and despotic thing which its enemies, either in ignorance or malice, have represented it to be, and that nothing but maladministration can harm any good man; and what government can prevent maladministration?

## CHAPTER XV.

The duty of the preacher in charge to hold watch-nights, love-feasts, quarterly meetings, and to supply his circuit with books and periodicals.

It has already been remarked that Mr. Wesley followed the openings of Providence in the economy adopted by him; and this is shown by the kind of meeting called watch-night. Some of his people that were zealous to grow in grace were in the habit of meeting occasionally, and continuing, till a late hour at night, in fervent devotion. He heard of their practice, met with them, and about the middle of the night there were unusual displays of Divine grace among them—from which time he appointed what has since been called watch-nights. On such occasions it is expected that all will attend with more than ordinary solemnity, for the purpose of waiting longer than at ordinary evening meetings in the various devotional exercises that are attended to by the ministry and membership; for usually there are a sermon or two, and several exhortations, and much singing and prayer. From the short description here given, it must be obvious to all that these meetings are admirably calculated to produce an excitement of religious feeling which it is desirable to accomplish by every prudent effort in the preacher's power. The preacher in charge is required to appoint these meetings, because it is supposed that his age, and experience, and weight of character will maintain that order and gravity which should be strictly attended to on these interesting occasions. A very young man, however good and zealous, might not be able to prevent confusion and disorder, which would bring reproach on the Church and vital religion. In the primi-

tive Church many of the members were in indigent circumstances by means of outrages committed on their goods, and by being deprived of many privileges which their wicked neighbors enjoyed who had not embraced the Christian religion, which was then greatly despised. Under such circumstances they would become objects of commiseration to their brethren, whose circumstances might be more favorable than theirs, in consequence of which means would be used to make them as comfortable as circumstances would permit. Hence the custom of preparing a frugal meal, called a feast of love, to which the indigent were invited, that all might sit down on one common level, at the same table, as children of a common parent. We may readily conclude that Christian experience and the prospects of future bliss would form the matter of their social conversation on these interesting occasions. This primitive practice has been long observed in our Church, in its spirit and design. It is true we do not prepare a regular meal, as our people are not so necessitous as were many in the primitive Church. We only receive a little bread and water as a significant indication of our brotherly love and Christian fellowship; after which we spend a season in relating and hearing religious experiences, greatly to our edification and comfort. That these meetings may not become extravagant in excitement of feeling on one hand and languid and insipid on the other, the preacher is required not to let them last more than an hour and a half. Were the doors thrown open and all persons permitted to attend our love-feasts, a moment's reflection will convince any reasonable man that the promiscuous crowd would so depress and awe the feelings of even the most pious as to destroy the spirituality of the meeting. Hence the propriety of refusing a general admittance. As a Methodist love-feast is intended for the special benefit of the members

of her own communion, there can be no possible wrong done to persons who are not of us by refusing them admittance. But, as we are ashamed of no part of our economy, we are willing that all serious persons may be present, as often as three times, at our love-feasts; and we think it best not to admit them oftener, unless they become members. Some preachers think they can mend the rule by extending the privileges of love-feast more frequently to persons out of our Church, and the consequences are that our rights are sacrificed without any benefit; for all such men will find more difficulty, in the end, in fixing the line of demarkation so as to please their own people and others than if they had kept the rule without endeavoring to mend it. The love-feasts are to be held by the preacher in charge; but if he have a worthy and capable colleague, I conceive he may do it by him; also, if there be local preachers in the circuit, whose age, and experience, and weight of character will sustain the dignity, importance, and usefulness of love-feasts, by them. I fear the preachers, in many instances, do not appoint and hold the meetings noticed so often and in such a manner as to do the good which might be done by them. Quarterly meetings are of much importance to our work, as they are the times of transacting the business of the circuit by the official members who compose the quarterly meeting conference; and, also, as they are generally times of religious excitement. Sometimes the presiding elder, who is the proper superintendent of the meeting, may be prevented from attending; in which case it becomes necessary that some person be substituted in his place, and this the Discipline does, by making it the duty of the preacher in charge to hold the quarterly meeting; and he, of course, is the proper president of the conference. Sometimes it may happen that the preacher in charge is a young man of very small expe-

rience, and there may be a man of age and experience present, who could preside with more dignity and to better advantage than the young man, who feels embarrassed under such circumstances. In this case, let the legal president call the meeting together and organize it; after which he may call the man of age to the chair, who presides in the name of the real president, so that the minutes and all other things may be signed by the preacher in charge in a legal manner.

It has been supposed by many that the Methodist ministry and membership possess an entire apathy in reference to intellectual culture; yea, that they rail at learning and that knowledge which may be gained from books. But let facts speak on this subject. The Church has several hundred thousand dollars invested in her Book Concern, and hundreds of persons employed in the city of New York, and a number in the city of Cincinnati, in making books and publishing periodicals, some of which have a greater circulation than any others in America.\* She has, also, considerably more than two thousand traveling preachers, a part of whose legal duty is to distribute the books which are made and to promote the circulation of her periodicals.† Does this state of things indicate that we are enemies to information? I think not. Let those who are frequently reproaching us for our ignorance examine our capacity and attainment—if they have capacity to do so—and they will find some preachers and

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\* This was the case before the multiplication of the number of periodicals.

† In 1845 the whole Methodist Episcopal Church had four thousand, four hundred and seventy-nine traveling preachers to distribute her books. In 1846 the Methodist Episcopal Church had three thousand, two hundred and eighty traveling preachers. How many the Methodist Episcopal Church South had at the same time I have no means of ascertaining; but at this time the two Churches must have near six thousand traveling preachers, whose duty it is to distribute books among their people.

people of our order not a whit behind their chief men in intellect and literature; but I forbear this invidious comparison. In supplying his circuit with books, the preacher must use some diligence to ascertain what the wants of the people are, together with their ability to purchase; but these things are easily accomplished. His great difficulty will be to convince many that it is their duty to purchase books. Sometimes he will find a man worth several thousand dollars, with a number of children growing to maturity, having a library not worth five dollars. Whenever I see this state of things, I think about the fox in the fable, which, seeing the mask of a playactor, exclaimed, "What a head, but there are no brains in it!"

The preacher should endeavor, in a mild way, to convince all persons that are able to do otherwise, that there is much impiety in rearing their families without the means of intellectual and gracious culture; for the ignorant are the dupes of knaves, and the creatures of the designing. There is a popular and true maxim, that "knowledge is power," which ought to be placed in bold relief in the most conspicuous place in every house in the nation. While the covetous man is striving to acquire much of this world's goods, but neglecting to procure the means of information for his family, he is employed in worse than "strenuous idleness;" for he is acquiring a fortune for unhappy dunces to waste, after their minds and hearts have been vitiated thereby. I know that it is very hard to convince an ignorant man that there is any necessity for any person in the world to possess more information than he does himself; for, in general, men are vain in proportion to their ignorance; the difficulty should not discourage, but prompt to reiterated efforts with a determination never to yield, till success crown their effort, if success be in the bounds of possibility. Many parsimonious men will try to excuse themselves from purchasing

books, because it is supposed the preacher is making something by the sale. In this case, honesty is the best policy; therefore, the preacher should let the facts of the case be known, and show that he, and the superannuated preachers, the widows and orphans of preachers derive profit from the sale of the books. He may, also, show the propriety and necessity of these profits, as all who are connected with the itinerancy are, in general, needy. General information on this subject will induce some men to purchase books, that otherwise would not do it. There is another consideration of importance in the distribution of books; and that is, many of the preachers are in such straitened circumstances, that they can not afford themselves extensive libraries, which will not be so afflicting if they can meet with a good supply of books in every place where they labor; hence, the preacher who exerts himself to spread the books, may greatly benefit his brethren in the ministry for years to come. O, but the people are so poor that if I sell many books I shall cut off my own resources; for what they give for books, they will withhold from quarterage! Now, do you really believe this? If you do, I pity your poor little mind, that has no more knowledge of human nature. Know you not, that man is the creature of habit, and that he who purchases books is destroying that covetous feeling of his heart, which prevented him from being kind to you? Let facts speak: the preacher who sells many books, generally, has an industrious, loving, liberal people. "But my people are, really, poor; and, therefore, can not buy many books." It may be so, but can they not purchase some? Persuade them to dispense with their whisky,\* their tobacco, and other superfluities; to rise early, to be industrious when they are up, and they will have the means to purchase books,

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\*Thank Heaven, the use of whisky has greatly declined among religious people since this was written.



and time to read them. Be not discouraged, my brother, but make a thorough trial, and you will exceed your own expectation. Another advantage will be realized by you, for the people will inquire the character of the books which you offer for sale, and you will be ashamed to say you have never read them; consequently, you will read more yourself. Pardon me when I digress, to give you one caution: if your circumstances are moderate, be careful not to use book money when you have sold books, lest you may not be able to raise it when you want it, and ought to pay the Book Concern, which is properly the property of the poor preachers and their families, whom you rob by your failure. Think of this. Unless you are careful in dealing in books, you will get your fingers burnt before you know it.

## CHAPTER XVI.

The preacher's duty to take the numbers in his charge—To give the presiding elder a quarterly account of the state of his charge—To overlook the accounts of the stewards—To appoint class collectors—To make quarterly collections—To make missionary collections.

MR. WESLEY'S habit of accuracy led him, at an early period of his societies, to take their numbers with much precision; and this course has been pursued ever since, in the connection, both in Europe and America, so that the annual Minutes contain a correct history of the increase of Methodism in its membership and traveling ministry; and I hope we shall soon have the increase of the local ministry presented through the same medium.\* As our numbers are published to the world, every preacher should feel himself bound, by the principles of honor and moral honesty, to present the numbers in his circuit correctly. There have been many and grievous complaints in taking the numbers in divers instances. If there be not more care in this thing, I would recommend an impeachment of every preacher who makes an inaccurate return. The bishops are regarded as the superintendents of the whole work; but such is its extension, that it is impossible for them to pay particular attention to every part in person; to remedy this unavoidable failure, the presiding eldership was instituted. The presiding elders, as the agents of the bishops, are required to give them a written account

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\* This is now done, only it is not done in such a way as to show the number in each circuit and station. Neither does it designate the number of elders, deacons, and preachers respectively, as I could wish to see it done.

of the districts, in their absence, which the elders can not do, unless they know the state of their districts; hence, the preacher in charge is required to give the presiding elder quarterly accounts of his circuit. This thing is seldom attended to.

Experience has proved in large stations, that the best plan is to have the men and women in separate classes, which would not be convenient in country places; but the advantage of this separation may be partly realized by meeting the men and women separately, once a quarter, which the preacher is required to do, whenever it is practicable. The Discipline requires the stewards to be men of solid piety, who both know and love our doctrine and discipline, and of good, natural, and acquired abilities, to transact the business of the circuit; but sometimes men of accurate business habits can not be obtained; and as the man in charge of a circuit is supposed to be a *Methodist* preacher, he is considered competent to give all necessary information to the stewards. Frequently, the class-collectors send the moneys collected from the classes to the circuit stewards, by the hand of the preacher; consequently, his moral character is liable to injury, if the stewards' accounts are not kept accurately. The preceding considerations are sufficient to induce a conscientious preacher to overlook all the accounts of the stewards, that all needful corrections may be made, and necessary information given. Although the preachers of our order profess to be called of God to preach, and to be, in some sense, thrust out by him into the vineyard, and to be actuated by considerations far superior to those of a pecuniary nature, yet every man should pay some regard to the things of this life; it, therefore, becomes his duty to carry into operation the provisions of the Discipline, to raise supplies for himself and family; and if he have no family, for the families of others, who are on circuits which

are unable or unwilling to make them comfortable; for all surplus money is applied to those who have not received their allowance.

The General Rules make it the duty of the leaders, to receive from the members the money which they are willing to give for the support of the preachers; but it often happens that many who are good leaders in other things, are miserably deficient in collecting money for ministerial support; hence, the framers of the Discipline have made it the duty of the preacher in charge to appoint a person in each class to receive the quarterly collection. When there is not a special appointment for this purpose, the class-leader is regarded as the class-collector. So far as my knowledge extends, the preachers in general, in the western country, receive but little more than half their allowance, without any thing, in most cases, for table expenses, etc.\* Generally, this deficiency is wholly the fault of the preachers themselves, by neglecting to observe the arrangements of the Discipline; for if a few preachers attend to their duty, the neglect of the many prevents success in raising ample supplies for ministerial support. I have yet to be convinced, that a people as numerous as ours, possessing the wealth that many of them do, and the competency of most, and as religious as they generally are, would let the preachers and their families be embarrassed, as they often are, if the proper means were used to prevent it. If there be a failure in obtaining support from the members of society, the preacher is authorized to make public collections round his circuit, once a quarter. Although it is painful to resort to this measure, it had better be done, than for a good and useful man to be driven from the work by the heavy hand of poverty, which

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\*This was the case when this was written; but there has been a very great improvement in this matter since, and this improvement is still on the advance.

has been the case many times. I have said it is painful to resort to public collections; not that I think there is any impropriety in the measure, considered in the abstract; but that the motives of the ministry may not appear to the world to be of a pecuniary nature. When we consider how much the community is bettered by a living and faithful ministry, in knowledge and morals, there is nothing unreasonable or unjust in expecting the community in general to aid in supporting the ministry, and many gentlemen and ladies esteem it a duty and privilege to do so. Now, let the preachers attend to these rules concerning money matters, and they will be able to clothe and feed their families comfortably—but not extravagantly, which they ought not to do if they had the means—and educate their children in a respectable manner, which will be all they can expect; for a fortune is not to be made in the itinerant life in the Methodist Episcopal Church.

I gladly leave money matters, and turn to things of more importance. An attentive survey of Heaven's plans of saving men, will convince us that one of the most prominent is of a missionary character. The Son of God was a missionary sent from heaven to earth. The apostles were missionaries sent to Jews and Gentiles in all the world. Many of the ancient prophets were itinerant missionaries. If ever the whole world be evangelized and civilized thereby, missionary operations must effect the work; for a regular, settled ministry can never exist in any unchristianized country, and if it could exist, it could not do the good which a missionary can accomplish. Settle a man in any place, and he contracts his partialities and prejudices toward the people and the people toward him, by which his usefulness is greatly curtailed. His views, his feelings, his operations become local, whereas the views, the feelings, and the operations of

the missionary are expanded and can be circumscribed by nothing less than earth's population. This statement will explain the reason why a few itinerant Methodist ministers have done more to promote the present and future welfare of the people in these United States, in little more than half a century, than all the regular clergy in America have done from its first settlement down to the present day. The success which has attended our operations, unexampled since the apostolic age, has been of incalculable service to many other denominations, who have added a missionary ministry to their regularly-settled pastoral arrangement. In this we rejoice; but we think it would be more generous, in some cases, if they would acknowledge that they kindled their fire at the Oxford torch—I mean the influence of Wesleyan Methodism—which some noble souls among them do, with great candor and gratitude.

It may be said the Methodists have been tardy in commencing missionary operations. But this is a mistake; for if you will examine, it will be found that the Wesleys and Whitefield were missionaries from England to America more than one hundred years ago; and Coke and others were actively engaged in missionary operations in the West Indies, shortly after the American revolution. It is true we do not read so much about missions in our Church in former years; but the fact is, our whole itinerant ministry is missionary in its whole features, and it was not deemed necessary to have a systematic plan of missionary operations distinct from the regular itinerant ministry till the densely-populated part of our country was occupied. But let none suppose, from these remarks, that the frontiers were neglected by us in our zeal to occupy the *cities, towns, villages, and populous neighborhoods*. The Minutes and the old preachers will tell of frontier scenes which have never been realized by the

preachers of modern days, and which never can be realized by them; for the new settlements which are now formed have many more comforts than those that were formed in years gone by. The plan of sending men into the frontiers of the work, to be supported by the missionary fund, is now adopted—which is as it should be; for it is calculated to bring the support of the preachers more on an equality. For a number of years last past the Head of the Church has given us access to the aboriginals of our country to a degree unknown to former ages; for, although Elliott and others, in New England, were greatly blessed in their labors among them, and the Moravians in other parts, there never was that depth of religious experience generally, and that systematic mode of Church government, and that approximation to civilization that are now realized. There is a great and effectual door now opening on the benighted continent of Africa for the missionary operations of our Church, but which, I believe, will ultimately have to be carried on by colored laborers, whose constitutions seem adapted to the climate. I also look forward to the day when the missionaries of our Church shall bear a conspicuous part in the propagation of Protestant Christianity among the millions in Mexico and South America. From this very brief survey of missionary ground and operations it must be evident that large sums of money will be needed to carry into effect the benevolent plans of Heaven and the Church. But the gold and silver, and every thing else requisite for this work, belong to the Head of the Church. Much, however, of the means is in the hand of parsimonious stewards, who are unwilling that their Lord should do what he will with his own, but are anxious to circumscribe him in his plans of operation; but we think many of them are becoming more faithful, and it is the duty of those who have the charge of circuits to exert them-

selves in producing a spirit of fidelity among those stewards in whose hands Heaven's means are lodged. That preacher who is indifferent about missionary operations, and negligent in collecting money for the same, has either a very shallow head or a very cold heart, which is a reproach to him and a disgrace to the Church, and the sooner he retires from a prominent station the better, unless he will reform, which will be the best course. The foregoing is not intended for an industrious man, who may have been unsuccessful because he had a barren soil.



## CHAPTER XVII.

The duty of preachers in charge to promote the Bible, Sunday school, and tract cause, and the erection of meeting-houses in their respective charges.

THE age in which we live is one which is characterized by benevolent effort. The formation of Sunday schools, together with Bible and tract societies, has been the means of doing a quantum of good, that will be known only in eternity, when the results of pious zeal and effort will be fully developed—when the millions who have been saved by such means shall join in holy exultation before the throne of the Eternal. When we consider the susceptibility of the young mind for deep impressions and the durability of early knowledge, we are astonished that men of enlightened minds and benevolent hearts did not adopt Sunday school instruction ages ago. But it is a fact that almost all great and good things seem to be fortuitous in their commencement, so far as human agency is concerned, that the glory may be given to God. Mr. Raikes and Mr. Wesley were nearly cotemporary in establishing Sunday schools, which, however, were not generally extended over England and America till of late years; and there yet remains too much ignorance of their nature, and too much indifference about their utility, among ministers and people. As it regards our denomination, the General conference and the Book Agency are not to blame for the limited influence of Sunday schools among us; for the one has made it the duty of the preachers and the other has furnished the means to extend Sunday school instruction to the hundreds of thou-

sands of the children of our people. Notwithstanding the Bible and tract societies, denominated American, and the Sunday School Union of the same denomination have done much good, and have our cordial good-will, and should never be opposed by us, unless they abuse their influence, yet it was believed by the General conference that more good would be accomplished by our denomination and its friends by having similar institutions under its own care and control. In consequence of our having a large, and well-organized, and prudently-conducted Book Concern, it was believed that Bibles, Sunday school books, and tracts, could be published by us cheaper than by the American societies, and that Sunday school books and tracts would be put in the hands of our people and their children free from every sentiment and all phraseology that are not in strict accordance with truth as we understand it, which was not the case with the books of the American institutions. The attempt was made in pursuance of an order of the General conference, and a Bible and tract society, and Sunday School Union of the Methodist Episcopal Church were formed—not as rivals of the American societies, but as fellow-helpers in the same good work. Our Bible society has not greatly flourished; and, indeed, we have felt less anxiety in its behalf than we otherwise should have done, because the country in general is fully supplied with Bibles at very cheap rates by merchants, the American Bible Society, and our Book Concern.\* The Sunday school and tract

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\* The Methodist Bible Society, which was organized nearly twenty years ago, had rather a feeble existence, and was finally dissolved, and we now take a lively interest and an active part in the American Bible Society, with which we are pledged to co-operate.

Since this chapter was written, we, as a people, have far transcended ourselves in the Sunday school cause; but as we do not come up to what we should do, I deem it proper to let the admonitions and exhortations remain as I wrote them a little more than fourteen years ago.

cause under our patronage has had a more extended and vigorous operation and influence, because a more energetic support has been afforded, but which has been feeble in comparison of what it should have been and what we hope it will yet be. In many instances our people seem not to understand the nature of our benevolent institutions as they ought. This want of understanding can not be owing to a want of facilities to give information, but to negligence on the part of the preacher and a criminal indifference among the people. I am far from charging all with this negligence and indifference; for there are many noble spirits among the preachers and people that have exerted a laudable zeal in the cause of benevolence, and I hope their efforts will yet be crowned with glorious success. Such is the nature of our itinerant operations, that if every preacher would do his duty in a proper manner and with becoming zeal, our whole country would soon realize the beneficial effects of the several benevolent societies of our Church. But, alas! how many pass on, year after year, in almost entire neglect of this part of their duty! It is true many of our preachers are young and destitute of experience, which may be some apology for them; but I fear, I *greatly* fear, they do not try to learn how to do this part of their work, and none are so ignorant as those who will not learn. Every preacher in charge of a circuit is required, as far as practicable, to form the children belonging to his congregation into classes, for the purpose of giving them religious instruction. But this he can not do, in many cases, in consequence of his other important and numerous duties; but this unavoidable lack of service may be partly remedied by well-directed Sunday school instruction. This consideration should have a powerful influence on the mind and effort of every preacher who wishes conscientiously to do what he solemnly promised to perform

when he was received as a member of his conference. How a preacher can, habitually, neglect the rising generation, and have a conscience free from continual laceration, can not be understood, unless we suppose his mind so dark as not to perceive the necessity of giving the minds of the young a right direction. Should this be the case, he ought to go to Sunday school himself, that he may learn what he ought to have known before he assumed the office of teaching others. It is not, generally, a want of capacity to see and feel the importance of youthful instruction, that causes so much neglect, but a heedless indifference about the subject. That preacher who neglects to exert himself in the cause of Sunday schools, is chargeable with neglecting the interests of his own Church; for, to a considerable extent, the increase in all Churches is from the children of their own members. If, therefore, the preacher takes no pains with the children of his charge, they will learn idle or vicious habits on the Lord's day, or they will be tutored by others, who will teach them sentiments, and forms, and modes of worship, subversive of our sentiments, forms, and modes, all of which we think of some importance; because they have the sanction of the Bible, and the example of Bible saints, which should be regarded by every man, who wishes to conform to the whole will of God, and the proprieties of Divine worship.

As our work is extended into every part of the United States and territories, it is to be expected that different plans of operation, to arrive at the same end, would be more proper in different places; in consequence of which, the General conference has clothed each annual conference with authority to prescribe the methods by which the cause of benevolence shall be sustained and extended among us. In order, therefore, that a preacher may do his duty, he should learn the plan of operation prescribed

by his conference, and then diligently and conscientiously comply with it. Our plan of changing preachers annually, although a good one, has its inconveniences, particularly in the promotion of Sunday schools; for one preacher is zealous in this work, and establishes a number of schools in his circuit; but before they have acquired stability, his time on the circuit ends; his successor comes on, a stranger to the state of things; in consequence of which, the Sunday schools are measurably neglected, and many of them languish and die. This inconvenience was perceived by the General conference, which is ever mindful of the interests of the Church, and a remedy was provided by requiring every preacher in charge, to present the quarterly meeting conference, at its last meeting in each conference year, a written statement of the number, and state of the Sunday schools on the circuit, and this statement is to be entered on the journals of the quarterly meeting conference; so that when a new preacher arrives on the circuit, he can call on the recording steward, and receive the information needful, that he may immediately commence where his predecessor ceased, in consequence of his removal.\* But how many preachers prepare well-written and accurate statements of facts, to be journalized? And how many, on coming to a new circuit, hasten to examine the journals for the purpose of gaining information, that will enable them to commence immediately in sustaining the Sunday school cause? Alas! but few, in the bounds of my acquaintance. Can it be a matter of wonder that our operations are crippled, while so many neglect these positive and necessary duties? So long as

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\*At a subsequent General conference, the rule was amended so as to require a written statement to be presented to every quarterly conference. To keep this subject before the official members, the presiding elder is required to ask, at every quarterly meeting conference, whether the rules concerning the instruction of children have been faithfully observed.

we have to commence our work anew every year, we shall never have settled and successful schools under our care, in our circuits generally. A business man—and such should all the preachers learn to be—can make a sufficient report of the schools on his circuit in an hour or two, and his successor could copy it in the same length of time, so as to have it always at hand in the beginning of the year, that he may immediately attend to the schools in his charge. Then why, my brethren, will you let the work of a few hours go undone, to the lasting injury of an important part of your work? I do hope you will amend in the discharge of this, as well as in other parts of your duty. A report, containing the number of Sunday schools, together with the amount collected for the support of missions, and for the publication of Bibles, tracts, and Sunday school books, is to be made to the annual conference, that the annual Minutes may, as far as possible, show our doings in the vineyard of the Lord; not for the purpose of ostentation, but to encourage the friends and servants of Immanuel to redouble their diligence, and to persevere till the kingdoms of this world shall become the kingdoms of God and his Anointed. Onward, my brethren, onward; for the saints of the Most High shall possess the kingdom forever, even forever and ever.

The prosperity of the Church greatly depends on commodious places of worship; for if they are wanting, hundreds and thousands will not attend our ministry, that would be our constant hearers. This remark will apply, particularly, to the more refined part of society; many of them greatly prefer our doctrine and modes of worship, but attend the ministry of other denominations, because their houses of worship are more spacious. Many of our people, it is true, are in moderate circumstances; but were they generous, to the extent of their means, almost every populous neighborhood, with a good class of Methodists

in it, might have a respectable Methodist meeting-house; in consequence of which there would be great accessions to the Church, and these accessions would enable us to increase the number and size of our meeting-houses, commensurate with the increase of population and attendance on our ministrations. The Discipline seems to contemplate a general fund for church building; but the newness of our country, and the limited means of our people, seem to forbid such a plan in the west, at present; and this plan is only required in those circuits which are able to bear it. Notwithstanding a general fund may not be raised for church building, yet every preacher may do much toward building places of worship, by suitable exhortations and counsels. In many populous and rich places in the country the preaching and class meetings are at private houses, to the no small burden of the families, for many years in succession.\* Ought these things to be? Nay, verily; and they would not be so, if we were all faithful in trying to promote the interests of the Church, by erecting solemn temples to the Most High.

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\* Since this was written our people have made wonderful progress in church building, and the prospect now is that preaching in private houses, in the older parts of the country, will soon be entirely dispensed with.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

The preacher to furnish his successor a correct plan of the circuit—To see that our people do not lose their membership by removal—To use his influence that our people may be cleanly and decent—To read the general rules to the societies and congregations—To appoint prayer meetings—To see that our people fast on the Friday prior to each quarterly meeting—To license suitable persons to exhort.

HAVING said so much, in former chapters, on the duties of those who have the charge of circuits, I shall only make a few passing remarks on some of the other directions given to them. When a preacher arrives in his field of labor, it is desirable that he have facilities to commence every part of his work, especially that of visiting from house to house; in order to which his predecessor is required to furnish a catalogue of the societies, as the members live on the several streets in towns and cities. The information thus furnished will save a strange preacher much valuable time, and will prevent much trouble. A knowledge of the state of a circuit is of much importance to a preacher, that he may be prepared to adapt his various ministrations to the condition of the people. Hence the propriety of the preacher leaving his successor a particular account of the circuit. A plan containing merely the preaching-places and the numbers in society is very far from a compliance with the direction in the Discipline. The plan of a circuit should exhibit the preaching-places, the day and hour for preaching, the number in society, the local elders, deacons, and preachers; the exhorters, stewards, and leaders; the periodicals taken in the neighborhood, and the general religious state of each society; all of which items should be arranged in



tabular order, accompanied with a list of the probationers, as was noticed in a former chapter. Sometimes months are lost by a strange preacher, for want of the information which might be given by his predecessor in a few hours, in consequence of his opportunity of being well acquainted with the state of things on the circuit in the course of the preceding year. The rules of society, whether general or special, are considered as calculated to promote the glory of God and the happiness of the members of the Church. Consequently, they should all be enforced vigorously; for the practice of letting a standing rule in the Discipline become a dead letter by neglect presents a bad and dangerous precedent; for if one rule may be treated thus, all may be treated in the same way with equal propriety, which course of conduct would finally abrogate the whole Discipline. But while there is a vigorous course pursued in enforcing the Discipline, it should not be a rash and imperious one, because the wrath of a minister worketh neither the righteousness of God nor the peace and happiness of society; for men will resist an overbearing manner, however good the thing may be which is aimed at, while a mild and gentle manner will prevail on men to do all the things required by our strict but Scriptural rules.

Notwithstanding Methodism is extended all over the civilized and some of the savage parts of these United States and territories, and is divided into conferences, districts, circuits, stations, societies, and classes, yet we are all one people, one Church, believing the same doctrines, and practicing the same mode of Discipline, with a unanimity such as has not been witnessed among any other people since the days of the primitive Church, while under apostolic ministrations and superintendence.\* The

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\* When this was written the Methodist Episcopal Church was a unit; but, alas! the "great evil of slavery" has made her twain. We of the

consequence of this unanimity is, that a degree of brotherly love and Christian fellowship has prevailed among us, as a people, seldom seen in other denominations of modern days. That this fellowship may continue it is necessary that the Church be protected from imposition, and this is done by requiring every person applying to be received as a member, in any place, on the ground of former standing, to present a certificate of such standing, signed by the preacher of the circuit from which the person applying may have removed. The propriety of the certificate being signed by an itinerant preacher is manifest; for, as his name is generally on the minutes, a reference may be made to the minutes to see if the person who has signed the certificate was, at the time of such signing, the preacher in charge of the circuit. The preceding remarks will suggest the propriety of the rule requiring the preacher to warn all, from time to time, not to remove without obtaining a certificate; for if any do so, he can not be received into Church as a regular member. When any person settles in a strange place, professing to be a Methodist, and has not a certificate, there are suspicions resting on him that his standing was not good in the place from whence he came, which will do him much injury, that might have been prevented by a little care of the preacher and the person himself.

One of Mr. Wesley's valuable maxims was, Let thy mind's sweetness have its operation on thy person, clothes, and habitation. In pursuance of this maxim, it is made the duty of the preacher to recommend decency and cleanliness every-where; in order to which the preacher should set the example himself, and then follow it with precept. Decency comes from "*deceat*"—it

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north do not consider her as properly divided, but that the South has seceded. I presume, however, that each body will receive the members of the other on certificate given by the preachers of each.

becomes, it beseems, it behooves, it is suitable—and will embrace propriety of dress, good breeding, genteel behavior, or a modest appearance and affable manners. Much prudence will be needed by him who endeavors to perform this part of his duty; for should he be indiscreet in his manner of recommending these things, he will lose all his labor and incur much odium and ill-will. Therefore, let him recommend decency in a *decent* manner. Decency and cleanliness are closely allied to purity of mind and piety of heart, and there is reason to fear there is not much genuine religion under a voluntarily-slovenly and filthy exterior of person, or interior of a house, or any thing else with which a professor of religion is connected. Sometimes abject poverty or affliction will prevent some good people from being neat and cleanly, as they would wish, and these are to be pitied more than blamed.

There is nothing in the economy of Methodism of which any minister or member of the Church ought to be ashamed, or afraid to let it be known; and, indeed, we are anxious all the world should know all the rules of our societies. The members of our Church ought to be well acquainted with our rules, as they are required to walk in conformity to them, and by neglecting so to do, they subject themselves to Church trial and a forfeiture of Church membership. To prevent, therefore, their ignorance and the consequences that may ensue, it is made the duty of the preacher in charge, with the aid of his colleagues, to read the general rules once a quarter, in each society; and that all who attend the Methodist ministry may know what the moral Discipline requires of all the members, these rules are to be read once a year in every congregation. How far the people forget, and, in consequence, ignorantly misrepresent the preachers, or how far they willfully do so, I know not; but if there be no misrepre-

sentation, there is a general and shameful neglect of this duty among the preachers; for, with very few exceptions, I hear great complaints in reference to this duty. If the preacher would only reflect that many of our people never read the Discipline for themselves, the propriety and necessity of attending to this duty will be very manifest. Can we, my brethren, expect the people to be regular in doing their duties while we are so remiss in affording them the helps which they need, and which are in our power to furnish? Surely our example will be contagious.

In promoting a revival of God's work, every means, whether instituted or prudential, should be resorted to. Therefore, the preacher should seek aid, to this end, from the private as well as from the official members of the Church. Consequently, he should appoint prayer meetings in every part of the circuit where it is practicable. To see a number of pious persons assembled for the purpose of engaging in a devout prayer meeting is an interesting sight to men, to angels, and to God, who will be moved by fervent prayers to send his blessings down on the objects for whom they are offered. A man may attend the public services of the Church in a decent manner, and be very little interested, as he is not required to take an active part; but when he attends the prayer meeting, in which he becomes an actor, he will become more interested at the time, and he will be more watchful and prayerful at other times that his prayer may not be hindered at the prayer meeting. That preacher who can succeed in having interesting prayer meetings well attended all round his circuit, will not be long without refreshing times; for the effectual, fervent prayer of a whole circuit will avail much in promoting a blessed and glorious revival of evangelical religion.

The quarterly meetings are times of much importance

to a circuit, both in a business and a spiritual point of view, and every thing should be done to make them interesting and useful. Hence, the preacher is required to take care that a fast be held on his circuit on the Friday prior to each quarterly meeting. That fasting is a Bible duty I deem unnecessary to prove, and that prayer should be united with it I suppose all will admit. When, therefore, a whole circuit humbles and afflicts itself before the Lord on a given day, and approaches him in unusually solemn and vehement prayer, may we not reasonably expect a special blessing to attend the business and exercises of the quarterly meeting? This quarterly fasting, I fear, is greatly neglected by our people—whether through the neglect of the preachers or of themselves I can not say. Merely to say, in an indifferent and careless manner, that such a day will be fast day, will have but little effect on the people; for their understandings and consciences must be influenced, or they will not deny their appetites so as to keep a holy fast to the Lord. Consequently, some pains must be taken to explain and enforce the duty; for, as all religious services are reasonable, they should be performed understandingly and conscientiously.

The last item in the section of Discipline we have had under consideration is to license suitable persons as exhorters, which is a very important duty. As a Church, we believe in a Divine and special call to every department of public ministerial services. Consequently, when we license men to preach or exhort, we do it on the supposition that the Head of the Church has called them to the work. Therefore, every preacher ought to be well convinced that God has called the man to the work before he gives him license. Were the preachers conscientious, as they should be, the quarterly conference would not have to spend so much time in examining the characters.

of so many drones, as is now the case, and the presiding elders would not have to write and sign so many useless licenses as they now do. The evidence that men are called to be exhorters is to be ascertained by their having gifts and grace for the work; for we may rest well assured that if Heaven call any man to official station in the Church he will give the qualifications necessary. It may be remarked that the feeling of favoritism in the preacher is strictly guarded; for he may not give license to any without the consent of a leader's meeting or of a class. I have now passed through the sections containing the duties of those who have charge of circuits, and have noticed every thing material, and, with much good-will, I now take leave of my brethren of this class.

## CHAPTER XIX.

The importance of the presiding eldership—The appointing power in the bishop, and properly so—The duties of the presiding elder, and of the quarterly conference in which he presides.

SECTION fifth, chapter first, of the Discipline, will now claim our attention in the two following chapters. Every man who considers that the call for laborers in the itinerant field is such, that young and inexperienced men are necessarily placed in important pastoral stations, will at once see that the necessities of the young men call for an experienced guide, and the concerns of the Church call for the office of presiding elder. The men selected to fill this important and responsible office, are usually men of established piety, of talents, age, and experience, and who have borne the heat and burden of the day, in whom the superintendency can confide; but sometimes such men as are desirable, are not to be had, and the appointing power is under the necessity of using such material as it has, although not altogether suitable. Much has been said on the subject of the appointing power by which the presiding elders are appointed; but it is not my purpose to enter into this controversy. If the harmony of the conference be consulted, and the fellowship of brethren be desired, the present plan is, by far, better than an election, for, as it was stated in the chapter that embraced the appointment of class-leaders, elections can not be introduced, without their accompaniments, an electioneering spirit and management, which would destroy brotherly love. The bishops are chosen by the General conference to superintend

the whole work, but as they can not attend, in person, to all the details of our economy, the conference has given them the presiding eldership to help them, so that as the presiding elders are the immediate helpers and deputies of the superintendents, they ought, as a matter of right, to have the power of appointing their substitutes. So far as my knowledge extends, the bishops do not act despotic in appointing men to be presiding elders, but exercise the best judgment they have, after deliberate consultation with brethren of age and experience, and who have the good of the Church much at heart; and I am persuaded, were the preachers in any district dissatisfied with their presiding elder, the bishops would remove such elder, on learning the wish of the preachers.

The presiding elders being men of weight and influence—if they are what they should be—are calculated to extend and sustain our doctrines and economy among the people, by their preaching, and pious and grave example, in connection with their weight of character. It is made the duty of the presiding elder to travel through his appointed district, and he is expected to preach as much as his time and strength will permit; and were this all he has to do, his work would be comparatively easy, but when his responsibilities are considered, it may be said great and laborious is his charge; for in the absence of the bishops he is required to take charge of the elders and deacons, traveling and local preachers, and exhorters in his district. When we consider the diversity of men's minds, tempers, talents, circumstances, and temptations, all of which are to be attended to by the presiding elder, that he may aid his brethren to be useful, we may well say, who can sustain the anxiety of mind and the labors required of him?

When the appointments of preachers are made at conference, all the information is obtained which can be had,



but sometimes, after all possible care, there are appointments made which are injudicious, and the usefulness and success of the preachers, and the good of the Church, require a change to be made. At other times causes transpire after conference which require a change. Great judgment and much caution are required in making changes, so as not to injure the feelings and usefulness of the preachers, and the feelings of the members of Church. The day was, when a change of preachers was expected frequently, but now, if a presiding elder change men, they and their particular friends are grievously injured in their feelings; and some men seem as if they would rather remain a whole year where they were appointed, although perfectly useless, than to be removed to other circuits, where they might do good. Brethren, is this as it should be? I think not.

The power of receiving preachers, in the interval of conference, is given to the presiding elder, to fill vacancies that may have been left at the time of conference, or which may have occurred afterward. And here he will meet serious difficulties, for many are anxious to thrust themselves out who will not answer the purpose; while those that would be acceptable and useful, can hardly be obtained; but in this case the presiding elder should be firm, and never intrude a man upon the people that does not bid fair to be useful, and prove a blessing to them, for they had better do without a preacher, than have a man who is unacceptable to them; and sometimes an improper man being employed, he is seized with the traveling fidgets, to such a degree, that he is never more worth any thing for business, and will never rest till he becomes a traveling preacher, if not among us, he will travel among those who will use material that will not answer our purpose. It is true we are often relieved in this way from men who *would* preach if they knew how. When the

presiding elder finds a man who wishes to travel, and who is likely to be useful, he should, if possible, give him an opportunity of making trial before he is recommended to conference, particularly if he is a married man; for it never can be certainly known by any man, whether an itinerant life will suit him or he it, till trial be made, and it does a man less injury to make a trial under the direction of an elder and fail, than under the direction of a conference and then fail. I would advise all men who intend to be traveling preachers, if opportunity will permit, to make trial of traveling under an elder before they offer to conference.

The manner in which a preacher is to be suspended, is pointed out in the nineteenth section, where the duty of the presiding elder is plainly stated. The answer to the first question directs the course when a traveling preacher is accused of immoralities; the answer to the second, the course when improper tempers, words, or actions have been indulged; and the answer to the third, the course when unmethodistical doctrines have been held and disseminated. I consider the nineteenth section so plain that it needs no comment, as any man suitable for a presiding elder will readily understand it.

The Discipline makes the bishop the president of the conference; but if he should fail to attend, it has made provision for a president pro tempore, either by the appointment of the bishop, or the election of the conference. When a presiding elder becomes the president of an annual conference, he is clothed with all the power of the bishop, with the exception of ordination and the transferring of a preacher from his conference to another, or from another to his. As it happens but seldom that a presiding elder is placed in the important station of the president of an annual conference, I do not deem it necessary to notice, in this place, the duties in that station, as they are

to be found under the heads of the annual conferences and the duties of bishops.

It has before been stated that the quarterly meetings are important, on account of their business transactions and religious exercises; consequently, it becomes the duty of the presiding elder, so far as is practicable, to be present at them, that the benefits of his labors and experience may be had. It is made the duty of the presiding elder to call together the official members of the circuit, to form a conference for the transaction of business. The first duty of the conference, when called together by the president, is to hear complaints. There is a vagueness in the phrase to hear complaints, which is calculated to perplex all presiding elders and quarterly meeting conferences, and which perplexes the present writer. I will, however, give a few specimens of what I think may be ranked under this head. When the preacher in charge had recommended an arbitration, as was noticed in the chapter on expelling members from Church, if either party be dissatisfied he may complain to the quarterly meeting conference, which has the power to grant a new arbitration. If any member of the quarterly meeting conference neglect his official or religious duties, he may and ought to be complained of in conference. Sometimes there are ordained local preachers, whose lives are not immoral in the common acceptation of that term, but who neglect all public and family means of grace; for which neglect, I believe a quarterly conference has the power to deprive all such of their ministerial standing, after having given them sufficient notice that their case would be acted on; and then they are thrown into the hands of the preacher and societies as other private members; indeed, I believe the conference has original jurisdiction, and can expel a preacher for any thing for which the preacher and society can expel a private member. Sometimes the traveling

preachers may neglect some of their official duties, such as attending their appointments, meeting classes, reading rules, exercising the Discipline, etc., all of which things ought to be complained of in conference, in the presence of the official members and the presiding elder, that the preachers may have an opportunity of making satisfactory explanations, if they can do so, that the elder may be properly prepared to represent his brethren at the annual conference, which he can not so well do from information received from a few persons in a private manner. As I said so much in a former chapter on expulsion, and the rights of appeal, I shall say nothing here on the subject of trying appeals, farther than to remark, that I consider the whole merits of a case brought before the conference on appeals, and not merely the legality of the former trial, as some have contended. If the legality of a former trial is alone the matter on which the conference is to decide, and not the justice of the case, the right of appeal is a very small safeguard against the prejudices of a preacher or a class.

There are other important matters to be transacted in a quarterly conference: such as the appointing and removing the circuit stewards; examining the reports of, and giving the directions to the boards of trustees of meeting-houses and parsonages; appointing committees to estimate the table and fuel expenses of preachers' families, and to estimate the amounts necessary to build meeting-houses, all of which matters should be done with much care, with an eye to the glory of God and the present and future good of the Church.

Since the local conferences have died a natural death,\*

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\* At the General conference in 1820, there was a rule passed organizing a local conference in each presiding elder's district, consisting of all the local elders, deacons, and preachers in the district, making the presiding elder the president of the conference. The duties of this conference were

the business usually transacted by them, in their short and sickly lifetime, is done by the quarterly conferences: such as licensing and renewing the license of preachers and exhorters, recommending men to the annual conferences for ordination, and to be received on trial, and the expulsion of local preachers. There is one item named here on which I wish to make a few remarks, as I think many have wrong views, which have done much harm: I mean the renewing of license. Many licensed local preachers and their friends seem to think that a quarterly meeting conference is bound to renew their license as a matter of course, and that if this is not done, they are greatly wronged; hence, many leave the Church when their licenses are not renewed, and join other denominations which have more anxiety for nominal preachers than the Methodist Episcopal Church. The fact is, that an annual renewal of license at once proves that the Church considers every licentiate as a probationer from year to year; and the Discipline says the quarterly conference—which acts in the place of the local conference—has power to renew license only in cases where the gifts, grace, and usefulness will warrant such renewal. Were this thing understood and regarded as it should be, men would not

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to examine the characters of all its members, to license preachers and renew their license, to recommend suitable persons to the annual conference to be received on trial as traveling preachers, and persons to be ordained deacons and elders, and to expel local preachers. At first these conferences were pretty well attended, but the distance to travel, the time required, and the expense incurred, soon caused such a falling off in the attendance, that the next General conference had to make provision for the respective quarterly conferences to do the business if the local conferences failed to meet; and such was the failure, that the conferences became extinct, and the General conference of 1836 expunged the entire section organizing local conferences from the Discipline. So much for the folly of trying to please a few discontented men, to accommodate whom the project was gotten up; but, after all, the most of the discontented left the Church.

vote, from year to year, to renew the license of men whom they believe in their souls can not preach, but whose feelings they are unwilling to hurt. An intelligent and humble brother would not be injured in his feelings if he were assured that his brethren could not, in good conscience, vote for the renewal of his license, but would rather be inclined to believe he was mistaken when he thought he was called to the work of the ministry. Many men who might have lived useful and respected as exhorters, by aspiring to the station of preachers, have been the mortification of their friends, the derision of the irreligious, and the tormentors of themselves; for no man of sensibility can feel comfortable in trying to do what he is not qualified to perform with some facility. The preceding remarks will apply to the renewal of the licenses of exhorters who are found incompetent.

I wish to say a few words on another thing transacted in quarterly conference. I fear many men are recommended for orders, or to travel, merely to save their feelings; and it is intended that the annual conference, or those who will have to represent the persons recommended, shall bear all the responsibilities and censures that may be incurred in the final disposal of their cases. This is a very unmanly and unchristian course; and how any man, pretending to religion, can reconcile it to his conscience, I know not. O my brethren, if you recommend a man do it honestly, and if you can not recommend with a good conscience, I beseech you never, no, never recommend.

## CHAPTER XX.

Duties and importance of presiding elders continued—A little personal history—The excellency and wished-for perpetuity of the economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church—An address intended for the Illinois conference at Bloomington, Ia., in the fall of 1826.

THE spiritual and temporal business of the Church in the presiding elder's district becomes his work, and demands his strict attention, as a part of his important duties, according to the Discipline, which he has promised to observe. It is his business to see that all the religious observances, order, and ceremonies of the Church be observed by all under his immediate supervision, that every thing may be conducted with order and propriety, that deep, vital, and lasting piety may be promoted in every part of his important field. It is his duty to pay particular attention to the minds and manners of the preachers, especially the young and inexperienced, that they may be a blessing to the Church in her spiritual interests. A presiding elder ought to be truly a business man in temporal matters; for he has to oversee the temporal interests of the Church in his bounds, and they are neither few nor small. He ought to use his influence to promote the building of meeting-houses and parsonages, and see that they are secured to the Church in a proper and safe manner, that they may not be wrested from the rightful owners in coming years, when they will be more valuable than now. The members in a town or neighborhood join, in a friendly manner, to build a meeting-house. They are careless about a deed; something causes a rupture in the society, and the church property is wrested from

those who ought to hold it. All this wrong, and the irreligious feelings consequent thereupon, might have been prevented had things been attended to in the proper time. Therefore, as the trustees of our Church property are accountable to the quarterly conferences, the presiding elder should be attentive to this thing, and use his influence to prevent difficulty. The interests of missions and Sunday schools, and the publication of Bibles, tracts, and Sunday school books, at our own press, claim his regards and strenuous efforts. I refer to what I said, in a former chapter, on the cause of our benevolent institutions, that I may be saved the trouble of saying the same things over again. All the preachers in the district are to be instructed and encouraged by him in the discharge of duty, in promoting the temporal as well as the spiritual interests of the Church; for he is to take care that every part of the Methodist Discipline be enforced in his district—to which end he must evince that he understands, loves, and keeps every part of our economy contained in the Discipline; for in vain will he urge others to these things if he be negligent of them himself; for the young preachers will pay more attention to his example than to his precepts. From what has been said, though imperfectly and cursorily, on the duties of presiding elders, it is manifest that the station, instead of being one of mere ease and honor, is one of much labor and inconceivable responsibility. That man who has the charge of several elders, deacons, and preachers in the traveling connection, some scores of elders, deacons, and preachers in the local connection, and probably as many exhorters, and, in some sense, thousands of Church members, must feel a great weight of responsibility, if he have that sense of obligation he should possess; and he ought to look to God for wisdom and power to go out and come in before so great a charge.



The prosperity of the Church greatly depends on a wise, pious, and faithful eldership. Therefore, I would exhort the presiding elders to be men of clean hands and pure hearts, that they may be a blessing to the Church. If any men among us ought to be holy men, who believe, teach, and experience *Christian perfection* as taught in the Bible, and explained and enforced by Mr. Wesley and his coadjutors, they ought to be the presiding elders; for they have more influence with the young preachers and the people than even the bishops, whose extensive travels will not permit such social and frequent intercourse with their brethren as the presiding elders enjoy. My brethren, if you are unwise, unholy, and unfaithful, you will be a curse to the world and the Church; for by little and little you will cause the glory of our Zion to pass away, and then she may have a name to live when she is dead and has lost her power to benefit mankind as she might have done. O, my brethren, never be the means of destroying that cause which you are appointed and expected to build up!

When I commenced these chapters I expected five or six would contain all I should write on ministerial duties; but I have found the subject so copious that I have found more difficulty to compress my matter into twenty chapters than to have extended it to forty or fifty, as long as these have been. This being my first attempt—and, for aught I know, my last—to write for the instruction of others, I have all the way through labored under a deep sense of my inability to present the important matters handled, in that clear, forcible, and interesting manner which they have deserved. If ardent wishes for success will avail any thing, my work will do some good.\*

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\* This was written nearly thirteen years ago, since which time I have passed through many fiery trials; but hitherto the Lord has sustained me. I am now becoming an old man, being this day—January 15, 1843—

One month more will complete twenty-five years since I, with a trembling body, a fluttering heart, and many fears, presented myself as a candidate for probation in the Methodist Episcopal Church; but before I did this I procured the book entitled the Doctrines and Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, which I carefully read and weighed, so that I think I acted understandingly in what I did. Between twenty-one and twenty-two years I have been a Methodist preacher and upward of eighteen years a traveling preacher, and one whose situation in life, in consequence of moderate circumstances and a large family, has been much of the time as greatly discouraging as any man's that I have known, so that it may be supposed I have been led to examine the economy of our Church with some degree of attention that I might form a just estimate of the sacrifices I ought to make for the Church to which I belong; for these, I consider, ought to be proportioned to the excellency and utility of the Church; and although I have hardly seen one day in more than eighteen years in which my heart did not ardently desire the peaceful scenes of retired and local life, which is more desirable to me than any thing this side heaven, yet such has been the sense of the claims of the Church upon me that I have not dared to retire. As to the future, I have no determination in reference to itinerant life, intending to follow the openings before me. If Providence seems to say travel, although a great cross and much affliction, I will try to travel; but if the way seems to close I will *gladly* retire. From the few things which I have said concerning myself—which I hope my brethren will pardon—it will be readily supposed I had heretofore a favorable opinion of Methodist economy; but, after analyzing

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fifty-nine years old; but, were it not for family affliction, I feel that I could yet go out and come in with my brethren in the regular work of an itinerant minister.

several parts of it, which the writing of this work has led me to do, my former favorable opinion has become admiration, mingled with increased adoration of God, who has guided, and veneration for the men who followed his guidance, in adopting an economy better calculated to make an able, faithful, and successful ministry than any other which I have ever known or read of. I speak of ministerial training since the days of plenary inspiration have ceased. Take a view of the case in a brief manner, and, for an example, select one from among our venerable superintendents. When a young man he joined the Church on trial; then a member in full standing; next a class-leader, becoming intimately acquainted with the mental exercises of a Christian from his own experience and that of his class-mates, with whom he converses weekly concerning their experience; then an exhorter, whose duties require zeal and energy, and give him some experience in public speaking; then a local preacher, choosing his own field of labor, in which he expounds and enforces the word of God; then a junior preacher, on a circuit, free from the charge, reading, praying, preaching every day or oftener, conversing with men of all classes, and having use every day for all that he learns, so that learning and practice go hand in hand; then an ordained deacon, in charge of a circuit, studying and exercising Discipline in the Church, administering baptism, and assisting in the solemnities of the sacrament, which cause a conscientious man to study the origin, nature, and design of Gospel ordinances; as a candidate for elder's orders he studies to show himself approved; ordained an elder, opposing every thing erroneous in doctrine and vicious in practice in the charge committed to him, his talents for preaching and government are developed, his character established, his services needed. He is made a presiding elder; he moves in a more extended sphere of labor and usefulness;

he acquits himself well; his mental and moral worth become known; his brethren turn their eyes to him as a suitable person to superintend the whole work; he is elected and ordained bishop, or general superintendent; he travels the length and breadth of these United States and territories, ordaining deacons and elders, traveling and local; presiding in conferences; with much care and judgment assigning his junior brethren their respective fields of labor. Although I am a warm friend to all literature and science, yet I ask what are *colleges and theological institutions* compared with this course of training ministers? I answer, they are poor, time-wasting, mind-cramping, heart-freezing, zeal-destroying, soul-neglecting things, of which it should be said to every man called of God to preach the Gospel, let the dead bury their dead, but go thou and preach the Gospel, not with the wisdom of the world, but with the science of heaven, and “*with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.*” On reviewing the whole I am ready to exclaim, “*De hac œconomia, hicanimus mei dicit, esto tu perpetua:*” concerning this economy this soul of mine says, Be thou perpetual.

In looking over some old papers, not long since, I found one which I had not thought of for years, containing the only written speech that I ever prepared, and which I intended to have delivered before the conference of which I was a member eight years ago last September; but my heart failed me, and I did not deliver it. As it is in accordance with many things in these chapters, I will make it the conclusion of the present one, which is the last that I calculate to write in regular order on ministerial duties.

MR. PRESIDENT,—This is the seventh conference in which I have had the privilege of sitting, and in all of them I presume I have not occupied more than one hour in speaking. I can assure you my silence has not

been owing to a want of interest in the deliberations of conference, but to my natural and increasing diffidence. I hope what I have said will plead my apology if I should now presume to say a few things when we are about entering into the examination of the characters of the candidates for reception and ordination to the offices of deacon and elder. I hardly need tell you, sir, that if there is any thing in the universe which I love, it is pure Christianity under the modern name of Methodism. Some sixteen years ago I made her the religion of my head, my heart, and my life, and God is making her the religion of my family and my friends. I am far from thinking, sir, that my love is a blind partiality, for I believe that Methodism possesses excellences that deserve my attachment. When I view her doctrines, I am ready to say, they are the unsullied rays of light, and the pure streams of truth issuing from the throne of the Eternal. When I view her government, I am ready to say, it is as good as the providence and word of God, and the wisdom of the wisest and best of men could make it. When I view her ministry, I am ready to say, it has not been equaled since the apostolic age, and I am persuaded if we could hear the testimony of astonished thousands and admiring angels, we would be confirmed in our opinion. If any ask why we think it so excellent, we answer, because God has called and qualified it; yes, sir, he has chosen men of all grades, from the academic grove, clothed in the gown, down to the backwoodsman with the hunting-shirt and the rifle; consequently, they are acquainted with men and things in every station in life, and are prepared to preach the Gospel to all classes of the community. From what I have said you will believe me when I say, I do think our Church is the glory of all Churches now upon the earth. When I look at her doctrines, and see how sound they are; and her government, and see how it is calculated

to raise and preserve a holy people; at her ministry, and see the degree of intelligence, the warmth of piety, and the fervor of zeal it possesses; and then turn my attention to the world, I am ready to say, O world, thou must, thou shalt be evangelized; thou must, thou shalt be Methodized. Believe me, sir, if there is a warm desire in this warm heart of mine, it is that the glory of Methodism may be as extensive as the habitable earth, and may last as long as the sun and moon endure. And shall my desire be granted me? I declare to you, sir, I have my hopes, but I must confess I also have my fears. And if any ask on what my fears are grounded, I answer, not on the apprehension that her doctrines will cease to be preached, for while God says his word shall run and be glorified, I have no fears that our doctrines shall leave the face of the earth; neither have I any fear that any deadly change will take place in her government, while Jesus walks in the midst of the golden candlesticks; neither have I any fears in reference to her ministry while he holds in his right hand the seven stars, and while it is said many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased; but my great ground of fear is her administration; and I fear a degree of laxity is already discoverable in this; and if I mistake not we are in danger from a thing in itself really excellent—I mean a desire to enlarge our numbers; and to do this are we not in danger of using too little caution in receiving members, and too much delay in disowning those who walk disorderly among us? I know, Mr. President, that this latter thing is painful to our feelings, and we are tempted to pass it by and leave it for others, and what are the consequences? Why, sir, the conscientious disciplinarian has so much to do in the discharge of his duty, that his mind is depressed, his studies are interrupted, and he is almost discouraged; and very often by delay a whole society is destroyed, or so

much injured that it never fully recovers. Now, sir, while we admit and elect men to office, I am determined to vote more conscientiously than ever I did before in all my life; therefore, I shall expect the presiding elders and others to present their preachers before us fully; not only as it respects their talents for preaching, but also whether they understand and execute the Discipline of the Church, and whether they do it mildly and nervously, or rashly and loosely. And let me tell you, sir, if any that have had opportunity to learn and practice in this particular are found to be deficient in any considerable degree, they will not get my vote unless they do truly promise to amend. Sir, I am no enemy to the young men, for I know the heart of a young man; I remember when I stood trembling on my examination, when I was received and ordained; but I say these things for their good. Mr. President, I have traveled nearly ten years under difficulties superior, perhaps, to those of any other brother on this floor; I have read considerable, I have studied considerable, and I have labored as much as, or more, than my constitution could well bear, and I have the vanity—if vanity it be—to think I have done some good; but should what I have now said have its desired effect, I shall think I have done more good at this time than in all the former part of my life; for if we are faithful in the discharge of all our duties, I believe that by our means “the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the glory of God as the waters cover the great deep.” So might it be!

## CHAPTER XXI.

## Conclusion.

IN writing the preceding work, I have endeavored to consider the government of the Methodist Episcopal Church what it is in fact, a government equally removed from despotism and democracy run mad. If rulers were perfect in wisdom and virtue, an absolute monarchy would be the most convenient and efficient government, both in Church and state; but rulers endowed with perfection of wisdom and virtue are not to be found on earth; therefore, a government giving the people a proper check on the rulers, is the safest in the present state of things. That the people have sufficient checks on the Methodist ministry is very evident, for the very sustenance, honor, and usefulness of the preachers are entirely in their hands. If, therefore, the preachers were to become obnoxious to their brethren, they would be under the necessity of retiring from the work in which they are engaged. The ministry can not receive or expel members without conforming to those rules which are calculated to guard the peace and welfare of the Church. In my expositions I have endeavored to point out the meets and bounds of clerical power and duties in our connection; in doing which I have been conscientious, and I am not conscious of having presented wrong views of any one rule. I had more doubts concerning my views, in which I stated that the privilege rested with an accused member to choose whether he would be tried by the society or a select number. "A Friend to Members" has animadverted on the ground



there taken, without producing any material change in my opinion. As the object I had in view, in part, was to remove all ground of objections to our economy, I may have yielded too much to objectors in the position taken. Probably the following view would be most satisfactory: *in ordinary cases, as a matter of courtesy, let the privilege of choice rest with the accused, whether he will be tried by the society or a select number of them.* This will avoid all the absurdity that "A Friend to Members" thinks the former opinion expressed by me involves, and will, at the same time, secure the end at which I aimed—an accommodation of feelings of an accused member so far as the safety of the Church will permit.

In the course of my work I have been led to weigh myself and my brethren in the balances of truth, as subscribed by us in our solemn examinations before the conference when we were received into full connection, and ordained deacons and elders, and I discover we are greatly deficient. As to myself, I fear I am not a half a Methodist minister, in the proper sense of that term. My deficiencies cause me much sorrow, and some purpose of amendment; but O, how weak and imperfect I am! My dearly-beloved brethren, let us all try to do better by living more for God and the good of souls, which may perish in consequence of our lack of service.













